



# New England Agricultural Statistics Service

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

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## Crop Weather

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September 22, 2003 - 4 pm

For week ending 9/21/03

### Unusually Warm September Week

**GENERAL CONDITIONS:** For the week ending September 21, 2003, there were 5.8 days available for field work across New England. Topsoil moisture was rated 1% very short, 17% short, 76% adequate, 6% surplus. Subsoil moisture was rated 1% very short, 19% short, 77% adequate, 3% surplus. Pasture condition was rated as 3% very poor, 8% poor, 42% fair, 39% good, 8% excellent. Unseasonably warm temperatures and sunshine dominated the week, allowing for much field work to be completed. Hurricane Isabel traveled a course southwest of New England, but still caused scattered precipitation and increased wind activity. Major farm activities included: cutting haylage and making dry hay; harvesting potatoes, small grains, corn silage, apples, peaches, pears, highbush blueberries and vegetables; finishing harvest of broadleaf and shade tobacco; desiccating potato vines; spreading manure; irrigating; monitoring fields; performing general farm maintenance.

**FRUIT:** Growers continued to harvest apples, peaches, pears, plums, fall raspberries and the last of this season's highbush blueberries last week. In order to prepare for the worst that Hurricane Isabel might have to offer, some growers picked tree fruit early to avoid later drops. Reports from across the region indicate tree fruit size is generally small this year. Massachusetts' cranberry growers completed white berry harvest and spent the week preparing for red harvest. Irrigation was necessary for some cranberry bogs.

#### FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	-- Percent Harvested --			Condition
	2003	2002	5-yr Avg	
Apples	45	45	45	Good/Fair
Peaches	85	95	95	Good/Fair
Pears	45	40	40	Good/Fair
Blueberries Highbush	99	100	99	Good/Fair
Cranberries, MA	<5	5	5	Good

**VEGETABLES:** Growers harvested cucumbers, eggplant, melons, peppers, pumpkins, squash, tomatoes, zucchini and other vegetables. Sweet corn harvest progress remained on schedule with the five-year average as harvest started to wind down. Harvested vegetable fields were cleaned up last week. Sweet corn, decorative fall crops and mums were popular items at local markets. Congratulations to Bruce and Mary Whittier of Henniker, NH for their world-record giant pumpkin, weighing in at 1,458 lbs. A defect will prevent it from competing at the Topsfield Fair.

#### SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
<b>Topsoil Moisture</b>			
Very Short	1	0	22
Short	17	21	35
Adequate	76	71	43
Surplus	6	8	0
<b>Subsoil Moisture</b>			
Very Short	1	0	32
Short	19	21	33
Adequate	77	75	35
Surplus	3	4	0

**FIELD CROPS:** Ideal weather accompanied third crop hay harvest and the final cuttings of the second hay crop. Silage corn harvest advanced at a rapid rate last week, as farmers took advantage of the mostly dry weather. Potato harvest in Massachusetts reached the half-way mark last week, while Rhode Island had a mere 15 percent left to harvest. Potato growers in Maine started to wrap up vine kill applications; harvest progress was behind normal last week, however the crop was rated in excellent to good condition. Farmers were nearing the end of small grain harvest, with only ten to twenty percent remaining by week's end. Tobacco growers in the Connecticut River Valley completed the harvest of broadleaf and shade tobacco crops, on schedule with normal harvest progress.

#### FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	-- Percent Harvested --			Condition
	2003	2002	5-yr Avg	
Barley, ME	90	90	90	Good/Fair
Oats, ME	80	85	85	Good/Fair
Potatoes				
Maine	15	25	25	Excellent/Good
Mass	50	55	60	Good
Rhode Isl	85	80	70	Good/Excellent
Silage Corn	25	35	35	Good/Fair
Sweet Corn	90	95	90	Good
Tobacco				
Shade	100	99	100	Good/Fair
Broadleaf	100	100	99	Fair/Good
Dry Hay				
Second Cut	95	99	95	Good/Fair
Third Cut	70	75	65	Good/Excellent

For the Week Ending Sunday, September 21, 2003

All 86 stations appear on the Internet and in e-mail subscriptions.  
Due to space restrictions, only 41 stations appear below. These stations are well distributed across the region.

