

Crop Progress & Condition



NEW ENGLAND
Agricultural
Statistics



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April 30, 2012 – 4 pm

For week ending 4/29/12

Multiple Frosty Nights Raise Concerns

GENERAL CONDITIONS: For the week ending April 29, 2012, there were 4.7 days available for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated 4% very poor, 7% poor, 35% fair, 47% good, and 7% excellent. The week began rainy with average daytime temperatures ranging from mid-50s to mid-60s. Total precipitation from rainstorms of April 21-24 ranged from 1.0 to 4.6 inches. Average to below average temperatures with instances of frost were observed in New England throughout the middle of the week. Light to moderate precipitation fell on northern New England States. Temperatures cooled further on the weekend with some record-breaking low temperatures in the 20s. When combined with high winds, New England reported abnormally cold wind chill measurements.

FRUIT: Development of fruit trees was well ahead of schedule by week's end. There were frost damage concerns throughout New England as a result of early blooming tree fruits and berry fields experiencing sub-freezing temperatures during last week. Apples scab was reported in Vermont. Because cranberry plants are at least 3 weeks ahead in their development and sensitive to cold temperatures, cranberry growers needed to sprinkle at night to protect the vines. As a consequence, some cranberry beds were oversaturated and growers were losing their water supplies. Mummy Berry infections were reported in several counties in Maine. Growers were monitoring for pests and applying fungicides.

VEGETABLES: Vegetable growers were plowing, disking, and spreading fertilizer and lime. They were planting leafy greens, onions, peas, sweet corn, and cole crops. A portion of the sweet corn crop had emerged by week's end, ahead of last year and normal. Greenhouse growers were moving plants inside during nights to avoid frost injury. Magnitude of frost damage in vegetables was undetermined as of last Sunday.

FIELD CROPS: Dry hay development was variable based on the amount of precipitation received by recent rainstorms. Planting of field corn was significantly ahead of schedule but low soil temperature slowed crop progress. Planting of potatoes and small grains in Maine had not begun as of April 29. Planting of potatoes in Rhode Island was underway while planting in Massachusetts was wrapping up by week's end, well ahead of schedule. Grasslands and pastures were greening up thanks to recent precipitation but not growing in some areas due to either inadequate or excessive moisture.

SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
Topsoil			
Very Short	3	16	0
Short	19	40	0
Adequate	61	32	49
Surplus	17	12	51
Subsoil			
Very Short	3	7	0
Short	22	43	2
Adequate	60	43	46
Surplus	15	7	52

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Stage of Development	Condition
Apples	Early Bloom/Full Bloom	Fair/Good
Peaches	Full Bloom/Petal Fall	Good
Pears	Early Bloom/Petal Fall	Fair
Blueberries		
Highbush	Bud Stage/Full Bloom	Good/Fair
Wild	Bud Stage	Fair
Cranberries, MA	Bud Stage	Good
Strawberries	Bud Stage/ Early Bloom	Good

FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	2012	2011	5-yr Avg	Condition
-- Percent Planted --				
Barley, ME	0	0	<5	N/A
Oats, ME	0	0	0	N/A
Potatoes				
Maine	0	0	<5	N/A
Mass	90	<5	20	Good
Rhode Island	30	10	15	Good/Fair
Silage Corn	10	0	0	Good/Fair
Sweet Corn	20	5	5	Good/Fair
Tobacco				
Broadleaf	0	0	0	N/A
Shade	0	0	0	N/A
-- Percent Emerged --				
Sweet Corn	10	0	<5	
-- Percent Harvested --				
Dry Hay				
First Cut	0	0	0	Fair/Good

