



New England Agricultural Statistics Service

a field office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service
United States Department of Agriculture

22 Bridge St. Third Floor
PO Box 1444
Concord, NH 03302

Aubrey R. Davis, Director
www.usda.gov/nass

603-224-9639
Fax: 603-225-1434
nass-nh@nass.usda.gov



Crop Weather

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For week ending 10/20/02

Cold, Rainy Finish to the Season

GENERAL CONDITIONS: For the week ending October 20, 2002, there were 5.1 days suitable for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated as 3% very poor, 24% poor, 54% fair, 17% good, 2% excellent. Fall foliage brought many "leaf peepers" to the New England States last week, increasing business at farmers' markets and roadside stands. The harvest season is nearly complete for most crops, as cold temperatures move in. Killing frost in most areas and the first snows in northern locations have already fallen. Major farm activities included: harvesting silage corn, hay, potatoes, apples, pears, and cranberries; finishing harvest for sweet corn and other late season vegetables; sampling soil for next year; picking rocks; disking; tilling; cleaning up and planting cover crops on harvested fields; and spreading manure and lime.

FRUIT: Apple harvest progressed to 85 percent complete last week, behind both last year and the five-year average. On the other hand, pear harvest is ahead of normal schedules, with only a small amount remaining to be picked in Massachusetts. Pick-your-own operations benefitted from increased fall tourism. Massachusetts' cranberry harvest is slightly behind normal schedules; growers have had a less than optimal crop season this year with drought, pests, fruit rot, and poor prices.

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	-- Percent Harvested --			Condition
	2002	2001	5-yr Avg	
Apples	85	95	90	Good/Fair
Pears	99	95	95	Very Poor/Poor
Cranberries, MA	70	80	80	Good/Fair

VEGETABLES: Freezing temperatures and regular hard frosts have put an end to most vegetable harvest. Some cabbage, pumpkins, squash, and other fall crops have small amounts remaining in the field. Sweet corn harvest is complete throughout the region. Cool temperatures apparently had little effect on farm business over the weekend, as good turnouts were reported.

SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
Topsoil Moisture			
Very Short	1	5	12
Short	18	18	46
Adequate	77	74	42
Surplus	4	3	0
Subsoil Moisture			
Very Short	7	9	28
Short	40	36	33
Adequate	51	55	39
Surplus	2	0	0

FIELD CROPS: Silage corn chopping is nearly finished throughout New England as winter weather creeps in. The cutting of third crop hay is also winding down, with only five percent more to cut. Dry hay has been difficult to make with cool, wet conditions. Both Maine and Rhode Island potato growers are on the verge of completing harvest, while Massachusetts has another ten percent of the crop to go. The only thing that stands between the farmers and harvest completion is the weather. Cool conditions have been ideal for potato storage. Tobacco growers have also reported optimum conditions for processing their crop.

FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	-- Percent Harvested --			Condition
	2002	2001	5-yr Avg	
Potatoes				
Maine	99	100	99	Good/Excellent
Mass	90	95	95	Good
Rhode Isl	99	100	95	Good/Fair
Silage Corn	95	95	90	Good/Fair
Sweet Corn	100	100	100	Good/Fair
Dry Hay				
Third Cut	95	90	90	Fair

This is the final New England Crop Weather report for 2002. This weekly report would not have been possible without the voluntary efforts of our reporters. We wish to thank all of them for their help in making this a timely, accurate report. We look forward to their continued support next May, when the 2003 crop season begins.

Although every report is important, special recognition is deserved by those who have been able to respond on a regular basis throughout the six-month growing season. Reporting is a significant commitment, and their faithful cooperation helps the New England Crop Weather release to be a consistent, high quality product.

For the Week Ending Sunday, October 20, 2002

The 42 stations shown below are limited by space but are well distributed across the region. All 86 stations appear on the Internet and in e-mail subscriptions.

