

Crop Progress & Condition



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For week ending 8/29/10

Still Dry Despite Rain

GENERAL CONDITIONS: For the week ending August 29, 2010, there were 5.4 days available for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated 4% very poor, 23% poor, 34% fair, 35% good, and 4% excellent. The week began wet and windy with below average temperatures ranging from the mid-60s to low 70s. Windy conditions, scattered precipitation, and cool temperatures in the 60s and 70s continued on Tuesday and Wednesday with some areas reporting over two inches of rainfall. Temperatures from Thursday to Saturday were variable ranging from the upper 60s to mid-80s. The week ended sunny and dry with above average daytime temperatures ranging from the mid-80s to mid-90s. Average nighttime temperatures during the week ranged from the lower 50s to mid-60s. Total precipitation ranged from 0.07 to over 3 inches.

FRUIT: Except for late maturing varieties in Maine, both the highbush and wild blueberry harvests neared completion last week throughout New England. In Maine, wild blueberry harvest yields varied greatly due to location and amount of frost damage. Other fruits being harvested throughout the region included peaches, plums, fall raspberries, Paulared, Gingergold, and Honeycrisp apples. In areas where moisture levels have been low, fruit size was reportedly on the smaller side. Rain at the beginning of the week aided cranberry beds in Massachusetts, with many beds looking well. Fruit growers were busied last week scouting for pests, moving bins into orchards, pruning trees, and mowing orchard floors.

VEGETABLES: The sweet corn harvest continued to near completion ahead of last year and normal with some good yields reported in Connecticut where irrigation was used. Pumpkins continued to mature ahead of normal last week throughout the region. Tomatoes were being harvested with abundant supplies reported in some areas. Other vegetables being harvested included beans, beets, cole crops, cucumbers, greens, pumpkins, radishes, summer squash, winter squash, zucchini, and other vegetables. Farmers were busy tilling fields, planting cover crops, and keeping an eye out for pests and diseases as powdery mildew has been identified on pumpkins and winter squash and downy mildew on cucumbers and melons in New Hampshire.

FIELD CROPS: Warm and dry conditions were favorable to hay cutting last week. Many farmers in New Hampshire were on their second or third cut. Many farmers in Maine many were unlikely to progress to a third cut due to lack of rain, while some farmers in Vermont had began their fourth cut. Rain at the beginning of the week gave pastures and crop fields much needed moisture. Although drought stress was still evident in some areas, field corn in parts of Vermont and New Hampshire had good ear set and size, and was expected to be a bumper crop. In Maine, grains continued to be harvested ahead of average with good color, although lighter in weight. The harvest of early white potatoes in Maine continued last week. The harvesting of potatoes in Massachusetts and Rhode Island also progressed. Farmers also spent their time vine killing potato fields in Maine and spreading manure.

SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
Topsoil			
Very Short	17	30	0
Short	29	28	10
Adequate	53	42	74
Surplus	1	0	16
Subsoil			
Very Short	26	26	0
Short	24	29	6
Adequate	49	44	77
Surplus	1	1	17

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Percent Harvested			Fruit Size	Condition
	2010	2009	5-yr Avg		
Apples	20	10	10	Average	Good/Fair
Peaches	75	70	70		
Pears	25	15	10	Average	Good/Fair
Blueberries					
Highbush	95	90	90		
Wild	99	90	90		
Cranberries, MA	-	-	-	Average	Good/Excellent

FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	2010	2009	5-yr Avg	Condition
-- Percent Harvested --				
Barley, ME	70	30	40	Good/Excellent
Oats, ME	60	30	25	Good
Potatoes				
Maine	10	<5	<5	Good
Mass	10	35	20	Good/Fair
Rhode Island	15	25	35	Good/Fair
Silage Corn	5	<5	<5	Good/Fair
Sweet Corn	80	65	70	
Tobacco				
Broadleaf	85	70	80	
Shade	90	70	80	
Dry Hay				
First Cut	100	99	99	
Second Cut	95	80	80	
Third Cut	45	30	25	Fair/Good