Weather Summary For New England Agricultural Statistics

Prepared By AWIS.com

For the Period: Monday April 23, 2012
 To: Sunday April 29, 2012

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	---	---
MAINE														
Augusta_State_A	31	60	45	-3	128	+117	26	+26	4.26	+3.35	4	4.44	+0.94	10
Bangor_Intl_Arp	28	61	45	-2	99	+93	13	+13	3.62	+2.83	4	3.98	+0.88	10
Bethel	29	60	42	-5	93	+87	10	+10	3.22	+2.38	4	3.63	+0.27	8
Caribou_Municip	25	62	43	+0	49	+45	4	+4	3.20	+2.59	5	4.33	+2.04	13
Dover-Foxcroft	17	61	41	-4	53	+49	2	+2	4.16	+3.32	4	4.38	+1.08	7
Frenchville	25	60	40	-2	44	+44	8	+8	2.03	+1.40	6	3.05	+0.67	15
Houlton	25	61	43	+1	54	+50	2	+2	2.36	+1.69	4	3.03	+0.59	12
Livermore_Falls	21	61	42	-3	85	+81	5	+5	3.37	+2.46	4	3.98	+0.34	7
Moosehead	23	56	39	-2	30	+30	0	+0	3.35	+2.58	4	4.82	+1.92	9
Portland_ME	30	60	46	-2	114	+109	19	+19	4.58	+3.66	4	4.84	+1.02	8
NEW HAMPSHIRE														
Benton	25	58	41	-6	89	+73	13	+13	1.77	+1.07	5	3.66	+1.08	11
Berlin_AG	28	61	42	-4	92	+81	12	+12	2.33	+1.52	3	3.76	+0.58	7
Concord	28	64	46	-3	183	+167	46	+46	2.50	+1.80	3	2.69	-0.04	7
First_Conn_Lake	24	58	40	-1	43	+43	2	+2	1.36	+0.59	6	3.40	+0.52	13
Keene_AG	28	66	44	-7	146	+119	32	+32	2.03	+1.26	4	2.25	-0.70	8
North_Conway	28	61	43	-4	111	+100	17	+17	3.40	+2.43	4	3.80	-0.05	8
Rochester	31	67	46	-4	172	+152	48	+48	3.14	+2.16	3	3.56	-0.42	7
VERMONT														
Bennington_AP	26	65	43	-4	151	+134	27	+27	1.21	+0.16	5	2.21	-1.85	11
Burlington_Intl	26	57	42	-8	166	+140	47	+47	2.00	+1.30	5	2.84	+0.24	11
Island_Pond	22	60	40	-4	75	+68	12	+12	1.34	+0.64	4	2.93	+0.41	8
Montpelier	24	59	40	-6	107	+93	20	+20	1.47	+0.85	5	2.72	+0.44	10
Rochester	26	59	41	-5	86	+75	12	+12	1.78	+0.85	5	3.47	-0.03	11
Rutland_AG	27	63	42	-9	110	+73	17	+16	1.39	+0.69	3	2.84	+0.34	7
Springfield_VT	27	63	45	-3	155	+140	34	+34	2.29	+1.38	4	2.83	-0.72	8
Sutton	24	63	40	-4	84	+80	12	+12	1.50	+0.80	6	3.27	+0.56	13
MASSACHUSETTS														
Boston/Logan_In	37	63	52	+1	262	+223	69	+69	2.52	+1.68	2	3.09	-0.27	5
Fitchburg	32	66	48	+2	255	+244	79	+79	2.78	+1.96	3	3.05	-0.11	9
Greenfield	30	64	45	-7	170	+134	44	+44	2.27	+1.36	3	2.48	-0.94	7
New_Bedford	34	65	50	-2	175	+133	31	+31	2.60	+1.69	3	2.91	-0.93	7
Otis_AFB	34	59	50	+3	123	+110	15	+15	1.32	+0.41	2	1.50	-2.12	4
Plymouth	29	64	51	+4	198	+184	44	+44	2.02	+1.04	4	2.17	-1.78	7
Walpole	29	67	50	-1	202	+178	54	+54	3.41	+2.47	3	3.72	-0.22	8
Chicopee/Westov	25	66	47	-8	204	+136	49	+48	2.09	+1.18	4	2.47	-1.14	8
Worthington	25	58	41	-7	113	+98	17	+17	2.24	+1.23	5	2.80	-0.95	12
RHODE ISLAND														
Providence	35	63	50	-2	201	+170	39	+39	3.21	+2.30	3	3.50	-0.34	9
Woonsocket	31	64	49	-1	220	+200	58	+58	3.67	+2.70	2	3.98	+0.11	5
CONNECTICUT														
Bridgeport/Siko	36	62	50	-3	184	+140	20	+20	2.60	+1.69	2	2.97	-0.54	8
Hartford/Bradle	33	62	48	-5	245	+191	65	+64	2.74	+1.83	5	3.02	-0.59	9
Norfolk	29	57	42	-6	130	+118	19	+19	2.22	+1.17	4	2.77	-1.40	8
Thomaston_Dam	28	64	46	-5	160	+131	28	+28	2.23	+1.19	4	2.71	-1.27	8
Willimantic	30	61	48	-3	216	+190	54	+54	2.38	+1.40	3	2.67	-1.24	7

