



New England Agricultural Statistics

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Crop Weather

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For week ending 5/15/05

When Will the Warm Weather be Here to Stay?

GENERAL CONDITIONS: For the week ending May 15, 2005, there were 5.2 days suitable for field work. Topsoil moisture was rated 6% short, 53% adequate, 41% surplus. Subsoil moisture was rated 9% short, 53% adequate, 38% surplus. Pasture condition was rated 6% poor, 39% fair, 43% good, and 12% excellent. Dry weather with abundant sunshine early in the week led to high productivity in the fields. A strong cold front moved into the area later in the week, bringing cool and damp conditions, gusty northwest winds, and temperatures plunging into the 20s and 30s. Wind advisories and freeze warnings were in effect Thursday night into Friday. More rain over the weekend slowed progress as fields needed to dry out again. Field work continued in southernmost states despite cooler temperatures. Growers in northern states are still waiting for more warmth and sunshine. Some livestock moved onto pasture this week. Grass is growing, but is still short due to the cooler weather. Major farm activities included: planting field corn, sweet corn, early vegetables and potatoes, spreading manure, fertilizer and lime, plowing and harrowing fields, pruning trees, fertilizing orchards, applying herbicides and fungicides, laying plastic, working in the greenhouses, and fixing fencing.

FRUIT: Warm weather early in the week advanced fruit bud development. Cool weather later in the week held bloom back. Total damage to blossoms from the mid-week frost and high winds will be determined over the next few weeks. Bees were out in the orchards of central and southern New England, but growers were concerned that the cool, cloudy weather limited their work. Apple producers sprayed on Thursday to protect from frost and scab infection. Peaches were in petal fall stage in Connecticut, while in bud stage to full bloom elsewhere. Pears in Massachusetts are in early bloom, while pears in other states are in full bloom to petal fall. High bush blueberries are beginning to bloom. Strawberries were irrigated to protect from frost. Cranberries in Massachusetts showed very little new growth in the uprights and many buds were still very tight. Wild blueberry growers in Maine burned drier fields, and applied fertilizer and sulfur where needed. Orchard growers spent the week planting fruit trees, pruning, fertilizing, spraying protective fungicide and insecticide, and watching for frost damage.

SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
Topsoil Moisture			
Very Short	0	0	2
Short	6	0	7
Adequate	53	51	84
Surplus	41	49	7
Subsoil Moisture			
Very Short	0	0	2
Short	9	2	4
Adequate	53	54	89
Surplus	38	44	5

were sprayed for weeds, but cooler weather brought worries of potential damage by pre-emergent herbicides. Asparagus and rhubarb were cut, but this week's frost set back harvest for several more days.

FIELD CROPS: Drier weather this week allowed for limited planting of small grains in Maine, but many farmers are still waiting for fields to dry out and soil temperatures to warm up to plant potatoes. Rhode Island potato planting had reached the halfway mark by week's end, compared with 45 percent planted (corrected) a week earlier. Field preparation and planting of field corn continued across New England as the weather permitted. Most states reported good conditions for field corn this week, while Maine growers, still recovering from recent flooding, reported very poor conditions for field corn. Grasses are green and forage crops are growing, but slowly due to cooler weather. Winter killed alfalfa in the Upper Connecticut River Valley was plowed down or re-seeded this week. Farmers spent the week spreading manure, fertilizing, plowing, discing, planting and harrowing fields that were not too wet.

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Stage	Fruit Set	Condition
Apples	Bud/FB	Avg	Good/Fair
Peaches	Bud/PF	Avg/Below	Fair/Good
Pears	EB/PF	Avg/Below	Fair/Good
Blueberries			
Highbush	Bud/EB	Avg	Good
Wild, ME	Bud	--	Good/Fair
Cranberries, MA	Bud	Avg	Good
Strawberries	Bud/EB	Avg/Below	Good/Fair

FB = Full Bloom, EB = Early Bloom, PF = Petal Fall

VEGETABLES: Planting of early season vegetables continued through the week, including peas, lettuce, greens, potatoes, carrots, cabbage, parsnips and cole crops. Growth was reported to be slow due to cool conditions. Some early sweet corn varieties needed to be replanted due to cold wet weather causing poor germination and seed rot. In fields where soil dried quickly, some growers were plowing, disking, fertilizing and laying down plastic mulch and drip irrigation tape. Sweet corn fields

FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	2005	2004	5-yr Avg	Percent Emerged	Condition
-- Percent Planted --					
Barley, ME	10	55	30	--	Fair
Oats, ME	10	55	30	--	Fair
Potatoes					
Maine	0	20	20		
Mass	60	75	70		Good
Rhode Isl	50	80	75	10	Good
Silage Corn	20	30	25	--	Good/ V Poor
Sweet Corn	25	20	30	10	Good/Fair
Tobacco					
Shade	0	0	0	--	
Broadleaf	0	10	5	--	
Dry Hay					
First Cut	0	0	0	--	

For the Week Ending Sunday, May 15, 2005

The 41 stations shown below were limited by space but were well distributed across the region.
All 86 stations appear on the Internet and in e-mail subscriptions.