Weather Summary for New England Agricultural Statistics

For the Period: Monday August 23, 2010
 To: Sunday August 29, 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 INCHES	DFN	DAYS
MAINE														
Augusta_State_A	54	81	66	+0	2090	+366	915	+240	0.91	+0.19	3	1.83	-1.18	11
Bangor_Intl_Arp	51	82	67	+3	2035	+460	890	+323	0.79	+0.02	2	1.66	-1.37	11
Bethel	50	78	62	-2	1794	+230	695	+147	2.17	+1.26	3	4.32	+0.69	12
Caribou_Municip	48	77	64	+5	1694	+414	667	+306	0.81	-0.10	1	1.58	-2.10	7
Dover-Foxcroft	47	78	62	-2	1639	+266	613	+188	0.95	+0.10	3	1.84	-1.47	13
Frenchville	50	75	63	+4	1496	+307	542	+233	0.35	-0.56	2	1.37	-2.35	10
Houlton	44	77	63	+2	1595	+258	607	+203	0.40	-0.51	2	1.55	-2.14	10
Livermore_Falls	46	80	63	+2	1777	+425	708	+303	1.45	+0.52	4	3.82	+0.12	13
Moosehead	46	77	60	+0	1359	+215	427	+134	0.87	+0.03	3	3.16	-0.21	12
Portland_ME	52	83	66	+1	2073	+490	912	+331	2.74	+2.05	4	2.95	+0.37	7
NEW HAMPSHIRE														
Benton	40	75	60	-3	1629	+184	612	+168	2.06	+1.15	5	4.79	+1.15	13
Berlin_AG	48	75	61	-2	1646	+190	603	+136	1.33	+0.37	4	4.78	+0.87	13
Concord	45	83	64	-2	2283	+545	1104	+426	1.99	+1.29	4	2.76	-0.25	10
Diamond_Pond	42	78	57	-2	829	-156	155	-40	0.99	-0.13	4	5.63	+1.00	14
Keene_AG	44	84	64	-4	2107	+171	949	+126	0.67	-0.17	4	1.91	-1.63	10
North_Conway	48	82	63	-2	1884	+261	759	+169	2.13	+1.22	4	2.96	-0.68	11
Rochester	48	86	66	-1	2361	+509	1170	+405	2.97	+2.20	4	3.66	+0.43	8
VERMONT														
Bennington_AP	44	78	64	+1	2090	+567	940	+436	0.60	-0.38	4	2.41	-1.48	12
Burlington_Intl	53	79	67	+1	2276	+414	1098	+327	0.88	-0.03	2	3.51	-0.16	9
Island_Pond	46	76	61	+0	1563	+368	570	+268	0.64	-0.40	4	8.16	+3.77	15
Montpelier	47	77	62	-1	1849	+381	770	+299	0.98	+0.14	3	2.52	-0.97	12
Rochester	46	80	62	-2	1751	+311	693	+236	1.23	+0.19	3	3.78	-0.38	11
Rutland_AG	46	80	64	-3	1983	+65	857	+56	1.94	+1.02	3	4.14	+0.34	10
Springfield_VT	46	81	65	+2	2168	+585	1000	+452	0.82	-0.09	4	2.75	-0.87	12
Sutton	46	75	60	-1	1537	+325	542	+226	0.57	-0.45	4	5.07	+0.78	14
MASSACHUSETTS														
Boston/Logan_In	61	83	68	-3	2744	+549	1452	+416	4.48	+3.71	4	5.75	+2.82	7
Fitchburg	52	84	67	+3	2686	+1106	1409	+853	2.02	+1.25	4	2.79	-0.40	10
Greenfield	48	80	65	-4	2213	+147	1041	+120	1.18	+0.37	4	2.50	-0.83	10
New_Bedford	51	85	67	-5	2507	+298	1268	+219	1.96	+0.99	4	2.63	-1.18	8
Otis_AFB	54	77	66	-3	2196	+398	1015	+268	3.06	+2.27	4	3.90	+0.83	8
Plymouth	51	86	68	+1	2664	+804	1413	+620	3.49	+2.53	4	4.17	+0.56	8
Walpole	50	93	66	-2	2576	+683	1332	+535	3.96	+3.05	4	4.86	+1.31	9
Chicopee/Westov	45	82	66	-6	2552	+190	1312	+156	1.61	+0.77	2	4.02	+0.84	8
Worthington	45	78	62	-3	1939	+395	804	+285	1.78	+0.87	4	3.25	-0.51	8
RHODE ISLAND														
Providence	55	83	67	-3	2774	+683	1458	+495	2.31	+1.47	4	2.43	-0.85	6
Woonsocket	51	82	65	-2	2555	+693	1295	+536	2.99	+2.08	4	4.61	+0.97	8
CONNECTICUT														
Bridgeport/Siko	58	84	70	-2	2800	+555	1514	+421	1.79	+1.09	3	2.43	-0.50	6
Hartford/Bradle	50	84	68	-3	2839	+567	1518	+427	1.64	+0.78	2	2.21	-1.07	8
Norfolk	47	74	62	-2	2082	+533	914	+389	2.10	+1.05	4	3.90	-0.21	11
Thomaston_Dam	50	81	66	-1	2487	+646	1251	+514	4.42	+3.44	4	6.56	+2.72	12
Willimantic	50	81	66	-2	2551	+675	1295	+527	2.33	+1.43	4	2.93	-0.64	10

