

Crop Progress & Condition



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

Gary R. Keough, Director

Phone: 603-224-9639

Fax: 603-225-1434

www.nass.usda.gov/nh

nass-nh@nass.usda.gov

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For week ending 5/23/10

Favorable Weather Aids Agricultural Activity

GENERAL CONDITIONS For the week ending May 23, 2010, there were 6.0 days available for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated 1% very poor, 6% poor, 29% fair, 50% good, and 14% excellent. The week began sunny, with above average daytime temperatures mainly in the 70s and variable nighttime temperatures ranging from the upper 20s to mid-50s. Temperatures cooled on Tuesday and Wednesday and allowed for much needed rain during both days. At least half an inch fell in most of New England, and 1.56 inches was reported in eastern Connecticut. Summer-like conditions arrived on Thursday with maximum temperatures in the 70s and 80s. Above average temperatures and dry conditions persisted throughout the rest of the week for northern New England. Temperatures in the southern States were closer to average levels during the weekend. Total rainfall for the week ranged from 0.01 to 1.56 inches.

FRUIT: Fruit trees were finishing the blooming stage, ahead of schedule. Extent of frost damage to all fruits was still being assessed this week. Initial reports suggest that losses were variable. Fruit conditions, particularly in Connecticut, deteriorated after the heavy frosts of mid-May. Irrigated strawberry fields were less prone to frost damage. Heavy rain from the 18th to 19th caused minor flooding on some cranberry bogs. All types of berries were still several days ahead of schedule. Orchardists were monitoring for pests and applying fungicide and insecticide sprays as needed. Fruit growers were also busy pruning trees, planting new fruit trees, and mowing the orchard floors.

VEGETABLES: Extent of frost damage to asparagus and other vegetables is still being assessed. Some vegetables hit by frost were replanted. Farmers took advantage of the dry weather and planted beets, radishes, turnips, tomatoes, egg plant, peppers, sweet corn, cabbage, and squashes. Farmers were also busy harvesting asparagus, greens, spinach, scallions, radishes, and rhubarb. Some growers began harvesting cucumbers and cherry tomatoes in high tunnels.

FIELD CROPS: Farmers were busy working in the fields due to last week's favorable weather. As a result, almost all potatoes, oats, and barley were planted by week's end, far ahead of last year and normal. Early planting allowed these crops to emerge much earlier in the season with the majority of oats and barley already emerged. Field corn planting was 60% finished by week's end, up from 25% reported a week earlier. Pasture and hay grew very well last week thanks to warmer temperatures. Chopping of hay was a primary focus for many growers last week. Shade tobacco transplanting was in full swing last week and was 80% complete by the end of the week, well ahead of schedule. Farmers were also busy plowing, disking, fertilizing, mowing haylage, and cutting rye for straw.

SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
Topsoil			
Very Short	7	2	3
Short	29	19	28
Adequate	62	76	67
Surplus	2	3	2
Subsoil			
Very Short	5	1	2
Short	17	14	24
Adequate	74	80	72
Surplus	4	5	2

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Development	Fruit Set	Condition
Apples	PF	Avg/Below	Good/Fair
Peaches	PF	Average	Fair
Pears	FB/PF	Avg/Below	Fair/Good
Blueberries			
Highbush	FB/PF	Average	Good/Fair
Wild	EB/FB	Average	Good
Cranberries,	BS	N/A	Good
Strawberries	EB/PF	Average	Good/Fair

BS= Bud Stage, EB= Early Bloom, FB=Full Bloom, PF=Petal Fall,

FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	2010	2009	5-yr Avg	Condition
--Percent Planted--				
Barley, ME	95	85	60	
Oats, ME	90	85	60	
Potatoes				
Maine	90	80	50	
Mass	99	95	90	
Rhode Island	100	90	90	
Silage Corn	60	50	50	
Sweet Corn	45	50	45	
Tobacco				
Broadleaf	<5	5	10	Good
Shade	80	65	50	Fair/Good
--Percent Emerged--				
Barley, ME	75	30	15	Good/Fair
Oats, ME	70	25	15	Good
Potatoes				
Maine	10	<5	<5	Good
Mass	70	45	30	Good
Rhode Island	60	25	30	Good
Silage Corn	10	10	10	Good
Sweet Corn	25	30	25	Good/Fair
-- Percent Harvested --				
Dry Hay				
First Cut	10	10	<5	Good/Fair