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	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL	DFN	DAYS
	-----	-----	-----	-----	TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN	INCHES			INCHES		
<b>MAINE</b>														
Augusta_State_A	48	80	65	+7	2106	+128	886	+146	1.90	+1.18	4	3.33	+0.50	9
Bangor_Intl_Arp	43	83	65	+8	2072	+267	867	+248	0.45	-0.35	3	1.96	-1.24	6
Bethel	44	77	62	+5	1835	+55	680	+85	2.22	+1.45	4	3.81	+0.54	8
Caribou_Municip	42	84	63	+11	1667	+252	610	+232	0.43	-0.36	3	0.78	-2.60	9
Dover-Foxcroft	41	80	60	+6	1539	-7	505	+53	0.91	+0.00	3	1.50	-2.10	6
Frenchville	47	85	63	+12	1530	+215	520	+197	0.53	-0.31	3	0.66	-2.89	7
Houlton	39	85	63	+11	1735	+256	655	+231	0.29	-0.55	3	1.02	-2.50	7
Livermore_Falls	42	81	62	+8	1892	+376	760	+331	1.62	+0.78	4	2.99	-0.49	8
Moosehead	39	87	60	+8	1437	+155	469	+159	1.21	+0.37	3	1.69	-1.71	7
Portland_ME	50	76	65	+7	2055	+225	841	+205	1.81	+1.11	3	3.40	+0.60	7
<b>NEW_HAMPSHIRE</b>														
Benton	44	75	62	+7	1778	+150	640	+164	1.09	+0.39	3	3.17	+0.00	6
Berlin_AG	43	80	62	+7	1828	+192	677	+180	1.69	+0.94	2	3.28	-0.04	5
Concord	46	82	67	+9	2346	+365	1066	+330	1.44	+0.81	5	2.53	-0.16	11
Diamond_Pond	42	77	59	+8	1290	+199	387	+182	1.57	+0.66	6	2.83	-1.20	13
Keene_AP	48	79	67	+7	2256	+36	963	+58	1.21	+0.51	3	2.31	-0.68	11
North_Conway	47	77	63	+7	2055	+221	845	+212	1.38	+0.61	4	2.80	-0.50	7
Rochester	47	80	64	+6	2083	-45	863	+21	3.10	+2.35	3	4.38	+1.39	6
<b>VERMONT</b>														
Burlington_Intl	48	85	68	+11	2496	+388	1145	+310	0.18	-0.58	3	0.70	-2.61	9
Island_Pond	43	75	62	+9	1704	+362	602	+277	0.45	-0.30	5	1.70	-1.80	11
Montpelier	43	76	63	+8	1859	+203	688	+178	0.14	-0.49	3	1.44	-1.46	8
Pownal	44	78	63	+7	1958	+224	699	+150	1.30	+0.42	5	3.17	-0.51	13
Rochester	46	79	64	+8	1903	+262	696	+196	0.38	-0.47	3	2.50	-1.24	6
Rutland_AG	46	81	64	+6	2026	-167	793	-89	0.38	-0.44	3	2.26	-1.24	10
Sutton	43	75	61	+8	1705	+351	583	+246	0.71	-0.06	5	2.05	-1.45	11
Townshend_Lake	47	77	64	+5	2077	-4	823	+10	1.46	+0.69	3	3.10	-0.16	10
<b>MASSACHUSETTS</b>														
Ashburnham	48	78	65	+8	2190	+395	916	+318	1.55	+0.89	4	3.06	+0.25	10
Boston/Logan_In	58	83	69	+5	2651	+78	1307	+124	0.73	+0.03	3	1.55	-1.37	7
Greenfield	49	82	67	+6	2380	-8	1039	+14	2.30	+1.53	4	4.21	+0.99	12
New_Bedford	55	80	69	+5	2402	-206	1108	-107	1.03	+0.26	4	3.13	-0.27	9
Otis_AFB	59	79	69	+8	2395	+278	1132	+288	0.09	-0.68	2	2.78	-0.32	7
Plymouth	53	82	69	+8	2310	+140	1037	+152	1.10	+0.13	4	2.89	-1.02	9
Walpole	51	82	68	+9	2447	+267	1134	+256	1.59	+0.75	3	3.04	-0.50	7
Chicopee/Westov	46	81	67	+4	2475	-265	1119	-185	3.06	+2.22	4	5.15	+1.79	12
Worthington	43	77	63	+6	1887	+116	674	+104	2.75	+1.91	4	4.72	+1.22	10
<b>RHODE_ISLAND</b>														
Providence	57	83	70	+8	2650	+195	1292	+196	0.87	+0.06	4	3.16	-0.17	8
Woonsocket	51	83	69	+9	2412	+265	1103	+267	2.34	+1.45	5	4.66	+1.04	9
<b>CONNECTICUT</b>														
Bridgeport/Siko	57	81	71	+6	2737	+87	1369	+103	0.93	+0.23	3	2.49	-0.38	10
Hartford/Bradle	50	83	70	+8	2730	+109	1315	+102	2.11	+1.22	5	5.17	+1.58	12
Norfolk	47	77	64	+7	1977	+207	736	+166	2.22	+1.25	4	5.51	+1.50	10
Norwich	52	83	70	+8	2601	+145	1249	+173	1.55	+0.64	3	5.14	+1.50	8
Thomaston_Dam	46	82	66	+6	2444	+314	1081	+259	2.21	+1.30	5	4.49	+0.66	12
Willimantic	49	82	69	+9	2531	+357	1183	+327	1.44	+0.51	4	4.08	+0.42	9