Summary based on NWS data.

DFN = Departure from Normal (Using 1971-2000 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 Weather Summary

For the Week Ending Sunday, August 29, 2010

STATE	AIR TEMPERATURES				PRECIPITATION	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	42	84	63	+0	0.26	3.43
NH	36	86	62	-2	0.46	3.16
VT	41	81	62	-1	0.19	1.94
MA	43	93	65	-2	0.75	4.66
RI	51	83	67	-2	1.00	2.99
CT	45	87	67	-2	1.64	4.42

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: Early week showers helped to bring some crops back to life. Some crops still need some more rain to recover. Sweet corn yielding well where irrigation was used. Full complement of vegetables on farm stands. Peach harvest winding down but apples and pears are being picked. A dry weekend resulted in a lot of hay being cut. Corn silage continues to be harvested. **Richard Meinert (Ext), Litchfield:** Fall has arrived! At least it has in the green industry. Garden centers are already stocking up on pumpkins, corn stalks, gourds, and other fall decorations. Maybe having the pumpkins start turning color early was a good thing?! Corn choppers are primed and ready. Most growers are waiting one more week - although a few fields were piled up early to be ready to feed from during the main harvest season. **Ann McCard (FSA), New London:** Much needed rain this week. **Nancy Welsh (FSA), New Haven:** It was a very wet week and it brought field activities to a standstill. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Excellent sunny, dry weather to work in the fields. Chopping corn, baling hay, picking vegetables, and picking early apples. Fruit on the smaller side, good flavor. Farmers markets are hopping. Good selection of fruit and vegetables; lot's of variety of items; eggs selling out quickly. Ginger Gold apples are ready.

MAINE – Casey Cote (St John Valley Soil & Water Conservation Dist), Northern Aroostook: The rain early this week did little to provide reprieve for crops. Grains are continuing to be harvested. Good color this year, but lighter in weight. **Larry James (FSA), Central Aroostook:** Rain arrived early in the week, dropping two inches in isolated areas. Most of the county received .5 to .75. A lot of early round whites are being harvested. Reports of average crops and good quality so far. Large sets and lack of rain will leave russets with a very small size profile. Grain harvest is winding down. **Pam Hickey (Ext), Central Aroostook:** Farmers continuing to harvest grains. Broccoli harvest continued. Vine killing potato fields in the area. Some early harvest of potatoes continuing to be harvested. The crops are still looking excellent. **Sandy Truslow (FSA), Cumberland/York:** Rain on Wednesday saved many crops which were stressed due to drought. Hay has gone dormant. Vegetables with irrigation are still producing well. More rain would be welcome next week. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** The rain we received helped. The ground water needs to be replenished so we need more. Crops are progressing well. **Valerie Porter (FSA), Hancock/Penobscot/Piscataquis:** Rain Rain please come again. Crops are really showing stress and producers are starting to harvest corn silage. Production and quality is anticipated to be below normal. Some corn is showing dent stage but a lot of it is turning brown up past the cobs. Late crops that are not irrigated like pumpkins and squash are really showing stress as well. Blueberry harvest is complete and crop overall looks pretty good. Third cut of hay is unlikely since no more rain has been provided in the past two months. Pastures are not coming back and that could be a loss to farmers and the need to feed out stored hay will diminish the supply. Apples are being harvested and are a little smaller than hoping for. Potato crop looks a little stressed and plants are looking like they have died. Harvest has started but crop is not what was anticipated either. **Megan McDonough (FSA), Kennebec:** While Kennebec County did receive a bit of rain this past week, we could still certainly use more! **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Over two inches of much needed rain fell in this area on Wednesday! This was a welcomed relief as crops were just starting to show signs of stress. We also had several great days for making hay. What a great year for our farmers! Sweet corn harvest is nearing completion, while apples and cold crop harvests are just beginning. Several days of temperatures over 90 are forecasted to start this new week. **Donna Coffin (Ext), Piscataquis/Penobscot:** Rain on Wednesday was helpful, but crops still need more moisture. Tomato yields are high. Plenty of canning tomatoes available. Pumpkins are ripening early. **Kathy Hopkins (Ext), Somerset:** It is still very dry despite some scattered showers last week. **Janet King (FSA),**