Weather Summary For New England Agricultural Statistics

Prepared By AWIS.com

For the Period: Monday May 17, 2010
 To: Sunday May 23, 2010

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	43	80	59	+3	256	+143	40	+33	0.49	-0.35	2	1.53	-1.98	11	
Bangor_Intl_Arp	38	82	58	+4	225	+143	33	+31	0.61	-0.20	1	1.81	-1.44	9	
Bethel	41	80	57	+3	189	+99	30	+25	0.68	-0.16	2	3.56	+0.25	12	
Caribou_Municip	37	79	57	+5	143	+84	24	+24	0.51	-0.19	1	2.63	-0.09	12	
Dover-Foxcroft	36	78	55	+3	132	+71	15	+15	0.42	-0.38	1	1.91	-1.35	11	
Frenchville	38	81	57	+7	123	+82	21	+21	0.00	-0.71	0	2.15	-0.61	11	
Houlton	32	78	56	+4	138	+78	25	+25	0.83	+0.06	1	2.43	-0.52	10	
Livermore_Falls	34	79	56	+3	163	+102	18	+18	0.78	-0.06	2	3.00	-0.42	11	
Moosehead	34	77	54	+4	89	+58	7	+7	0.13	-0.64	1	2.34	-0.72	11	
Portland_ME	41	82	57	+3	237	+162	38	+38	1.08	+0.30	2	2.16	-1.23	9	
NEW HAMPSHIRE															
Benton	28	77	56	+2	165	+54	23	+10	0.07	-0.71	1	3.36	+0.40	12	
Berlin_AG	36	78	56	+3	153	+60	20	+11	0.48	-0.34	2	3.67	+0.51	10	
Concord	34	84	59	+3	284	+155	69	+57	0.51	-0.19	2	1.40	-1.40	10	
Diamond_Pond	28	74	47	-3	48	+11	6	+6	0.19	-0.72	3	4.21	+0.84	17	
Keene_AG	33	85	59	+1	239	+58	46	+19	0.64	-0.21	3	2.28	-1.04	13	
North_Conway	37	79	58	+3	209	+100	31	+21	0.51	-0.39	2	2.75	-0.92	12	
Rochester	39	84	60	+2	288	+137	58	+40	1.35	+0.51	2	2.80	-0.85	8	
VERMONT															
Bennington_AP	32	82	60	+6	268	+153	74	+59	0.34	-0.71	2	2.23	-1.91	13	
Burlington_Intl	37	83	62	+5	296	+132	79	+54	0.01	-0.69	1	2.28	-0.50	13	
Island_Pond	33	78	56	+5	144	+79	21	+20	0.78	-0.08	4	3.21	+0.08	18	
Montpelier	34	79	58	+4	218	+111	56	+44	0.36	-0.41	3	3.32	+0.53	16	
Rochester	32	82	57	+4	179	+83	30	+21	0.22	-0.76	1	2.90	-0.99	13	
Rutland_AG	33	82	60	+2	231	+36	51	+16	0.11	-0.69	1	3.58	+0.56	12	
Springfield_VT	34	82	60	+4	269	+148	62	+48	0.43	-0.48	2	2.42	-1.22	13	
Sutton	41	76	58	+6	145	+83	19	+18	0.42	-0.42	3	4.20	+1.11	17	
MASSACHUSETTS															
Boston/Logan_In	48	84	62	+3	429	+228	114	+100	1.08	+0.38	2	2.91	-0.13	11	
Fitchburg	46	85	63	+8	409	+308	109	+104	1.19	+0.38	2	2.97	-0.19	12	
Greenfield	37	84	60	+1	259	+55	51	+26	0.44	-0.47	2	2.26	-1.24	14	
New_Bedford	41	77	59	+0	319	+115	57	+42	1.13	+0.33	2	2.16	-1.22	13	
Otis_AFB	45	70	57	+2	236	+131	27	+25	1.48	+0.64	2	2.94	-0.51	13	
Plymouth	42	79	59	+3	351	+233	78	+74	1.10	+0.21	2	2.59	-1.13	11	
Walpole	41	79	59	+2	349	+195	81	+70	1.56	+0.79	2	2.74	-0.52	11	
Chicopee/Westov	35	86	61	-1	368	+92	101	+58	0.43	-0.48	2	2.22	-1.42	15	
Worthington	38	82	58	+3	221	+111	42	+32	0.71	-0.34	2	2.83	-1.35	16	
RHODE ISLAND															
Providence	48	81	62	+4	434	+259	98	+88	0.90	+0.06	1	2.64	-0.84	12	
Woonsocket	41	83	61	+4	363	+213	81	+73	1.82	+0.91	2	3.14	-0.60	12	
CONNECTICUT															
Bridgeport/Siko	48	77	61	+2	372	+157	66	+36	1.03	+0.14	2	3.62	+0.00	12	
Hartford/Bradle	40	86	63	+2	475	+225	132	+91	0.76	-0.20	2	2.53	-1.20	14	
Norfolk	39	80	58	+3	265	+159	57	+49	0.63	-0.42	2	3.55	-0.59	15	
Thomaston_Dam	41	83	61	+4	335	+166	74	+55	0.91	-0.07	2	3.38	-0.71	14	
Willimantic	38	85	61	+4	378	+211	99	+81	0.89	-0.03	2	2.50	-1.36	14	