STATION	AIR TEMPERATURE				CUM SINCE MAR 1 GROWING DEGREE DAYS				1-WEEK PRECIP			4-WEEK CUM PRECIP			
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	BASE-50F		BASE-60F		TOTAL INCHES	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL		DFN	DAYS
					TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN				INCHES	DFN		
MAINE															
Augusta_State_A	29	57	45	-4	2343	+256	1015	+269	1.88	+1.00	4	4.01	+0.76	13	
Bangor_Intl_Arp	24	56	44	-4	2187	+289	902	+280	1.58	+0.82	5	4.13	+1.16	12	
Bethel	25	53	41	-6	2050	+187	794	+198	1.55	+0.68	4	3.65	+0.41	10	
Caribou_Municip	25	57	41	-3	1674	+226	600	+222	1.64	+0.95	4	3.09	+0.25	15	
Dover-Foxcroft	24	48	37	-8	1621	+26	530	+78	1.65	+0.82	5	4.03	+0.63	15	
Frenchville	25	56	38	-4	1549	+206	549	+226	1.14	+0.44	5	2.12	-0.90	12	
Houlton	22	59	41	-3	1722	+208	612	+188	1.33	+0.63	5	3.64	+0.73	15	
Livermore_Falls	20	57	40	-5	2099	+534	863	+434	2.25	+1.40	5	4.74	+1.47	15	
Moosehead	24	52	38	-5	1534	+217	489	+179	1.92	+1.15	4	4.14	+1.02	12	
Portland_ME	27	61	47	-1	2338	+406	977	+340	2.50	+1.63	3	4.73	+1.51	14	
NEW HAMPSHIRE															
Benton	21	58	40	-6	1989	+286	757	+281	1.35	+0.60	4	3.14	+0.29	14	
Berlin_AG	24	56	40	-5	1907	+207	692	+195	2.26	+1.44	4	4.42	+1.36	12	
Concord	23	59	45	-3	2620	+536	1201	+462	1.18	+0.46	3	3.20	+0.47	14	
Diamond_Pond	21	50	36	-6	1342	+224	390	+185	1.53	+0.69	4	2.80	-0.57	16	
Keene_AP	21	59	44	-6	2526	+167	1104	+188	0.34	-0.36	3	3.05	+0.33	10	
North_Conway	25	54	41	-5	2354	+441	1031	+398	1.95	+1.02	4	4.03	+0.58	12	
Rochester	26	58	43	-7	2537	+273	1136	+284	2.17	+1.20	3	3.94	+0.47	11	
VERMONT															
Burlington_Intl	27	66	46	-2	2660	+442	1212	+371	2.52	+1.89	5	6.57	+3.95	12	
Island_Pond	22	61	40	-5	1763	+369	611	+286	2.05	+1.35	5	4.52	+1.72	15	
Montpelier	22	55	41	-5	2066	+332	786	+274	1.43	+0.80	4	3.62	+1.10	16	
Pownal	26	59	43	-4	2149	+323	813	+261	1.26	+0.42	4	5.85	+2.51	13	
Rochester	24	59	42	-4	2081	+354	800	+296	2.24	+1.40	4	5.89	+2.53	15	
Rutland_AG	24	62	43	-7	2185	-151	867	-33	1.30	+0.67	3	3.64	+0.90	14	
Sutton	22	57	39	-4	1832	+436	650	+313	1.68	+0.91	5	4.62	+1.67	16	
Townshend_Lake	27	56	43	-5	2392	+188	1000	+177	1.42	+0.67	4	4.86	+2.01	14	
MASSACHUSETTS															
Ashburnham	30	60	45	-2	2500	+616	1073	+475	1.68	+0.93	5	5.19	+2.37	13	
Boston/Logan_In	37	63	52	-3	3271	+459	1663	+435	1.07	+0.34	2	3.13	+0.30	11	
Greenfield	29	63	46	-6	2739	+170	1244	+193	1.27	+0.50	5	5.20	+2.12	14	
New_Bedford	32	67	52	-4	2952	+81	1362	+92	1.24	+0.46	4	3.71	+0.73	13	
Otis_AFB	36	66	51	-1	2820	+525	1274	+409	1.91	+1.04	4	6.57	+3.19	13	
Plymouth	30	66	50	-3	2787	+448	1278	+375	1.50	+0.59	4	3.98	+0.39	15	
Walpole	29	62	48	-3	2870	+546	1355	+461	1.41	+0.53	3	4.28	+0.88	13	
Chicopee/Westov	25	61	47	-8	3024	+54	1479	+129	0.63	-0.18	5	5.11	+1.98	14	
Worthington	24	57	42	-6	2204	+322	884	+309	1.40	+0.56	4	6.89	+3.60	14	
RHODE ISLAND															
Providence	36	66	52	-2	3282	+612	1666	+532	1.52	+0.68	3	4.16	+0.99	12	
Woonsocket	29	64	48	-1	2863	+581	1337	+491	1.68	+0.77	3	4.13	+0.64	12	
CONNECTICUT															
Bridgeport/Siko	37	66	52	-4	3356	+440	1703	+375	0.65	-0.05	4	4.48	+1.73	13	
Hartford/Bradle	28	63	49	-3	3252	+441	1648	+406	1.03	+0.26	4	5.32	+2.10	11	
Norfolk	28	57	43	-4	2513	+647	1067	+494	1.83	+0.95	5	5.73	+2.21	15	
Thomaston_Dam	27	64	46	-5	2787	+493	1257	+411	1.38	+0.49	5	5.60	+2.06	15	
Willimantic	28	63	49	-3	2913	+574	1360	+484	0.56	-0.35	4	3.41	-0.23	13	

