



New England Agricultural Statistics Service

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United States Department of Agriculture

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Crop Weather

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September 16, 2002 - 4 pm

For week ending 9/15/02

Harvest is Full Speed Ahead

GENERAL CONDITIONS: For the week ending September 15, 2002, there were 5.9 days suitable for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated as 13% very poor, 38% poor, 36% fair, 13% good, 0% excellent. Strong winds arrived in the Northeast at week's end, causing increased drop for some tree fruit crops. Rain fell mostly in northern New England, small amounts were received in the south. Any rainfall from now until the end of harvest will be too late to help most crops, but will be needed to help replenish ground water supplies. Major farm activities included: harvesting shade tobacco, potatoes, oats, barley, apples, peaches, pears and vegetables; finishing highbush blueberry harvest and harvest of broadleaf tobacco in Connecticut; applying vine desiccants to potatoes; cutting dry hay and chopping haylage; irrigating; applying manure.

FRUIT: Apples, peaches, plums and fall raspberries were harvested last week. Weekend rain thwarted plans for pick-your-own customers, but dry weather during the week allowed up to 15 percent more harvest to be completed for tree fruit crops. White cranberry harvest is complete in Massachusetts, and some early dry harvest of red and black berries took place last week.

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	-- Percent Harvested --			Condition
	2002	2001	5-yr Avg	
Apples	35	35	30	Good/Fair
Peaches	90	90	90	Good/Fair
Pears	40	40	30	Very Poor/Poor
Blueberries				
Highbush	100	95	99	Good
Cranberries, MA	<5	5	<5	Good/Fair

VEGETABLES: Last week, growers harvested cucumbers, eggplant, pumpkins, squash, sweet corn, and tomatoes, along with other summer and fall vegetable crops. Crops such as gourds are being harvested for fall decorating. Pumpkin and squash crops have been reported in poor condition due to the dry season. Sweet corn was rated in good to fair condition and harvest advanced to 90 percent complete last week.

SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
	-- Percent --		
Topsoil Moisture			
Very Short	32	34	37
Short	37	38	38
Adequate	31	28	25
Surplus	0	0	0
Subsoil Moisture			
Very Short	39	39	36
Short	32	31	34
Adequate	29	30	30
Surplus	0	0	0

FIELD CROPS: Farmers continue to cut third crop hay and finish off what remains of the second crop. Silage corn harvest is in full swing. Due to lack of moisture, field corn is short and ears are small. Oat and barley harvest in Maine continues to progress at a rapid pace. Maine potato harvest advanced to 15 percent last week, and vine desiccants continue to be applied to unharvested fields. Potato crops throughout New England are generally in good to fair condition. Broadleaf tobacco harvest is complete in both Connecticut and Massachusetts. Connecticut shade tobacco harvest neared completion by week's end.

FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	-- Percent Harvested --			Condition
	2002	2001	5-yr Avg	
Barley, ME	85	95	75	Good/Excellent
Oats, ME	60	85	70	Good/Excellent
Potatoes				
Maine	15	10	10	Good/Fair
Mass	50	45	55	Good/Fair
Rhode Isl	75	85	60	Good/Fair
Silage Corn	20	35	20	Good/Fair
Sweet Corn	90	90	85	Good/Fair
Tobacco				
Shade	99	99	99	Good/Fair
Broadleaf	100	95	99	Good/Fair
Dry Hay				
Second Cut	95	90	85	Good/Fair
Third Cut	65	65	60	Fair

For the Week Ending Sunday, September 15, 2002

The 42 stations shown below are limited by space but are well distributed across the region. All 86 stations appear on the Internet and in e-mail subscriptions.