State Weather Summary

For the Week Ending Sunday, May 23, 2010

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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STATE	AIR TEMPERATURES				PRECIPITATION	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	28	84	56	+3	0.00	1.08
NH	26	86	57	+3	0.07	2.40
VT	30	89	59	+4	0.01	0.78
MA	33	86	59	+3	0.25	2.64
RI	41	83	61	+4	0.86	1.82
CT	38	87	61	+2	0.63	1.57

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

CONNECTICUT - Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland: Showers Tuesday with up to 1.5 inches of rain helped drier soils. Shade tobacco really got moving and planting is nearly complete. Field corn neared 75% planted, and more grass continued to be chopped. Orchards still assessing damage from May 11 freeze/frost. **Richard Meinert (Ext), Litchfield:** Making hay (haylage) while the sun shines! Harvesting first cut has put corn planting on hold. A six day stretch with temperatures between 70 and 90 and only a minor chance of showers has everyone mowing, raking, chopping or baling as fast as possible. **Patricia Smith (FSA), New London:** Crop conditions are good. Plants are doing well. Grass is being chopped and dry hay harvested as well. **Nancy Welsh (FSA), New Haven:** Rain mid-week slowed field work but sunny warm weather at week's end really helped. Grass haylage was being harvested and by Friday hay was mowed for dry hay. Field corn planting is progressing well along with vegetables. **Jude Boucher (Ext), Tolland:** Last week we had some guests from Nova Scotia down to tour farms that use deep zone tillage to prepare their vegetable fields for planting. All the sweet corn and bean stands that were up and growing on the five farms we visited looked great. The growers are all thrilled with this technology, partly because it saves so much time and fuel, but also because it helps improve their soils over time. Our visitors were quite impressed with the plant stands and the enthusiasm of the growers using this system and headed back to Nova Scotia to start their own DZT trials and to spread the word. Thanks to all five growers who took the time to share what they have learned with our northern neighbors. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Mowing grass haylage all over the county, corn planting about half done, soil is dry. Freeze and frost damage has killed new growth on Christmas trees; raised havoc in apples, peaches, pears, blueberries, asparagus and strawberries. Some damage in grapes; they are two to four weeks ahead of normal. Most crops are ahead of usual with warmer weather.