STATION	AIR				CUM SINCE MAR 1				1-WEEK PRECIP			4-WEEK CUM PRECIP				
	TEMPERATURE				GROWING DEGREE DAYS				-----			-----				
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	BASE-50F	BASE-60F	TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN	TOTAL	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL	DFN	DAYS
MAINE																
Augusta_State_A	33	72	50	-5	48	-15	1	+1	0.10	-0.76	3	13.10	+4.16	27		
Bangor_Intl_Arp	27	74	50	-3	60	+17	0	+0	0.05	-0.79	2	8.99	+0.69	21		
Bethel	30	75	50	-4	29	-19	0	+0	0.49	-0.30	3	15.80	+7.15	25		
Caribou_Municip	27	75	48	-2	40	+10	0	+0	0.31	-0.39	2	9.19	+2.77	34		
Dover-Foxcroft	29	71	47	-4	16	-15	0	+0	0.30	-0.49	2	10.23	+1.89	22		
Frenchville	26	75	48	-1	30	+12	0	+0	0.33	-0.37	2	6.58	+0.28	32		
Houlton	26	76	47	-3	48	+18	0	+0	0.32	-0.45	2	9.93	+3.42	32		
Livermore_Falls	28	75	49	-3	27	-4	0	+0	0.21	-0.63	2	13.95	+4.72	26		
Moosehead	26	77	46	-1	16	+4	0	+0	0.34	-0.43	2	10.45	+3.05	31		
Portland_ME	35	65	49	-4	36	-3	4	+4	0.17	-0.67	3	14.37	+4.66	28		
NEW_HAMPSHIRE																
Benton	29	81	50	-3	36	-30	0	-5	0.17	-0.60	2	7.84	+1.09	29		
Berlin_AG	31	83	50	-2	32	-21	1	+0	0.30	-0.47	2	10.09	+2.15	24		
Concord	27	82	54	+0	88	+13	12	+8	0.01	-0.69	1	9.68	+2.46	28		
Diamond_Pond	23	74	45	-2	11	-7	0	+0	0.40	-0.45	3	12.37	+4.69	41		
Keene_AP	27	82	55	-2	94	-17	8	-4	0.00	-0.84	0	11.01	+3.05	25		
North_Conway	28	80	52	-2	40	-21	3	+1	0.36	-0.55	3	12.10	+2.23	29		
Rochester	29	78	51	-5	61	-28	8	+1	0.05	-0.86	1	14.11	+3.91	25		
VERMONT																
Burlington_Intl	31	80	54	-2	102	+2	15	+3	0.18	-0.52	2	5.46	-1.07	27		
Island_Pond	28	76	49	-2	29	-7	3	+3	0.54	-0.26	3	7.51	+0.75	34		
Montpelier	28	81	53	+1	75	+12	14	+10	0.15	-0.55	2	7.40	+1.12	32		
Pownal	28	82	53	+1	74	+5	6	-1	0.05	-0.96	1	9.48	-1.01	28		
Rochester	25	84	52	+0	50	-5	4	+3	0.24	-0.74	2	9.98	+0.90	25		
Rutland_AG	26	83	53	-4	56	-68	5	-13	0.11	-0.66	1	6.22	-0.41	26		
Sutton	27	77	48	-2	31	-1	2	+2	0.44	-0.33	2	8.74	+1.39	36		
Townshend_Lake	28	85	54	+0	65	-24	7	-2	0.10	-0.74	1	9.29	+1.03	28		
MASSACHUSETTS																
Ashburnham	30	79	54	+1	77	+20	6	+6	0.11	-0.66	2	12.35	+4.01	32		
Boston/Logan_In	39	76	54	-4	120	-8	15	+12	0.05	-0.71	1	7.52	-1.54	27		
Greenfield	29	75	55	-3	91	-37	10	+0	0.09	-0.75	2	10.45	+1.66	27		
New_Bedford	28	66	51	-7	74	-57	3	-1	0.04	-0.80	2	11.81	+1.59	31		
Otis_AFB	41	68	52	-2	123	+64	9	+9	0.15	-0.69	1	12.56	+3.18	29		
Plymouth	31	68	50	-5	68	+1	3	+3	0.15	-0.76	1	12.85	+2.51	27		
Walpole	33	76	54	-2	115	+22	7	+4	0.09	-0.68	1	11.19	+1.44	26		
Chicopee/Westov	34	77	58	-2	160	-26	22	+1	0.01	-0.90	1	9.08	-0.36	29		
Worthington	26	78	53	+0	61	-3	4	+2	0.05	-1.00	2	11.96	+2.38	33		
RHODE_ISLAND																
Providence	40	67	54	-2	119	+11	6	+5	0.00	-0.84	0	10.60	+0.44	27		
Woonsocket	31	73	54	-2	113	+24	7	+7	0.02	-0.89	1	14.28	+4.21	29		
CONNECTICUT																
Bridgeport/Siko	41	67	56	-2	153	+15	8	-5	0.03	-0.88	1	8.04	-1.52	29		
Hartford/Bradle	32	77	57	-2	173	+10	22	+2	0.05	-0.89	2	9.12	-0.46	30		
Norfolk	28	80	53	+0	88	+28	9	+9	0.06	-0.93	1	10.23	-0.71	29		
Thomaston_Dam	32	77	55	+0	103	-2	9	+1	0.08	-0.94	1	10.06	-0.42	29		
Willimantic	31	73	55	-1	125	+22	8	+1	0.00	-0.98	0	9.81	-0.38	30		