State Weather Summary

For the Week Ending Sunday, April 29, 2012

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	17	63	42	-3	2.03	4.85
NH	4	67	43	-4	0.83	3.66
VT	12	65	41	-6	0.74	2.82
MA	25	68	48	-1	0.76	3.59
RI	31	64	50	+0	1.50	3.67
CT	26	64	47	-5	2.22	3.56

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: Hay is heading out much shorter and earlier than usual. We had very warm temperatures early in the season. Then we had no rain to push the crop along. Farmers predict a short first cutting of hay. **Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland:** Several frost and freeze mornings this past week, undetermined water injury from record breaking warmth followed by freeze for tree fruit. Plowing got an early start with dry/warm conditions. Some sweet corn up on bare ground and a lot up under row cover. Greenhouse/farm stand growers still moving plants out during the day and in for night to avoid frost injury. Some field corn planted this past week, emergence will take a while due to cold soil conditions. Where fences got fixed animals have been put out on pasture. **Kathryn Gostyla (FSA), New Haven:** Sweet corn under row cover is up and bare ground is still to emerge. Field corn; early fields planted. Hay progressing nicely. Concerns over tree fruit with stage of development at this time of year and frosts still occurring. Pastures ready to go, but fences still need to be mended. Greenhouses and farm stands needed to be prepared to protect plants from weekend frost.

MAINE – Larry James (FSA), Central Aroostook: Cold and wet has been the norm for the last week. A small amount of broccoli and a few potatoes have been planted. Most operations are waiting for spring to break. **Don Audibert, (FSA) Northern Aroostook:** Had approximately three inches of rain this week. Farmers haven't planted anything yet. They're getting their seed source ready and doing repairs on machinery. **Sandy Truslow (FSA), Cumberland /York:** Producers will be checking their apples, peaches and strawberries for damage from the frost the last two nights. Right now it's too early to tell if there was significant damage. Everyone is thankful for the 3 to 4.8" of rain that fell last Monday. Conditions were very dry before the rain. The full moon is next weekend. We may have had our last frost. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** TOO much warm weather in late winter caused maple syrup production to be 40 to 80% lower than last year. TOO little rainfall caused drought conditions and has limited grass growth. TOO early budding of fruit trees could cause pollination problems. TOO cool weather may cause fruit crop losses. Let's hope things start to moderate. Manure is spread, fences fixed and land prep is underway. **Marcia Hall (FSA), Oxford:** We received rain last week which was needed all throughout the counties. Field work is going strong and some grain corn has been planted. Preparation has begun for spring planting of vegetables. The grass is green and looking better since receiving rain last week. Producers have reported that in several areas we still need additional rain but in moderation! Spring has come early but frosts are still in the forecast for the upcoming week. **Donna Coffin (Ext), Piscataquis/Penobscot:** Manure spreading in driest fields. Some areas of fields are too soft for spreading activities. Orchardists are pruning trees. Pastures and hayfields are starting to green up. **Kathy Hopkins (Ext), Somerset:** Variable weather - hot then cold. Frost over the weekend may have damaged any early blossomed fruit crops. **Elaine Moceus (FSA), Somerset:** Soaking rain one day at the beginning of the week provided lots of needed moisture; evening rain and showers later on in the week have also helped to bring up levels of ground and top soil moisture. Frost over the weekend with temperatures in the mid to high 20's could have caused problems for fruit and berries. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Four and 1/2 inches of rain last week slowed field work to a crawl. Lots of blooms about to happen. Hard freeze on the 28th and 29th may have caused some damage to early flowering varieties.