**STATE WEATHER SUMMARY**  
For the Week Ending Sunday, September 21, 2003

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	38	87	62	+7	0.09	2.68
NH	35	88	62	+7	0.91	3.41
VT	39	85	63	+7	0.14	1.55
MA	43	84	67	+7	0.06	3.06
RI	51	83	70	+8	0.31	2.34
CT	45	83	68	+7	0.40	3.67

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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 - Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Major efforts made to harvest vegetables, fruit, hay, silage to reduce risk of loss from Isabel. Farmers sighed with relief Friday as the hurricane went Northwest. Heavy, brief rains and wind passed through and sunshine graced the weekend. Third Annual Celebrating Agriculture brought about 4,000 people to Woodstock to participate in events of the day, showcasing agriculture in the Quinebaug Shetucket National Heritage Corridor. **Richard Meinert (Ext), CT Cooperative:** More rain - just what we didn't need to start the corn harvest. Some corn chopped around the effects of Isabel. Not as much as farmers would have liked, but that has been the story all year.

**MAINE - Marvin Hedstrom, Northern Aroostook:** Potato harvest is in full swing in Aroostook County. Soil conditions are extremely dry. Last of potatoes are being desiccated with second application going on some fields. Potato yields might be down a little, however quality is very good. Size is a little smaller on late varieties but tuber set is high. Small grain harvest is nearly completed. **Pam Hickey (Ext), Central Aroostook:** All growers have started to harvest potatoes this past weekend. The weather has been very nice, although we could use some rain. The ground is very dry. Growers are continuing to apply vine kill - this should be done by the end of the week. Canola harvesting is approximately 70 percent done. Oats and barley are 60 to 90 percent done, respectively. It looks like its going to be a good harvest and an excellent looking potato crop! **Donna Lamb (Ext), Piscataquis:** Rains were welcome by most this past week. Potato farmers had delays in harvesting due to the rain. Pastures are picking up with the cooler weather and moisture. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Rain from the tropical storm didn't slow corn silage harvest by much. Pastures did green up quickly from the moisture. Apple harvest starting up and in full swing. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Silage corn harvest underway with good crop reported. Pumpkins and winter squash now at roadside stands. Fall work on blueberry fields continues. **Michael Tardy (FSA), Androscoggin:** Good weather for field work for most of this week. Rained on Tuesday. Farmers harvesting apples, sweet corn, pumpkins and squash. Silage corn harvest in full swing. Yields look pretty good. **Parker Rand (FSA), Cumberland/York:** The last full week of summer brought out the potato harvesters, the russets are still green but the rest are being dug. Corn choppers are busy, the apple harvest is going very well and the vegetables are about done. All in all, it's been a good year. **Laura Rand (FSA), Oxford:** Apple pickers are everywhere! Apple producers are reporting that it is a very good year and yields are projected at the average rate. Some apples are small, however, of good quality. Potato harvest is in full swing. Grain corn looks good, tall with heavy ears. Silage corn is being harvested with a vengeance. No reports of significant frost yet. Fall color is starting to appear on farm stands. Pumpkins, squash, and corn stalks demonstrate that fall is upon us.