STATE WEATHER SUMMARY

For the Week Ending Sunday, October 20, 2002

Summary based on NWS data.
 DFN = Departure From Normal (Using 1961-90 Normals Period).
 Precipitation (rain or melted snow/ice) in inches.
 Precipitation Days = Days with precip of 0.01 inch or more.
 Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit.

State	Air Temperatures				Precipitation	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	19	61	41	-5	0.59	2.87
NH	11	61	41	-5	0.31	2.62
VT	17	66	42	-5	0.82	4.05
MA	22	67	48	-3	0.50	1.92
RI	29	66	52	-2	0.59	1.68
CT	26	66	48	-5	0.56	1.83

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REPORTERS COMMENTS, By County: Reporters are from Extension Service (Ext), Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS), or other knowledgeable individuals.

CONNECTICUT - Howard Rood (FSA), Fairfield/Litchfield: Field work is coming to an end for the season. Most of the silage corn has been harvested. Field corn remaining to be harvested will be allowed to dry down for harvest as grain. **Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland:** Packing winter squash and apples for shipment, picking last of apples. Picking up plastic in fields and putting equipment away. Killing freeze on Tuesday. Pumpkins being shipped by the bin load and moving at farm stands. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** From hot and sunny to cold and gray in one week, frost has arrived and remaining corn for grain harvest is all brown. Apple picking winding down. Golds, reds and yellows of the fall leaves are enriching the view as harvest for 2002 comes to a close. **Nancy Welsh/Karen Lockman (FSA), New Haven:** We received our first frost this week. Heavy rains and cool temps. Apples are almost done, size and shape look good. Farms stands still busy with PYO and pumpkin sales, cider, donuts and pies. Leaves are turning. Summer is over.