MASSACHUSETTS – Russell Norton (Ext), Barnstable: Extremely dry conditions continued. Received approximately 3/4 inch of rain between 4/22 and 4/23. Field preparation is being hampered by lack of soil moisture. First plantings of sweet corn have been planted or have just emerged. Most cultivars of apple are in full bloom, strawberries in early bloom. Asparagus is being harvested. **Heather Baylis (NRCS) Franklin:** Producers have been

protecting their crops from frost damage. Have received notice of loss on asparagus and low bush blueberries. **Ted Smiarowski Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** This week brought 3 days of freezing night temperatures/conditions where small fruit growers were irrigating their crop for frost protection. Farmers continued planting sweet corn, potatoes, cabbage, and beets. Growers are harvesting fiddleheads and asparagus. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: Because plants are 3+ weeks ahead in their development and particularly sensitive to cold temperatures, this has been a nightmare spring so far for cranberry growers. With three more sleepless nights this weekend and long sprinkling episodes to protect the vines, the beds are over saturated with standing water in the lower spots. Some growers are getting dangerously low on water supplies as it has been a very dry year so far. The 2-4 inches last week was very welcomed, but we need much more to beef up the supplies. And we are far from being out of the woods, with many more cold nights ahead in all probability. At this rate (although an average week of temperatures slowed things down), the early varieties will be in bloom by the end of May. Buds look good on all varieties and vines have totally greened up in the early varieties and have lost a lot of the red color in the later varieties. Sprays have already been applied for winter moth, black-headed fireworm, Phytophthora root rot and upright dieback. Thus far, there has not been any notable frost injury in any beds.

NEW HAMPSHIRE – Donna Juneau (FSA) Belknap/Merrimack: Producers are reporting concerns about frost over the last few days in Hillsborough and Merrimack counties with potential impact to apple, blueberry, strawberry and asparagus crops. Temperatures reportedly dipped to 24 degrees Fahrenheit in some locations. Some producers have been irrigating over the last three to four days beginning on Friday, April 27. In addition, there are continued concerns about potential drought conditions. Soaking rains beginning the weekend of April 21-22 were welcome, but may not be enough to alleviate the drought conditions. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Some much needed rain early in the week, and cooler, partly sunny conditions for the remainder of the week. We could still use a little more rain. Farms continuing to spread manure and start tillage for silage corn. Grass in pastures and hayfields is doing OK, though warm weather this spring has led to it being at a later stage of maturity. Some planting taking place on vegetable operations. Tree fruit is blooming early with some injury possible after a couple of frosty nights. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Mix of weather from cold, wet and snowy to sunny and windy. Generally wet, some snow in north Coos and higher elevations, temps down into low twenties several nights. Manure spreading at good pace as earlier dry conditions allowed many farms to get a good jump on field activities. Some corn fields on lighter soils worked up in places. Soils still quite cold, too much so for corn planting at this time. Early blooming apples and blueberries - few hit by hard freezes at end of the week. If temperatures warm up, could see earlier planting than usual. Grasslands greening up and growing well. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** Over the last week, we have gotten about three quarters of an inch of rain. Things are starting to green up. People are spreading manure on fields and getting them ready to plant. We have had a number of producers reporting winterkill losses due to the lack of snow cover and freezing temps. April 28th and 29th, we experienced very high winds causing some power outages. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Watching cold temperatures at night and hoping frost/freeze does not occur. Irrigating strawberries for frost control and running wind machines in orchards three nights in a row. Temperatures dipped to 25 degrees F at some sites! Fruit: Hoping for a crop! Apples-McIntosh were at full beginning of week to petal fall at end of week. Peaches are at petal fall. Blueberries are at early pink to bloom. Pruning last blueberry bushes and raspberry patches. Fertilizing orchards. Protective fungicide sprays applied on fruit trees. Field Crops: Liming and fertilizing hayfields. Spreading manure, plowing, disking, fertilizing