**MASSACHUSETTS - Arthur Williams (FSA), Berkshire:** There was a lot of silage chopping Monday - Thursday. Heavy rain (0.75 inches) left the ground muddy and tough to get equipment around the field. Corn doesn't have many dry leaves. Dry haying also had a wet ground problem. Growers were harvesting pumpkins, close to end of sweet corn. Still no frost. Orchards in full swing picking the fruit. A nice looking crop but a little smaller. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: The in-between period between white berry and red berry harvest. Some irrigation has been necessary, as not much rainfall from the remnants of Isabel. Growers simply getting ready for harvest and waiting for color. Frost nights have been minimal. **David Rose (FSA), Bristol:** Another nice week as we avoid the hurricane. Many farmers were busy harvesting corn for silage just in case the hurricane paid us a visit. All crops still in good supply. Many fields being harrowed and cover cropped. **John Devine (FSA), Franklin:** All farmers are very thankful that hurricane rain and winds didn't effect the remaining crops to harvest. Following Isabel's departure, we had nice weather for the weekend. Field conditions are still a bit wet but nothing like they could have been. Silage, potatoes, onions,

apples, squash and fall ornamentals are all being harvested now. Road-side stands were very busy this past weekend. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** Fall harvest in full swing despite Hurricane Isabel's rainfall. She left us with 1 1/4" of rain. **Gary Guida, Worcester:** Harvesting all summer crops as warm weather continues! Pumpkins getting closer to all orange but not yet. Most consumers are preferring sweet corn over pumpkins. All crops at farm stands doing exceptionally well with retail sales. Fall mums still popular along with apples, honey and decorations. Grass herbicide applied to strawberry fields, no insect pressure to report other than squash bugs.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE - Amy Ouellette (Ext), Belknap:** Still harvesting sweet corn, tomatoes, red peppers, melons and other crops. Other than powdery mildew on vine crops, things look good. Strawberry plugs for annual system planted. Apple crop is excellent - now picking McIntosh and Cortland. Garden center and farm stand sales are strong. **Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll:** Second cutting is there, very few drying days available to get it in the barn. Corn silage chopping began last week, looks like an excellent corn silage year. Farm stands doing a less than brisk business in mums and pumpkins, should pick up once trees show more color. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** A couple days of rain, but lots of sunshine, too. Most corn looks good. More corn being chopped, but not quite in full swing yet. Regrowth on grass and alfalfa looks great - some farms might take a fourth cutting on early-harvested fields. PYO apples doing a brisk business. Vegetable stands offering pumpkins, tomatoes; cleaning up fields for fall. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Fairly warm week for this time of year, just a bit of rain, foggy mornings in valleys, no hard frost reports. Some corn silage being chopped, at various locations at dent stage and still others at milk. Haying and pasturing continues as farmers make use of favorable weather. Macs and Cortland apples now available, some orchards being thoroughly harvested in case of winds hurricane/storm may bring. Pumpkins, squash, late variety corn available, along with other late summer veggies. Now hearing of bear damage in apple orchards, too. **Tom Buob (Ext), Grafton:** Third cut finishing up and corn silage harvest beginning. Cool weather has slowed dry down of corn, although ears are showing dent. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** Five days suitable for field work. The hurricane only dumped 0.47 inches of rain in our area. Wind damage was negligible. Corn is still drying down and grass is still growing well. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Field Crops: Farmers continuing corn silage harvest. Hay cutting continued, along with making haylage. Some spreading manure on hayfields. Fruit: Orchardists harvesting McIntosh, Gala, Honey crisp and some early Cortland apples, peaches, pears, plums and fall raspberries. Vegetables: Harvesting wide array of summer and fall vegetable crops. Farmers are starting to clean up harvested fields, putting away irrigation equipment and planting cover crops. Pumpkin crop is light and winter squash yields vary from field to field and within a given field. Good demand for all vegetables continues. **David Seavey (Ext), Merrimack:** Apple harvest progressing well. More apples harvested in anticipation of high winds. Orchards were mowed for pick-your-own customers. Fall raspberries being harvested. Winter squash, pumpkins, mums and other fall crops being harvested. Landscapers are planting perennial plants and seeding lawns. Excellent weather for roadside stand sales. Winter rye seedings on vegetable land. Pasture seedings being made and dry hay was cut. Some field corn was harvested. Excellent silage corn yields although ears are a little small due to cool weather. No frost yet. Ideal disease conditions in winter squash and pumpkins as excessive growth prevented good air circulation. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** Good weather for outdoors work for most of the week. Hurricane Isabel gave rain and winds on Friday. Picking pumpkins, many apples varieties, peaches, plums, a whole array of vegetables and sweet corn. Haying and harvesting field corn. Late blight on tomatoes and powdery mildew on cucurbits are noticed in many fields. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** The week was dry but just a few showers at the end of the week. Farmers are now finished with the third cut and have started harvesting silage corn. Fruit growers are busy