MAINE – Casey Cote (St John Valley Soil & Water Conservation Dist), Northern Aroostook: The weather has been warm and dry. Crops continue to be planted. Approximately 70% potatoes are in the ground and approximately 80% of grains are in. Some grains have begun to emerge. **Larry James (FSA), Central Aroostook:** Most are done planting. A few seed guys are still going. Rain early in the week helped the hay fields. Less rain than we needed but, some areas received an inch. **Pam Hickey (Ext), Central Aroostook:** Most growers finished planting by the week's end. Seed growers are still planting. All grains have been planted and are emerging. The soil is very dry in Aroostook County. **Steve London, Southern Aroostook:** Potatoes and small grains: Some farmers starting to herbicide. **Sandy Truslow (FSA), Cumberland/York:** 1/2 to 3/4 of an inch of rain fell last week, but we could use more. The sunny, windy days have made for good drying weather for early hay. Freeze damage reports are still coming in. Some locations have 100% losses on apples and strawberries, other areas are okay. **Valerie Porter (FSA), Hancock/Penobscot/Piscataquis:** Past week was great weather for planting. All potatoes and corn reported to be planted. First crop of hay looks good and harvest may start this week. Apples, strawberries and blueberries are starting to develop fruit. Ground water is extremely low, rain is much needed. Small veggie growers are almost all done planting, some are waiting for the 1st of June in case of frost. Spraying will be the next job producers will be dealing with. **Megan McDonough (FSA), Kennebec:** I've heard from a few folks that they have been able to start putting first cut in the barn! Corn is being planted and with the exception of last week's frost, things are off to a good start. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Another great week for field activities. Many small vegetables were planted and land is being prepared to plant pumpkins and squash. Farmers are spraying to control weeds in crops fields and manure continues to be spread on fields. A little more rain is needed in this area with none forecasted until later in the week. We did receive beneficial rains on Wednesday of almost

an inch. The apple crop is of major concern with no definite idea as to the extent of damage caused a couple of weeks ago from a severe frost. There is also damage to the strawberry crop, although still too early to tell of severity. It appears the blueberry crop in this area made it through the frost with very little to no damage. Farmers have just started cutting grass in earnest this week. This is early so the crop may be light, but the quality will be there. Another few days of sun and warmth are predicted through mid to late week allowing farming activities to continue as planned. Most crops are currently ahead of normal schedule. **Marcia Hall (FSA), Oxford:** Harvesting of hay has started here in Oxford County. Growers are busy setting up irrigation and getting ready for the growing season. 90% of potato crop is in and approximately 80% of corn has been planted thus far. Pastures still looking good and livestock are grazing in some areas. **Donna Coffin (Ext), Piscataquis/Penobscot:** Great week for field work. Planting is in full swing. Some farmers were able to get in their first cutting of forage for silage. A few are trying to put up hay with this extended warm weather. **Kathy Hopkins (Ext), Somerset:** A good week with some needed rain mid-week that helped pastures and early crops. **Janet King (FSA), Somerset:** With one day of rain this past week, it was very productive in the field, hearing reports of lots of planting being done. The welcomed rain on Wednesday was an all day event, totaling about a half inch or more in some areas. We're in for a nice stretch of really nice hay making weather over the weekend and into next week. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Dry weather and warm temperatures are pushing things along very rapidly. Some farms have first cutting haylage done. Yields of grass have been low. We need some rain! Lots of corn silage planted and some emerged. Still assessing the damage from the hard frost we received earlier in the month. **Dr. David Yarborough (Ext), Washington:** Wild blueberries; Cool weather has slowed crop development but it is still about one week ahead of normal. Bees are continuing to pollinate the crop state wide. Fungicide treatments to protect against leaf spot disease are being made on cropping fields.