and getting ready to plant corn. Fixing pasture fences. Also, getting ready to make new and making new pasture and hayfield seedings. Vegetables: Transplanting tomatoes into high tunnels. Early season vegetables (peas, lettuce, greens) are being planted. Liming, fertilizing, plowing, disking and getting ready to plant fields. **Dot Perkins (Ext), Merrimack:** The warm weather is pushing the fruit trees along. Much needed rain will help the hay crop. Fields are already responding to it. Graziers will start or have just started grazing this past week as pasture grasses are 6 to 8 inches tall. Eastern tent caterpillars have hatched. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** Early in the week we had a good amount of rain (2.5" - 4"). It helped with the drought, but we are still in need of more. We had some hard frosts for 2-3 nights in a row. Still assessing the situation. Days have been sunny. Preparing vegetable fields, planting peas, carrots, onions, leafy greens and cole crops. Preparing fields to plants small fruits. Spreading lime and manure for field corn. Apples in bloom and some in petal fall. Monitoring pests and spraying. We are two to three weeks early in season.

RHODE ISLAND – Paul Brule (FSA), All Counties: It was cold this morning, 28 degree's up in apple country. The southern part of the state was about 36 degrees. A lot of the big apple growers had irrigation going last night to save their crops. Potatoes are still being planted. We still could use more rain, possibly Tuesday and Thursday this week rain is forecasted. Some early sweet corn is being planted continuously. It's too early yet to put in other crops such as tomatoes and peppers. Pastures are green but not growing due to the lack of rain. Farmers are looking for feed for their animals, usually at this time of year the pastures are good, but not this year.

VERMONT – Jeff Carter (Ext), Addison: Very wet soils in fields. Early start to planting with 20% corn in and most new seedings of hay planted. Soil conditions were dry for past three weeks and seed beds worked up nicely. Many hay fields planted to catch up from last year when very few were planted due to excess rain. Pasture and hay growth good, but still slow with rain and snow these last few

days. Field work at a standstill for now. **Heather Darby (Ext), Franklin:** Not much fieldwork last week due to wet and very cool temperatures. Rain helped to recharge soil moisture. New seedings coming up. Spring grains also emerging. **Paul Stanley (CCA), Franklin:** Some rain first part of the week has slowed field work in Franklin County. Cool, frosty nights are keeping growth in check. Much concern of frost on apple trees, however, not a damaging situation as of yet. Soil temps are still very cold and corn growers are now looking at getting seeds in the ground, not a good combination. Pastures and grass growth are not booming, however, good for this time of year. Some peas in the ground for the garden side and still too wet and cold for any other gardening to take place. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** There were a lot of rain showers and even some snow this past week. The ground was all white on Saturday morning. Farm activities this past week included manure spreading, tilling fields for corn planting and some grass seeding. Pastures are starting to grow with the moisture received last week, but some warmer temperatures would help. Some concern over the apple flower buds with this cold weather. **Terence Bradshaw, (UVM):** Apples are at late pink to early bloom bud stage. Cold weather over the past weekend, down to 24.5 F at the UVM Horticulture Farm in South Burlington, caused variable damage to developing fruit buds. Initial assessments found damage easily, but it was not a complete loss. As blossoms continue to open in the next few days, further damage may be evident. Fortunately, the weather this week appears good for bee pollination and ovule fertilization, so remaining healthy blossoms stand a good chance to set fruit. Apple scab continues to be on the radar, with roughly 70% of ascospore inoculum mature, so growers should maintain fungicide coverage prior to expected wetting events. **Julie Jacque (FSA), Windham:** Some showers this week helped with a little moisture. Still lacking enough moisture for adequate soil levels. Cole crops being planted; new seedings being finished up. Some are still trying to clean off debris of sand and stones from Tropical Storm Irene. Fruit growers somewhat nervous about the continuously cool/cold temperatures and bloom times.

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