Somerset: Need Rain! **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** One day of rain. Some people got 3/4 of an inch, others three inches. Some corn fields being chopped because they are so dry. Apple harvest has started and the pumpkins are all ready! New forage seedings need more rain. **Dr. David Yarborough (Ext), Washington:** Wild blueberries: Wild blueberry harvest finishing up this week. Crop yields have varied widely from 75% crop loss to 'the best crop I have had in 18 years' depending on location. Those fields further from the coast or in low lying areas experienced considerable frost damage, whereas those on the coast with good pollination and irrigation had better than average yields. It is estimated that the 2010 crop will be about 70 to 75 million pounds in Maine.

MASSACHUSETTS – Aimee Thayer (FSA), Berkshire: This was a seasonal week with temperate days and cool nights. Fall crops are maturing early. Rain early in the week was helpful leaving pastures and hayfields looking better. Some vegetable fields have been tilled and are being planted with cover crops. Farmers' markets are busy and bountiful. **Ted Smiarowski Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** A few days of rain showers were a blessing to all crops to relieve the plant stress. Vegetable growers have started harvesting winter squash and pumpkins. The harvesting of all other crops continues. Many growers are applying a cover crop on harvested fields. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: The area received anywhere between two and six inches of rain from Sunday into Wednesday which really helped the cranberry vines and fruit. There was some puddling of the wetter areas, but things have drained out well. This is the calm before the storm, with growers taking time off and getting ready for the coming harvest. The crop continues to look very good, with many Early Black beds in particular looking strong. Hopefully, the quality will be good as predicted.

NEW HAMPSHIRE – Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire: A couple days with some much-needed rain, but overall amounts were pretty light across the area and we could have used more. No severe drought injury yet, but moisture stress is pretty widespread. Field corn continues to mature and much of it should be ready to chop in the next week. Hay/haylage harvest continues, but regrowth is still light and yields are down. Vegetable crops are still doing pretty well as long as they're irrigated. Orchards dealing with crop loss from freeze in May - some places seeing 90-100% yield reductions. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Field corn looking exceptionally good, benefitting from good temperatures and moisture conditions. Pastures also nice regrowth on previously mowed fields, looking like one of the best crop years for sometime as we approach late summer. Wide range of vegetables available locally, big ear sweet corn at market. Typical late season plant problems, powdery mildew for one. Quick growing annual weeds like crabgrass a concern for this year. Early apples coloring up nicely, pumpkins and winter squash as well. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** Received about two inches of much needed rain early last week. Good, clear weather towards the end of the week. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** A needed good soaking rain occurred at beginning of the week. Vegetables: Growers are harvesting an array of vegetables: beans, beets, cole crops, cucumbers, greens, potatoes, pumpkins, radishes, summer squash, sweet corn, tomatoes, winter squash, zucchini, and other vegetables. Some growers are beginning to irrigate again to try to save unharvested crops. Powdery mildew can be found on pumpkins and winter squash and downy mildew can be found on cucumbers and melons. Corn Earworm and Fall Armyworm trap numbers are still extremely high on some farms. Fruit: Orchardists harvesting peaches, plums, and picking Pauleared, Ginger Gold, and Honeycrisp apples. Orchardists busy monitoring for pests, summer pruning trees, mowing orchard floors, fixing up orchard roads and moved bins into the orchard. Highbush blueberry harvest is over except for those few growers who have late maturing varieties, and fall raspberry harvest continued. Field Crops: Hay cutting continued during the week with