harvesting apples, late peaches and fall raspberries. Vegetable growers continue to harvest a wide variety of vegetables. Pumpkin sales are picking up for both vegetable growers and garden centers. Garden centers and nurseries are very busy with fall mum sales.

**RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport:** Winter cover on potatoes, with harvest almost finished. Sweet corn, tomatoes and summer vegetables still coming in strong. Field corn looks good with chopping going well. Some needed rain this week was welcomed. Farm stands full of fall decorative crops, mums, corn stalks and summer vegetables along with hard squashes. **Dexter Miller (RC&D), All Counties:** Crops look great as many farmer are currently harvesting several fall crops. Mums, pumpkins, corn stalks, and apples are being harvested and available. Tomatoes, squash, eggplant and peppers are available and appear in excellent condition. Hurricane Isabel provided some threat to Rhode Island, but fortunately did not hit the area with more than mild wind and some rain.

**VERMONT - John St. Onge/Kim Peterson (FSA), Lamoyille:** Corn silage harvest made good progress last week along with second and third cut grass harvest. Soybeans are looking good but need to dry down further. Good year for pumpkins as they seem to be everywhere. Remnants of Hurricane Isabel left us with very little much needed rain. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** Landowners are spending long hours chopping corn this past week. The hurricane totally missed us so the conditions here remain dry. This has made it much easier to harvest corn. Almost all hay has been harvested now. By all accounts it appears to have been a good year for hay. **Lynette Hamilton/Perley Sparrow (FSA), Windham:** The hurricane of last week did little damage with only about an inch of rain. Field corn harvest is in full swing with better than average yields. Apple producers are reporting an average yield but they say apples have some of the

best color they have ever seen. Winter squash and pumpkins are beginning to show up at local roadside stands along with some late summer veggies. **Jeff Carter (Ext), Addison:** Harvesting corn silage. Finishing third crop haylage. Some manure spreading on cut hay fields. **Eric Winchester (FSA) Orange/Windsor:** This past week began with some rain Monday night and Tuesday morning. The middle of the week was sunny and dry. Friday we saw the residual effect of Hurricane Isabel with stiff breezes and a little rain. Overall, we got off rather easy from that storm. The principal field activity this week was the initial chopping of corn silage. The quantity seems to be ahead of last year. Most farmers are telling us that the crop is very green for this time of year. One farm reported half dent for 85-day corn, while other varieties had just started to dent. Most third cutting of grass, alfalfa and mixed forage crops has been completed. Overall, it looks like production was very good this year but with a possible decrease in quality due to delayed harvesting of these crops. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Hurricane Isabel dropped about a half-inch of rain and some wind on us on Friday afternoon and night. Some have begun opening corn fields in preparation of real chopping. Some late season haying. No frost yet. Seems unusually warm. **Chris Benedict (Ext), Chittenden:** Possibilities of Isabel coming our way brought our pickers in droves to avoid premature drops. Although, lower than expected winds combined with some moisture offered fair conditions. **Heather Darby (Ext), Franklin:** Another beautiful fall work week. In the Northwest region of Vermont, corn harvest is in full force. Hay being harvested for third cut. Manure being spread on harvested hay and corn fields. Pastures could use some rain. Soils are very dry. **Sherwin Williams, Rutland:** Rainfall this week: 0.211 inches. Great week to bring in the harvest. No frost, all crops maturing in good shape, half of the potato crop has been dug (good crop). Picking and storing squash and pumpkins. Shops full of all sorts of fall decorations. That good fall feeling is in the air. Hope for all New England that Isabel doesn't get too rough.

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

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