MAINE - Marvin Hedstrom, Northern Aroostook: Potatoes: Fall work continues such as fall tillage, rock picking, lime spreading, soil sampling. A few acres of potatoes remain to be harvested. Weather is not cooperating - with rain, snow flurries and cold temperatures hindering the harvest of these last acres. Hopefully, they will get them out. The potato crop in storage looks very good with ideal conditions for cooling storages down. **Albert Dow (NRCS), Piscataquis:** Still some potatoes in the ground and some silage corn to be harvested. Rains have interfered with harvesting. Livestock are still grazing, though milk cows are eating some hay as a supplement. Some farms are carrying on building projects before the winter sets in. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Periodic rains have helped the dry conditions, although we have not had the soaking rains we need in Central Maine. Manure spreading to empty pits is in full swing. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** We've been getting the rain that we needed last summer. Wells have started to recover. We have enjoyed sharing our comments and reading how crops are doing in the rest of the state. We look forward to talking to you all in the spring. **Michael Tardy (FSA), Androscoggin:** Everyone is wrapping up. A few are still harvesting, some are preparing for the next round. Apple producers are still having pickers go at the trees. Market gardeners are busy getting corn stalks, gourds and pumpkins out to the public. Here's to another year. **Parker Rand (FSA), Cumberland/York:** Most harvest activities are winding down, some are chopping a little grass and there are still some apples coming off. It's time to prepare for winter. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** Soybeans and grain corn are left to harvest. Except for excessively well drained soils, crops were a little better than expected. With ice on the puddles, it is time for hot chocolate and a good wood fire. Spring seed catalogs are on the way!!! **Laura Rand (FSA), Oxford:** The frost is on the pumpkin! Cold, frosty nights have been the event of the past week. Producers have been busy getting in the last harvest of crops and apple picking still prevails. Even though we have received a few inches of rain, the ground water supply is still short but being replenished.

MASSACHUSETTS - Arthur Williams (FSA), Berkshire: Corn chopping nearly all done. Very little hay for forage, mostly in plastic tubes. Apples when harvested were very small in size. Very hard frost this week, some temps in the twenties. Several wet days this week, but only about an inch of rain. **Paul Russell (FSA), Southeast Massachusetts:** Cranberry growers continue to harvest and are disappointed at the small crop. Drought had more impact than previously thought. Fresh fruit growers are finding it difficult as the bogs are not drying because of the showers and dew. The late berries are very small but good quality. Vegetable growers are cleaning their fields, spreading rye, etc. Dairy farmers are chopping corn with low grain value due to drought. Shellfish growers continue to harvest with excellent quality but a soft market. **Kip Graham (FSA), Worcester:** Have a great winter everyone. The crops are all just about in. It wasn't the best year, but it wasn't the worst one either. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: Harvesting winding down; finished for many growers. This was not a growing season many growers will reminisce fondly about. The crop was less than anticipated: the drought, cranberry weevil and fruit rot took a major portion of the crop away. The price is still nowhere growers would like it to be. For some, this will have been the final cranberry harvest; they have no more resources to utilize. The cranberry industry is in a sad state of affairs. With some better decision making by the industry "leaders," there never would have been a downfall and the industry would be as viable as ever. **David Rose (FSA), Bristol:** It was a very good weekend for farm stands. All crops have been harvested. Farmers busy spreading

manure and planting cover crops. **John Devine (FSA), Franklin:** A heavy frost and temps in the 20's should bring most field activities to an end this week. Most forage and vegetable fields have been seeded with rye and their fields look great. Tobacco growers are reporting that the past two weeks have been ideal to process their crop. Forage producers in the eastern sections of the county are reporting feed losses from the drought. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** Potato, cabbage, grain corn and apple harvest continues. Fall clean up continues. Vegetable growers are removing plastic row covers off harvested fields and irrigation pipe. Dairy farmers are spreading manure and finishing up on their last cutting of hay. **Gary Guida, Worcester:** A good weekend for retail sales! Pumpkins and related fall products did really well. Consumers still cautious about dollar purchases. One more weekend to move about 40 pumpkins left - can I do it? Field work going slowly as daylight and physical energy waning. This has been a very challenging year, both physically and financially for northern Worcester County growers as strawberry crop was non-existent, drought, heat and soft economy were all factors this year. Perhaps next year will be better. Wishing all a happy and safe holiday season, write to you all next year!