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 WEATHER SUMMARY
For the Week Ending Sunday, May 15, 2005

State	Air Temperatures				Precipitation	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	22	79	48	-4	0.02	0.49
NH	10	86	51	-2	0.00	0.70
VT	17	85	52	-1	0.01	0.91
MA	26	84	53	-2	0.00	0.26
RI	31	73	53	-3	0.00	0.06
CT	27	80	55	-2	0.00	0.16

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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: It was a cold, wet week. Frost mid-week may have damaged peach and apple crops. We need warmer weather to make the grass grow. **Jude Boucher (Ext), Tolland:** Rain for only one day last weekend, frost on Friday morning. **Lorriane Los, Univ of Connecticut:** Apples were in full bloom this week. Pollination conditions were fair to good with some cool weather and one very windy day (Thursday, 5/12). **Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland:** Fields dried out allowing tillage to progress nicely. Frosts Monday through Wednesday were capped with a hard Freeze on Thursday was tough on fruit trees which were near fullbloom. Soil temps still cool. Strawberry crop was also hit by freeze despite pumping water on most nights. **Frank Himmelstein (Ext), New London:** Field corn- manure being spread, field discing continues, some fields being planted. Field work continues despite the unusually cold weather for this time of year. The upcoming week's weather does not look good for getting corn that already has been planted to emerge rapidly out of the ground. Pre-emergence herbicides in this weather depending on the type and rate applied could injure corn and reduce yields compared to later planted corn. **Marsha Jette (FSA), New London:** Cold and wet. Some early sweet corn had to be replanted. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Macs and Empires in full bloom, frost hit, fruit concerns and loss of cutting of asparagus, spraying for scab, IPM scouting for bugs in orchard, summer pruning to shape, irrigated strawberries to protect from frost, good weekend for bedding plant sales, Corn continues to be planted, large equipment on the roads, out and about to get the job done. **Joyce Meader (Ext), Windham:** Fertilizing and liming hay fields, studying the new crop of weeds to control. Corn planted on some farms, others are worried about cold soils causing the seeds to rot before germination. **Richard Meinert (Ext), CT Cooperative:** Warmer and dryer conditions this week allowed manure spreading and corn planting to return to normal. Multiple inches of rain over the weekend will again slow things down going into next week as fields will need to dry out again.