MASSACHUSETTS - Aimee Thayer (FSA), Berkshire: It has been seasonable although on the dry side with a constant breeze. Silage and sweet corn was planted and some veggie crop transplants were set out. Some hay was cut as the fields are growing fast and rye straw was harvested. Markets have annual and perennial flats, rhubarb, greens, and asparagus. Memorial Day sales are up so far with great weather. **Thomas Monahan, Berkshire:** Heavy frost damage in several locations in tree fruit, blueberries got hurt and some early sweet corn got toasted. Apples are expecting a huge June drop because of roller coaster weather pattern along with some bad frost damage, wait and see. **Lori Carver (FSA), Franklin:** A rainy day was just what was needed. A couple more rainy days would be great. Harvesting of hay is getting underway as planting of silage corn is finishing up. Planting of tobacco is beginning. **Ted Smiarowski Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** This was a dry and cool week. Farmers were busy planting beets, radishes, turnips, tomatoes, peppers, sweet corn, cabbage, and squashes. They have been harvesting spinach, greens, asparagus and rhubarb. Dairy farmers are planting field corn and harvesting hay. Mixed hay field yields are light due to the dry spring. **Caroly Demoranville (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: Heavy rain from the 18th to 19th caused minor flooding on some bogs. A few growers still have overly saturated conditions from heavy rains earlier in the spring. Development is at least 2 weeks ahead of normal with some bogs in hook stage.

NEW HAMPSHIRE – William Lord (Ext), Belknap: Rain Wednesday put a halt to field work. The extent of frost damage to apples is variable with some blocks totally wiped out while others have a moderate crop. Sweet corn planting is underway. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Warm and sunny most of the week, with a nice steady rain Wednesday. Most field corn planted and earliest

is at 2-leaf stage. Hayfields and pastures are doing well, some farms beginning first cutting. Planting on veggie operations is going well. Orchards are still waiting to see full extent of freezing injury from a couple weeks ago. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Much warmer, drier, weather, rain at mid-week but not slowing farm operations down too much. Most corn fields now planted, others worked up, fertilized and should go in shortly. Kentucky bluegrass headed out, other grasses growing vigorously and providing very good grazing. May see some haylage soon. Quite an early season compared to past couple of years allowing many farms to get a jump on crop activities of various sorts. Black flies are also active and biting! Dandelions past peak except in more northerly part of county. Crows are checking corn. Brisk business at garden centers & nursery operations. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** For the week ending May 22nd, we received less than a quarter inch of rain. Soil moisture is adequate as a general rule. Some poorer drained soils and upland sites are still a little too wet for farm equipment to operate. First cutting of hay and haylage is well under way, and many have finished first cut. Quality appears to be good. Most producers have made significant progress on field corn planting. Early sweet corn plantings are also well underway. There is significant concern over potential damage to the apple blossoms from the freezing weather that was received earlier in May. Concern has also been expressed over potential damage to the strawberry and asparagus crops. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** The frost events that occurred during the week of May 9 did minor damage to tree fruit orchards and small fruit plantings in some locations in county. Other parts of the state had orchards having severe losses. If growers did not irrigate strawberries during night/morning for frost control, some crop loss has occurred. Fruits: Apples are fruit set and orchardists are determining to thin, but it is difficult due to frost occurrences. Strawberries are blooming. Orchardists and fruit growers are applying protective fungicide sprays on fruit trees and blueberries. Planting new fruit trees and finishing up pruning of peach trees. Field Crops: Farmers are plowing, discing, fertilizing, planting corn, and applying herbicides. Pastures and hayfields starting to look good however some fields are lacking growth. Corn has emerged and new seedlings are up and growing. First cutting of haylage started. Vegetables: Continued planting vegetables, along with successive planting of sweet corn and transplanting tomato plants in field. Laying plastic mulch and drip irrigation tape. Harvesting asparagus and greens. **Amy Ouellette (Ext), Merrimack:** Farmers have planted peas, beans, carrots, early sweet corn and more. Fields are being prepped for transplanting. Fruit growers are assessing damage from last week's frost. Plum curculio is in orchards now. First cutting of hay in many places. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** A busy week for planting vegetables and replanting vegetables that were hit by frost in mid- may. Harvesting greens, scallions, radish, asparagus, and greenhouse cucumbers. Watching and monitoring pests in orchards and small fruits fields. Some apples orchards are showing frost damage. Pastures are looking good and seeding forage and field corn. Rain and cold most of the day. Farmers markets are very busy as well as garden centers. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** Excellent for field work except for one day in the middle of the week. Grass in hay fields and pastures are growing very well. Fruit growers were mowing the orchard floors and spraying protective fungicides and insecticides as needed. Some apple and peach growers experienced serious

