Rain Rain Come Today

GENERAL CONDITIONS: For the week ending September 9, 2007, there were 6.5 days suitable for field work across New England. Topsoil moisture was rated 14% very short, 43% short, 42% adequate, and 1% surplus. Subsoil moisture was rated 11% very short, 36% short, 53% adequate, and 0% surplus. Pasture condition was rated 3% very poor, 28% poor, 42% fair, 24% good, and 3% excellent. Temperatures over the past week varied widely, with highs ranging from the upper 60s to low 90s; the average was in the upper 70s to low 80s. Skies were partly cloudy throughout the first part of the week. Much needed rain fell in the northern states over the weekend, but the southern states received very little to no rain, leaving most areas very dry and crops showing signs of drought stress. The dry weather provided good conditions for harvesting second and third cuttings of hay and for curing tobacco in the barns. Vegetable and fruit growers were irrigating where possible and noted again that irrigation reserves were dwindling.

FRUIT: The apple harvest is in full swing with 20 percent harvested at week’s end. Pick-your-own operations were very busy as Sunday was “Apple Sunday” in Maine. Peaches and pears were 75 and 15 percent harvested, behind last year and normal. All three tree fruit crops were reported in good condition. Orchardists were busy overhead irrigating, monitoring for pests, and mowing orchard floors. The highbush blueberry harvest progressed very little this past week and was 95% complete by the end of the week, same as the prior week. Cranberry growers reported being worried the lack of rain will not provide enough water for harvest and frost protection. Despite the dry conditions, the fruit quality remains good and the crop was reported in good to excellent condition. The fall raspberry harvest continued and the fruit quality remains good and the crop was reported in good condition. The fall vegetable harvest was in full swing this past week. Growers were picking tomatoes, summer and winter squash, cucumbers, sweet corn, carrots, peppers, eggplant, beans, broccoli, greens, and zucchini. Vegetable producers were busy irrigating newly renovated strawberry beds.

VEGETABLES: The fall vegetable harvest was in full swing this past week. Growers were picking tomatoes, summer and winter squash, cucumbers, sweet corn, carrots, peppers, eggplant, beans, broccoli, greens, and zucchini. Vegetable producers were busy irrigating newly renovated strawberry beds. The highbush blueberry harvest progressed very little this past week and was 95% complete by the end of the week, same as the prior week. Cranberry growers reported being worried the lack of rain will not provide enough water for harvest and frost protection. Despite the dry conditions, the fruit quality remains good and the crop was reported in good to excellent condition. The fall raspberry harvest continued and the fruit quality remains good and the crop was reported in good condition. The fall vegetable harvest was in full swing this past week. Growers were picking tomatoes, summer and winter squash, cucumbers, sweet corn, carrots, peppers, eggplant, beans, broccoli, greens, and zucchini. Vegetable producers were busy irrigating newly renovated strawberry beds.

FIELD CROPS: Field crop conditions were varied this past week. For the southern states, the lack of rain has dried up pasture, hay, and field corn crops. The lack of rain has caused field corn to mature quickly and farmers were busy harvesting in order to save as much of the crop as possible. The harvest was 20 percent complete by week’s end, well ahead of last year and normal. For northern states, the rain over the weekend provided needed moisture and field crops were reported in good condition. The Maine potato harvest began this past week and Rhode Island and Massachusetts potato harvests progressed nicely as well. All potatoes were reported in good condition. Broadleaf and shade tobacco harvests were 95 percent complete at weeks end and growers reported the crops were curing well in the sheds. Oat and barley harvests were still behind last year and normal, but were reported in good condition. Farmers were busy spreading manure on hay and harvested corn fields and baling hay.
### State Weather Summary

For the week ending Sunday, September 9, 2007

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**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.

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CRANBERRIES: The drought continues and growers are beginning to be concerned about adequate water supplies for water harvest and frost protection. We were hoping to get something from Gabrielle, but that's not going to happen. Fruit quality continues to hold up pretty well so far. White harvest started last week, with more happening this week.

EMILY TCHORZ (FSA), BRISTOL: Lack of rain and high temps throughout August and now into September have affected all crops in the county. Water supplies are very strained and all crops are suffering. Farms with irrigation capabilities are running out of water. Drought conditions exist in all areas.

TAYLOR SMIAROWSKI, JR. (FSA), FRANKLIN/HAMPSTEAD/HAMPDEN: Another very dry week with hardly any rain. Irrigation pumps are still running due to the very dry conditions. Harvesting all types of fall crops including Indian corn, silage corn, sweet corn, winter squash, pumpkins, gourds, apples, peaches, pears, potatoes, parsnips, carrots, and fall raspberries. Tobacco crop is all harvested and is curing very good in the sheds.