STATION	AIR TEMPERATURE				CUM SINCE MAR 1 GROWING DEGREE DAYS				1-WEEK PRECIP			4-WEEK CUM PRECIP		
	-----				-----				-----			-----		
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN	TOTAL	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL	DFN	DAYS
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MAINE														
Augusta_State_A	44	96	70	+10	2095	+167	949	+217	0.29	-0.41	1	1.34	-1.53	7
Bangor_Intl_Arp	41	97	67	+9	1959	+199	845	+232	0.28	-0.56	2	1.36	-1.82	12
Bethel	43	99	67	+8	1847	+109	742	+153	0.07	-0.70	1	0.69	-2.70	8
Cari bou_Muni ci p	38	89	62	+8	1524	+130	562	+184	1.32	+0.48	6	2.86	-0.63	11
Dover-Foxcroft	36	94	63	+7	1486	-30	503	+51	0.15	-0.76	1	1.86	-1.68	7
Frenchville	36	85	60	+6	1400	+105	510	+187	1.94	+1.06	6	4.48	+0.85	12
Houlton	31	92	62	+8	1560	+103	570	+146	1.60	+0.75	3	2.18	-1.41	9
Livermore_Falls	37	100	66	+10	1899	+411	807	+378	0.28	-0.56	1	1.00	-2.60	9
Moosehead	35	95	62	+8	1400	+141	454	+144	1.59	+0.73	4	2.10	-1.30	8
Portland_ME	44	93	69	+9	2051	+270	896	+266	0.08	-0.62	1	1.82	-0.93	8
NEW_HAMPSHIRE														
Benton	42	93	65	+9	1810	+216	713	+239	0.55	-0.21	2	1.77	-1.58	6
Berlin_AG	41	92	64	+8	1737	+134	649	+153	0.68	-0.09	3	1.07	-2.45	7
Concord	38	95	69	+10	2324	+391	1106	+376	0.01	-0.64	1	2.10	-0.69	9
Diamond_Pond	37	86	60	+8	1220	+146	362	+157	1.73	+0.77	3	2.38	-1.86	8
Keene_AP	37	93	68	+7	2245	+84	1020	+127	0.11	-0.59	1	3.23	+0.10	7
North_Conway	43	98	68	+10	2138	+344	974	+345	0.04	-0.75	1	0.99	-2.43	9
Rochester	40	100	70	+9	2260	+189	1047	+215	0.00	-0.70	0	1.77	-1.23	6
VERMONT														
Burlington_Intl	48	98	70	+10	2360	+300	1128	+301	1.49	+0.70	4	2.46	-0.98	8
Island_Pond	38	91	62	+8	1611	+295	579	+255	2.19	+1.38	3	3.20	-0.60	7
Montpelier	41	92	66	+9	1865	+245	737	+233	0.53	-0.15	3	1.53	-1.59	7
Pownal	41	87	64	+6	1909	+217	756	+213	0.19	-0.72	2	2.29	-1.48	8
Rochester	41	95	66	+8	1868	+266	750	+256	0.60	-0.31	2	1.97	-1.95	7
Rutland_AG	39	93	66	+6	1979	-157	822	-48	0.82	-0.03	1	1.99	-1.64	5
Sunderland	39	93	64	+3	1845	-202	715	-79	0.28	-0.56	1	3.06	-0.48	5
Sutton	39	92	65	+10	1677	+348	619	+282	1.87	+1.06	3	2.40	-1.34	9
Townshend_Lake	42	92	67	+7	2136	+108	934	+131	0.02	-0.75	1	2.80	-0.58	9
MASSACHUSETTS														
Ashburnham	43	92	68	+10	2216	+463	991	+398	0.06	-0.64	2	2.33	-0.58	11
Boston/Logan_In	54	91	74	+9	2835	+346	1500	+343	0.00	-0.70	0	3.25	+0.27	10
Greenfield	43	92	67	+5	2420	+101	1144	+135	0.02	-0.79	1	2.68	-0.60	11
New_Bedford	47	88	71	+5	2542	+23	1217	+33	0.06	-0.74	1	2.19	-1.39	12
Otis_AFB	50	84	70	+7	2429	+381	1147	+318	0.00	-0.77	0	2.19	-0.91	9
Plymouth	42	89	69	+7	2427	+322	1158	+286	0.01	-0.97	1	3.02	-0.84	13
Walpole	47	93	70	+9	2526	+405	1242	+376	0.00	-0.87	0	3.47	-0.13	9
Chilmark/Westov	41	91	69	+4	2677	+20	1358	+80	0.00	-0.84	0	2.04	-1.31	8
Worthington	37	91	64	+5	1974	+248	825	+261	0.02	-0.82	2	2.82	-0.74	10
RHODE_ISLAND														
Providence	52	88	72	+7	2829	+454	1489	+416	0.00	-0.84	0	2.65	-0.71	10
Woonsocket	46	92	69	+8	2508	+420	1219	+393	0.00	-0.91	0	3.88	+0.24	9
CONNECTICUT														
Bridgeport/Siko	50	84	71	+4	2883	+324	1520	+287	0.01	-0.75	1	5.12	+2.25	9
Hartford/Bradlee	47	91	71	+7	2854	+308	1497	+304	0.00	-0.91	0	2.80	-0.75	8
Norfolk	45	89	66	+7	2239	+513	998	+434	0.00	-0.98	0	3.44	-0.64	10
Thomaston_Dam	41	88	65	+3	2465	+397	1163	+354	0.00	-0.95	0	3.89	+0.00	10
Willimantic	42	89	69	+7	2541	+430	1236	+393	0.00	-0.91	0	3.25	-0.34	10

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 WEATHER SUMMARY
 For the Week Ending Sunday, September 15, 2002

State	Air Temperatures				Precipitation	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	29	100	64	+7	0.00	2.41
NH	25	100	65	+8	0.00	2.47
VT	32	98	65	+8	0.02	6.24
MA	37	96	69	+7	0.00	0.62
RI	46	92	69	+6	0.00	0.02
CT	41	92	68	+4	0.00	0.04

Prepared by AWIS, Inc.