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Amy Ouellette (Ext), Belknap: Pumpkin, winter squash, Indian corn, corn stalk and mum sales continued through weekend. The apple harvest is finished. Pastures are green again. **Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll:** With frost occurring on a regular basis, home gardens are all put to bed. Any remaining silage corn needs to get in the silo right away. The moisture we needed earlier in the season has finally arrived, better late than never! **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Silage corn harvest just about complete. A few farms are taking a fourth cutting on alfalfa or a late third cutting on grass. Too cool and the days are too short for making dry hay. Farms are also spreading manure, testing soils, and spreading lime. Ninety-degree temps in April, lots of rain in May & June, then drought conditions for the rest of the summer - farmers are looking for a 'normal' growing season, if such a thing ever existed. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Corn harvest about finished up in what's been a cold, wet week. Frosts now frequent. Apples, pumpkins, winter squash available at local farms. Personally sampled some terrific "Honey Crisps" grown at an orchard in Stark, some choice fruits nearly a pound in size! General farm clean-up activities, manure spreading happening. Pastures still pretty green. What started as a rather questionable growing season has turned out rather well. Corn rebounded to better than average yields despite flooding and slow start thanks to hot, sunny weather this summer. Hay crop also a considerable improvement after last year's double whammy of armyworms and drought. Still some nice leaf colors up here. See you next year. **Tom Buob (Ext), Grafton:** Corn harvest finishing. Still some 3rd and 4th cut to be harvested after hard freeze. Dry weather during August and Sept. reduced crop yields on corn silage, grass hay and some legume mixes. Drier soils were more affected. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Fruit: Apple harvest winding up. Finishing harvesting Red Delicious, Rome and other late maturing apples varieties. Only the final picking of Golden Delicious and Fuji remain. Pear harvest is done. Cleaning up dropped apples and putting orchard equipment away. Pick-Your-Own apple operations had a busy weekend! Vegetables: Finished harvesting pumpkins and squash with threats of cold weather. Most warm season vegetables are done along with sweet corn with the past hard freeze. Farmers kept busy pulling plastic mulch & tomato stakes, mowing and disking fields, cleaning up fields, planting cover, and putting equipment away. Field Crops: Corn silage cutting is complete, seeding cover crops on harvested fields. Some manure spreading and incorporating in soil is taking place. Markets: Farm stands had a busy weekend! World record size giant pumpkin exhibited at the New Hampshire Giant Pumpkin Weigh-Off, the pumpkin weighed 1,337 pounds and was grown in New Hampshire! **David Seavey (Ext), Merrimack:** Pumpkins harvested with good demand. Rainfall hurt apple sales. Plenty of apples available for retail sales. Field clean up and winter rye seeding taking place. Land clearing for expanded vegetable crop production. Silage corn harvest wrapping up. Warm season vegetables covered for frost protection. Some fall fertilization of nursery stock. Landscapers planting trees, shrubs and herbaceous perennials. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** Cleaning vegetable fields after the killing frost and planting rye. Harvesting apples. Liming hay fields and pastures. Selling apples, ornamental pumpkins, winter squashes, cool season vegetables, and mums. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** Rain showers continued last week. We need more precipitation to recharge the wells and fill up the ponds. Vegetable season is over, however one grower was still harvesting greenhouse tomatoes - the greenhouses have to

be heated in cold nights. Growers are busy with pumpkin sales. The pastures are looking much better due to rains we have received in the last few weeks. The vegetable season was difficult for most growers due to lack of rains. The fruit season is almost over. A few growers are still harvesting late apples. The fruit size this year was generally smaller due to lack of rain. Some growers also experienced frost damage to the flowers in early spring and this affected the fruit yield. The field cut flower growers had difficult time trying to control weeds. Because of the drought the weeds seemed to over-compete with the flowers. The flower stem lengths were also generally shorter than normal. Greenhouses and nurseries had an average season. The season started late because of cold weather which continued into late May and then was slowed down by very dry, hot weather in summer. The fall mum sales have been slow due to warm fall weather. We all hope for a better season next year.

RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport: Harvesting and grading potatoes and chopping field corn. Rain early in the week stalled up some field work. Doing some cover crop work. Plenty of pumpkins available, roadside stands look great. **Marilu Soileau (FSA), All Counties:** "Leaf peepers" were out in droves this past weekend. Rhode Island foliage is nearing its peak. The roads were flooded with weekend tourists. This was a good thing for farm stands and roadside sales of all types. One local producer with a "scary" corn field has reaped the benefit of TV ads, radio announcements and ticket giveaways for his "flashlight nights." The locals are attending and making many purchases while en route. Orchardists are still harvesting the late apple varieties such as Rome Beauty, Winesap and Baldwin. Silage corn continues to be harvested with below average yields. Christmas tree growers are gearing up with many already open for tagging. The Harvest Festival at a local mall was well attended with many types of products available for sale from Rhode Island farms. Some frost was reported in low lying areas in the past few days. Winter can't be too far behind!

VERMONT - Bill Snow (Ext), Orange: Corn chopping coming to an end. Fall spreading now underway. Putting away equipment for the winter and taking a breather from the work schedule. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** Area received it's first snowfall on October 21. Traces to 2 inches fell overnight. Almost all of crops have been

harvested. Most landowners say they will have adequate feed for the winter. Landowners are spreading manure to empty their manure storages for winter. **Lynette Hamilton (FSA), Windham:** The corn is all covered with the GoodYear tire doughnuts or in long white sausage tubes. The area neighborhoods have the sweet aroma of manure being spread. The geese are like Emeril, "Happy" on their way south with all the new planted winter rye to graze on. The area school children are carving up all the pumpkins as Halloween approaches. Apple growers have gone from picking to grading and squeezing for cider. So from Southern Vermont we want to wish everybody a good winter until spring. Goodbye!! **George Cook (Ext), Lamoille:** Heavy rains Wednesday and Thursday dropped 1 inch on the area. Corn chopping in most areas done or nearing completion. Manure being top-dressed. Nice foliage now well past peak; the rains raked a lot of the leaves off. **Jeff Carter (Ext), Addison:** Finished harvesting corn silage and hay crop silage for the year. Soybeans and shell corn ready for harvest. Field work includes manure spreading, lime spreading and fall tillage of some fields. **Richard Noel, Franklin/Grand Isle:** Cool, wet and miserable weather - only way to describe the weather up here. But we needed the moisture and the 3.25 inches of rain was needed to replenish the water table for the coming winter. Much of the crop work is done, except for some corn waiting for the combine and the field work also is winding down. Time to put Mother Earth to bed for the winter, she needs to rest up for next spring. Hopefully we'll get a nice blanket of snow to keep her warm 'til then. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** One-and-a-half inches of welcome rain this week. Most corn silage in the silo. Some trying to get a last cut of haylage in. Rain and frost is delaying this. Spoke to one farmer who got 5 cuts of grass from one field, for the first time. Forage supplies seem adequate, but not exceptional. **Chris Benedict (Ext), Chittenden:** Cold and wet. This explains the conditions up here this week. We had good moisture this weekend, but cold conditions for this time of year. **Sherwin Williams, Rutland:** All seeding of winter rye finished. All but the last seeding has come up. 1.632 inches of rain for the week. Good for top soil, but lots more needed before freeze up. All crops in except cabbage and turnips. Starting sales on squash and pumpkins. A good frost Tuesday morning, time to get the wood in and bank the house. Have a good week.

To receive this report every Monday evening, send an e-mail message to listserv@newsbox.usda.gov and in the body, type **subscribe usda-new-eng-crop-weather**

Aubrey R. Davis, Director
Statisticians: Emily McAllister, Robin Helrich **Stat Assistant:** Wayne Colpitt

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