DOROTHY PERKINS (Ext), MERRIMACK: Pumpkins have turned early. Sales are low due to time of year. Rain is needed in many areas but crops are not suffering to the extent that significant harvest will be lost. This week’s rain and cool weather will help tremendously. Growers report a good year of sales for tomatoes, corn and beans. This year’s hay is the best in many years, almost everyone got a second cut and great weather for processing it. Silage

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corn is doing very well this year also. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** Another very dry, hot and humid week. On Saturday evening few towns were hit with severe thundershowers with gusty winds knocking trees down. Sunday some communities received steady, drizzling rain for part of the day. Picking early apple varieties such as Gala, Cortland, McIntosh; peaches, blueberries, fall raspberries, sweet corn, tomatoes and a whole array of vegetables. Fields are dry. Some fields are being irrigated while crops growing on non-irrigated fields are showing drought stress. Second hay cut and pastures are suffering from the drought. Mum are now available at many local retail outlets.

**RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport:** Lots of second cut finished this week and some third. Both crops are pretty thin. Sweet corn still coming in strong, along with all summer vegetables. Potato harvest is OK, some skins tender due to dry weather. Farmers markets and roadside stands doing very well.

**VERMONT - John St. Onge/Kim Peterson (FSA), Lamoille:** Another hot, dry week just ended on a much needed moist note with a light soaking rain on Sunday. Corn silage harvest started in this area last week under ideal conditions. Quite a bit of dry baled hay was made last week. The grass has been struggling and needs any rain we can get to improve third cut yields. Same story for pastures. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** The nice weather last week allowed a lot of really high quality third cut hay to be harvested. A few of the larger corn growers started to chop corn. Mostly just opening up the fields and checking equipment. We haven't had a frost yet but the corn appears to be mature and is drying down. Nice gentle rains over the weekend will help the drier conditions we had started to experience. Pastures are still producing fairly well. A really good grazing year over all. **Jeffrey Carter (Ext), Addison:** Corn silage harvest underway. Fast and furious as corn is drying down very quickly. Started out a great year for planting, great start for early growth, then late season drought conditions on clay soils is making for quicker than normal crop maturity. Good yields reported. Soybeans also early senescence and beans in pods filling nicely, but early. Hay harvest pretty much over. Some manure being spread on hay and harvested corn fields. Anticipate early fall plowing of clay soils. **Julie Jacque (FSA), Windham:** Very dry conditions, pastures and grasses have slowed growing. Corn ears slightly stunted. Cucurbits being "stemmed" and rowed for putting into bins.

**AUGUST CROP WEATHER SUMMARY:** Temperatures in the beginning of August were average to above average, ranging in the 80s to 90s. Heavy thunderstorms with hail and tornado like winds hit the area on August 3, causing damage to potato, tobacco, corn, vegetable, and tree fruit crops. Much needed rain showers occurred throughout the second week of August, bringing moisture to dry fields. Cooler temperatures arrived mid-month, with frost warnings in some areas of New England. The below average temperatures hindered field corn development, but were very beneficial to both wild and highbush blueberry fields, keeping fruit firm for harvest. Rainfall was occasional and light; growers reported that fields were very dry and several crops were showing signs of drought stress. The last week of August began with cool temperatures (ranging in the 70s to 80s) and cloudy skies, hindering the dry hay harvest. The end of the week boasted record high temperatures in some areas and clearer conditions, allowing field work to be completed and spurring field corn growth. By month’s end, many areas in New England were very dry despite sporadic showers throughout the month. Rainfall at most locations was one-to-two-inches behind normal. Vegetable producers were busy harvesting a wide array of summer crops and irrigating dry fields throughout the month. Sweet corn harvest was in full swing and was 75 percent complete by month’s end. The dry conditions hindered field corn yields and caused poor ear development, as well as drying out the stalks. The Massachusetts potato harvest began mid-August and was ten percent complete by month’s end. The Rhode Island potato harvest has reached the half-way mark and the Maine potato harvest was just beginning at month’s end. Potatoes in all three states were reported in good condition. Potato farmers were busy scouting for pests and began vine killing. Late blight was identified in southern Aroostook County and farmers were on a seven-day spray schedule throughout the month. The oat and barley harvests in Maine began mid-month and were 20 and 25 percent complete at month’s end, considerably behind last year’s harvest for the same time period. Both crops were reported in excellent condition. Shade and broadleaf tobacco harvests continued through August with both crops reported in good condition. Shade tobacco was 75 percent picked by August 27 and broadleaf was 55 percent picked, behind last year and normal for both crops. The first cut of dry hay was complete the third week of August. The second (80 percent complete) and third (30 percent complete) cuts were progressing nicely, but growers have reported lower yields due to the dry weather. The wild blueberry harvest began the first week of August and was 95 percent complete by the end of the month. The highbush blueberry harvest was also 95 percent complete at month’s end and both crops were reported in good condition. The pear harvest in Connecticut began the last week of August and was five percent complete at month’s end. Apples and peaches were ten and 50 percent complete, respectively. All three fruit crops were rated in good condition. However, the lack of rain throughout the end of the month forced some tree fruit growers to overhead irrigate their orchards.

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