the second and third cuttings being made. Some spreading manure on hay fields and forage seeding are being made. Farmers starting to get equipment ready to start chopping in a couple of weeks. **Amy Ouellette (Ext), Merrimack:** It was a great weekend for making hay. Fruit growers are harvesting early apple varieties and late season peaches. Late blueberries are on and day neutral strawberries are still kicking. Garden centers are selling fall mums. Nights are getting colder, which is great for apple flavor. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** A cooler week with mid-week rain ranging from one to eight inches. Harvesting apples, plums, a whole array of vegetables (abundance of tomatoes), winter squashes and pumpkins, and cut flowers. Haying and haylage being done. Monitoring for pests. Farmers markets busy as well as farmstands. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** Much needed rain showers in the first half of the week. The rains were a great help to hay fields and pastures and the non irrigated corn which was starting to show moisture stress. Vegetable and fruit growers were also happy with the rains because for those with irrigation ponds the water was getting too low. Vegetable growers continued to harvest an array of different vegetable crops. There was an abundance of produce at farm stands but business was slow for most growers. Fruit growers were harvesting peaches and apples. Pick your own operations were busy with customers picking peaches and apples. Fall mums were starting to show color and most garden centers were displaying and offering them for sale to their customers.

RHODE ISLAND – Paul Brule (FSA), All Counties: This past week, we had approximately two inches of rain (Monday, Tues, Wed) which covered all of the state. It came down slowly and it was very well needed for the crops. Small vegetables are still doing good. Prices are good. Sweet corn is still a little short for this time of the year because too many hot days brought the crop in earlier. Hay fields got welcomed rain this week. We'll see if this helps. Potatoes are being dug. Lost two days last week because the fields got a little too wet (too much mud). Livestock are doing well. Still being fed supplemental feed because pastures are short. To me, it's still looking like a good year for RI agriculture. Plenty of fresh vegetables to be had by all.

VERMONT – Jeff Carter (Ext), Addison: Continued nice weather for hay harvest and manure spreading on cut hay fields. Getting set for harvest of corn silage by opening up edges of fields. Soybeans growing fine. Wheat, barley, and oats all harvested. New seedings of hay being planted this past week. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext),**

Caledonia: A dry week, cool at the beginning and hot at the end. Complete hay mobilization this week, lots of hay and hay crop silage moving. Some of it looked very, very nice. Soil was drying out by the end of the week with temps in the 80s and windy. **Paul Stanley (CCA), Franklin:** Super weather week in Franklin County contributing to dry hay harvest and finishing field corn for harvest. Pastures will begin to slowdown in growth with the smell of fall in the air. Some areas are beginning to dry up with the lack of rain for the last week and none in the forecast in the beginning of the week. Potatoes are at the last of the harvest and have heard of some poor results. The bulk of the crop is in good shape, however, reports of complete crop failures are still coming in. Still not sure of the reasoning at this point, may have been a moisture problem at planting time such as some corn had trouble with germination during the dry spell in May. Overall, gardens have continued to yield very well. Tomatoes seem to be escaping the blite and this dry weather may be the ticket to keeping this under control for this year. Apples are looking good and the prediction of an early harvest is in the air. This stretch of good weather may help this along. **Heather Darby (Ext), Franklin:** Some welcomed moisture arrived last week. Although really just enough to help perk the crops up that had started to wilt. It also gave a well needed boost to the pastures and hay crops. Many farms starting fourth cut of hay crops. The corn is drying down rapidly especially in areas that have received low rain amounts. Some corn is nearing half milkline and several farmers have indicated they will begin chopping in the first part of September. **John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille/Washington:** The weather has allowed for a good season of dry hay. A report of some late blight in a home garden, but not wide spread. Farmers are reporting that they will start to harvest their corn silage earlier this year and the yields look good. **Terance Bradshaw (Univ of Vt):** After early varieties (Gingergold, Zestar, Paulared) maturing about seven days ahead of schedule, mid-season varieties appear to be ripening near-normal if slightly advanced. Early pickings of McIntosh and Gala will begin this week. Honeycrisp color is developing well, but the fruit needs another week for optimum flavor. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** We are in the middle of another good stretch of weather this week with cloudless sunny skies and warm temperatures. A lot of dry second and third crop hay is going in the barn. So far the cropping season has been exceptional. Corn is looking to be a bumper crop in most areas. Ear set is good and the size of the ears are excellent. It should be a good harvest. Pastures are holding their own but are a little short due to the drier weather. Some farms have been opening up hay fields for fall grazing.

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