frost damage in the last two weeks due to freezing temperatures at night. Some strawberry growers also had frost damage on the king blossoms on their strawberries. Some vegetable growers were preparing the fields for planting while others started two different vegetable crops in the fields and high tunnels. Some growers started to harvest cucumber and cherry tomatoes in high tunnels.

RHODE ISLAND – Paul Brule (FSA), All Counties: Going into the last week of May. The weather and soil conditions are great. We had 1 nice small rain storm on Wednesday night that helped things out. Potatoes are 100 percent better than last year at this time. Strawberries are coming ahead of schedule but still 2 to 3 weeks ahead. Providence and Kent County had cold weather last week and have not had any damage reports. Early sweet corn is continuing to be planted. This week they are starting to plant peppers, egg plant, tomatoes and other vegetable plants. Summer squash is looking good. Spring is finally here. Livestock, they are starting to put heifers and beefers out on pasture. Have not started mowing hay yet, too early. Cutting rye for straw currently.

VERMONT – Jeff Carter (Ext), Addison: Good weather so most farms started first cut hay crop of grass. Alfalfa is still a week off. Corn planting is in full swing along with mowing haylage. First crop hay isn't very heavy with lots of dandelion. New seedlings look average growth to sparse. Some fields still too wet to plant. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Nice spring week. Corn planting is in full swing. Some first cut hay mowed at the end of the week. Others are making final adjustments on haying equipment. Cool early in the week, finished up with summer-like conditions. **Paul Stanley (CCA), Franklin:** AWESOME sums up the week for Franklin County. Good full week of field work and all took advantage. Lots of corn in the ground and first cut haylage is under way. A lot of pressure on folks doing Haylage harvest and corn planting at the same time, however, it is paying off. Results back on early forage analysis is fantastic. Proteins are in the low 20% and energy values are near what is seen in corn. Yields are good for early cut haylage, however, quality is making up the difference. The weather is the key factor and many are making the best of it while we have it. Gardens are going in full tilt and the orchards are still in a wait and see mode of damage from the frost on budding. Pastures are doing great and many animals are in them enjoying the great weather. **Heather Darby (Ext), Franklin:** Great weather this week helped push field work along in the area. Many farmers planting corn and harvesting first cut hay simultaneously. Some corn has emerged and looks healthy. Winter wheat is approaching the boot stage. Spring forage seedlings have emerged and are growing rapidly with the warm weather. **John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille/Washington:** Roller coaster spring conditions continue with record heat predicted this week. Last week saw corn planting swing into high gear along with mowing of first cut grass. Veggie growers were busy last week and are hoping that we've seen the last of any frost and cold weather. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** Nice weather this past week translated into a lot of corn planting. Top soil is dry in some spots. First cut hay got under way as well. Yield looks short so far. Pastures are doing better with the warmer weather. **Julie Jacque (FSA), Windham:** Rye cutting for straw harvest. Hay cutting will begin soon. Moisture levels in soils are pretty low. Many are done planting corn early.

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Gary R. Keough, Director
Hernan Ortiz, Statistician

Ty Kalaus, Deputy Director
Lynne Arsenault, Stat Assistant