MAINE - Marvin Hedstrom, Northern Aroostook: Potatoes and small grains: Very little activity in the fields, a few acres of small grains planted. Growers still waiting for fields to dry out and soil temperatures to warm up. Planting is going to be late this year. **Steve London, Southern Aroostook:** Potatoes and small grains: Just getting started, preparing fields in high grounds. Waiting for dry weather. **Albert Dow (NRCS), Piscataquis:** Very little tillage done yet. Some have become stuck trying to till. Wednesday 75 plus degrees. After that very cold with drying wind. Some livestock are already on pasture. **Donna Lamb (Ext), Piscataquis:** Some fertilizer and manure was spread on fields. Livestock are being turned out on the best drained pastures. **Kathy Hopkins (Ext), Somerset:** Two days of sun then rain again so little field work possible. **Janet King (FSA), Somerset:** Rain, rain go away. Corn is being planted, we need sunny days. **Donald Burke (FSA), Waldo:** Manure spreading has been done during the week. Cows have been turned out to pasture. Continued wet, cloudy and cool weather has slowed up spring plantings. Fields are still wet. Working in the woods is difficult with the ground so wet. Most areas got a frost during the week. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Some burning was done during the week on fields that were dry. Fertilizer and sulfur application on blueberry fields began. Some vegetables have been planted. Potted plants have moved from the greenhouse to the market. Cold, cloudy weather has kept blueberry and apple blossoms from opening. A late frost during the week, even at higher elevations may have done some damage. **Sandy Truslow (FSA), Cumberland/York:** Weather cold and wet, waiting to start planting. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** It is still too wet. Field work is being slowed down. The grass is green & growing like crazy. **Marcia Hall (FSA), Oxford:** Oxford County needs sunny weather to get the crops into the ground. Potato farmers are trying to get crops planted but still too wet in areas. Some field corn has been planted. **Laura Rand (FSA), Oxford:** The rain just keeps falling! Producers are busy trying to get fields tilled and planted. Some of the quicker drying fields are tilled and starting to be planted.

MASSACHUSETTS - Arthur Williams (FSA), Berkshire: Preparing

fields for crop planting (corn, sweet corn, grains) Not much moisture Sunday with a half inch of wet stuff. Ground was drying nicely. Applying fertilizers, orchards are spraying what & when needed. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cool conditions have delayed normal development in the cranberry vines' growth as well as insect development. Very little new growth in the uprights and many buds are still very tight. Growers have not begun to sweep for insects for the most part. Two frost nights last week, one was predicted to be much worse than it was. Plenty of water in the reservoirs and ponds. Pre-emergent herbicides still being applied. **John Devine (FSA), Franklin:** A heavy frost on Friday morning affected all crops without frost protection. Fruit growers have said that it's too early to determine the extent of the damage but it may be significant. Cool and damp weather has further affected asparagus production and all planting schedules. Forage producers have reported that cool soil temps have delayed corn planting. These same conditions have slowed hay growth to the point where 1st cut may be late. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** Crop fields are drying out some due to part of week heavy rains. Season temperatures are eight to ten degrees below normal. Heavy freeze Friday morning. Strawberry growers were irrigating their fields for frost protection. Asparagus crop is being reported maturing slowly because of the very cool weather. Vegetable growers are planting potatoes, sweet corn, peas, carrots, lettuce, cabbage and parsnips. Dairy farmers are starting to plant corn silage and the hay crop looks very good. **Gary Guida, Worcester:** Finally; almost a week without rain. Plowing, planting corn, pre-plant herbicide applications, fitting fields and laying plastic. Hard freeze here this week (22deg.) may have damaged most of our strawberry crop. Plant sales still very strong especially, on Saturday as citizens came out to support local growers. Very productive week.

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Amy Ouellette (Ext), Belknap: Things are drying out some. Weather cool. Raspberries very slow to leaf out; many canes leafing out bottom first. Winter kill? Record or near record cold May 13. Hopefully crops not far enough long to be hurt by freeze. **Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll:** No doubt about it now, we've got another cool wet spring on our hands. Fruit growers doing what they can to spray for Mummyberry and Scab, weather conditions don't always allow for timely spray application. Rainy weekends really putting a crimp in plant and garden center sales. Pastures get taller by the day, but most are not dry enough to turn animals out on. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Mostly sunny during the week, even a couple warm days, with a little rain over the weekend. Farms making progress finishing field prep and planting field corn. Grass continues to look good. Vegetable farms still transplanting and seeding crops. A heavy frost may have caused some injury in apples and strawberries, too early to tell how much. Pattern of sunny weekdays and rainy weekends is taking a toll on greenhouse sales. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** A cold and windy week ending with rains this weekend, making for difficult corn planting and field preparation. Market gardens, high tunnel operations starting up. Haylands and meadows greening up, some lime and fertilizer begin top dressed. Behind for the average this time of year. **Tom Buob (Ext), Grafton:** Corn planting continues as weather permits. Grass growth continues slowly but should increase in growth rate soon. Some warmer weather but cool in general. Field prep continues except on wetter fields. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** Field work is in full swing. Winter killed alfalfa pieces are being re-seeded or plowed down. Farmers are planting their corn. So far, soil moisture is generally adequate, but we could use more moisture. The ground is drier than normal for this time of the year. One farmer that I spoke to on Tuesday, mentioned that he had to stop plowing because the ground was still frozen on one of his river bottom fields. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Weather: Hard Frost on the morning of May 13 did some damage to fruit blossoms in the county. It will be a couple of weeks before total damage can be determined. Fruits: Made sure bees were in apple orchards beginning of week. Peaches were in petal fall stage and apples are at full bloom in the Hollis area. Pear are at full bloom to petal fall. Blueberries beginning to bloom. Some orchardists concerned about the cooler cloudy weather and at bees did not work the apple blossoms. Planting fruit trees, raspberries, blueberries and strawberries. Orchardists making sure to have

protective fungicide and insecticide sprays applied. Vegetables: Farmers making successive plantings of sweet corn and planting potato. Continue early season vegetables (peas, lettuce, greens, cole crops) planting. In fields where soil dries quickly, some growers were plowing, discing fertilizing and laying down plastic mulch and drip irrigation tape. Weed spraying sweet corn fields. Harvesting asparagus on weekend Field Crops: Spreading manure, plowing, discing, fertilizing and planting corn on fields that are not too wet. Grasses and forage crops are growing slow due to cooler weather. **Sadie Puglisi (Ext), Merrimack:** Corn that has been started in the greenhouse is planted. Garlic is growing tall. Could use some sun. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** Harvesting asparagus and rhubarb. Preparing vegetable fields by plowing , discing and fertilizing. Planting early sweet corn varieties and other early vegetables. Seeds not germinating because of lack of heat. Strawberries under row covers are in bloom. Uncovering strawberries bed. Thursday afternoon, covering the strawberry with straw, Reedy or overhead irrigation because of the threat of frost; very high wind that same day blowing away some of the fruit trees blooms. Bedding plants look gorgeous but sales at greenhouse operations and garden centers are slow because of the rain on the week-end. **Pam Marvin (FSA), Sullivan:** Below normal temperatures is slowing down germination of corn and early vegetables. Too early to tell what the cold temps and frost late in the week will do to the strawberries, blueberries and apples. They are all in their bloom stage. Some irrigation was used to keep the frost off. More and more silage corn fields are being prepared and planted. Hay fields have greened up nicely, need warm weather to advance the growth. First cut of haylage could be good. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** A moderately nice week. Sunshine most of the week and rain showers by the weekend. Pastures and hayfields doing very well. Some farmers working the fields and planting corn. Fruit growers applying preventative sprays against scab. Others trying to finish pruning of peaches and raspberries. Vegetable growers planting peas and other cool season crops. Greenhouses and Garden Centers trying to make for lost business of last week which was very wet.

RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport: Still some cold weather and a frost this week, but no rain and lots of field activity. Potatoes still being planted, fields being harrowed and plowed and

readied for summer planting. Spraying fungicides on Christmas trees and thinner on apples. Manure being spread.

VERMONT - John St. Onge/Kim Peterson (FSA), Lamoille: Fairly decent week for fieldwork with fields being planted to corn and other spring seedlings. Pastures are now able to provide some decent feed. Vegetable growers are very busy with lettuce and other cool weather crops in the ground. Still waiting for more warmth and sunshine. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** Drier weather this week has allowed Landowners to work corn fields again. Some no-till corn has been planted. I am starting to see more cows out on pasture this week. Grass is still short due to the cool weather. A few warm days will change this. **Perley Sparrow (FSA), Windham:** Another cool week has passed in Windham. Corn has a hard time to germinate with this type of weather. We received a hard frost on Thursday many apple producers sprayed their apple to protect them. Vegetable grower are reporting slow growing because of the cool condition. **Terence Bradshaw, Univ of Vermont:** Warm weather early in the week advanced bud stages into late pink with some king blooms open. Cool weather later in the week which has persisted has held bloom development back. Wet weather over the weekend likely caused scab infection period. Good spray conditions existed Friday May 13 and Saturday May 14 which allowed for protective spray application before rains commenced. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Warm early in week, cool and damp later in week. We avoided the freezes that had been predicted. Grass is growing, but still not tall enough to move in the wind. Farmers who plant corn are getting some seed into the ground. Some heifers out, still have not seen milk cows out on grass- not quite enough there. Fixing fence and getting corn ground ready to plant are big activities. **Heather Darby (Ext), Franklin:** Dry weather last week led to a flurry of field activity. Fields were prepared and planted for corn. Manure and fertilizer were being spread. Corn fields were being sprayed for weeds. Cows were being turned out to pasture. **Sherwin Williams, Rutland:** Harrowing, fertilizing sweet corn fields, all potatoes planted. Early garden crops planted. No moisture for the week. Two real warm days, than a hard frost May 12. Started cutting asparagus, but hard frost will set it back for several days. Now we need rain and warm weather.

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