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: High winds (up to 60 mph in some areas of the county) damaged trees and tree fruit crops. Very little rain. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Third cutting of hay was about 60% of usual. Corn less than wished for with smaller ears. High wind shook out some fruit. Apple color is coming with arrival of cooler weather. Peaches almost done, good quality fruit. Market stands busy. Still need more rain. **Nancy Welsh/Karen Lockman (FSA), New Haven:** Chopping corn. Picking winter squashes and decorative gourds for stands. Humid weather and rains bring cracks to tomatoes and apples.

MAINE - Marvin Hedstrom, Northern Aroostook: Potatoes: Harvesting potatoes on a small scale both for processing and fresh market. Vine desiccation continues. Late maturing varieties still green, trying to gain larger size of tubers. Small grain harvesting continues. Showers during the week might help in getting more size on tubers, but time is running out. Tuber quality looks good. **Pam Hickey (Ext), Central Aroostook:** Potato farmers are starting to harvest for processing. Regular harvest will start by the end of the week or first of next week. We recently received rain that was very much welcomed. Showers are continuing today (Monday). This recent rain should help the sizing on late varieties. Farmers are continuing to harvest small grains. Crop are looking good. **Steve London (Ext), Southern Aroostook:** Still harvesting small grains and some early processing potatoes. **Albert Dow (NRCS), Piscataquis:** Well water levels are low. Sebec Lake's official temperature was 97 degrees at the beginning of the week. Potato harvest is under way now. **Janet King (FSA), Somerset:** Finally some rain. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Dry weather continues to keep pastures from a fall flush of growth. Corn silage harvest is in full swing, along with apples. Some manure spreading activity. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Sale of fresh produce is winding down. Fall mowing of blueberry fields has begun. Rain finally arrived on Sunday - too late for most crops. **Michael Tardy (FSA), Androscoggin:** Now it pours. Sunday gave us heavy showers but it's a little late for most crops. Folks are harvesting whatever is available and trying to get the crop year ended. Apples look good and "pick your own" is in full swing. Some of the silage corn is looking pretty good; much of it is short, no ears and dry. **Parker Rand (FSA), Cumberland/York:** Fall harvest is underway, apples - small but good quality, silage corn - poor, hay - very little left to be harvested. Animals on pasture have to be fed from next winter's supply. They say rain is on the way, let's hope! **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** Several requests for livestock water assistance have been received. Harvest has been easy due to dry field conditions. Insects have had a very high population this summer. Frost and dry soil conditions have turned some cornfields brown already. **Laura Rand (FSA), Oxford:** Ground conditions are very dry! Fall vegetables are appearing at farm stands, silage corn harvest has begun.

MASSACHUSETTS - Arthur Williams (FSA), Berkshire: Producers chopping corn this week. Vegetables still being harvested: sweet corn, fall squash, pumpkins, etc. Fruit being picked. Not good yield this year. Seasonally average temperatures returned this week. Light rainfall mid-week, heavy on Sunday, 1-3 inches. High winds mid-week. **Paul Russell (FSA), Southeast Massachusetts:** Harvest of late season crops is well underway and as expected all crops are showing damage from the drought. Pumpkins and squash are almost a total loss, sweet corn is slightly better than corn picked in August, with other crops like potatoes, green beans, etc. probably producing less than 50% of their normal yield. Cranberry harvest continues with some early blacks being harvested for fresh fruit with average yields and size. Process growers continue to wait for color and water before they start harvest. Silage corn growers are opening up their fields and harvesting drought damaged corn. **Kip Graham (FSA), Worcester:** Vegetable farmers were busy picking end of the season vegetables including pumpkins, squash, tomatoes and sweet corn. About 3/4 of the sweet corn is

harvested. Farm stands are still in full swing. We had some heavy winds last week that fell some trees and caused some crop damage as well. Vegetable yields varied from field to field depending on locations. Field corn harvest will be well underway soon and has begun in some parts of the county. Aside from the dry weather we've had, the corn is holding up for the most part. Third cutting of hay is in full swing between the raindrops. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: White berry harvest completed. Some dry harvesting begun. Harvesting will start on a wider scale later this week. Color is much better than expected, size is average to small. Some fruit rot problems. Rain coming from Hanna will help. **John Devine (FSA), Franklin:** Rain on Sunday provided a welcome relief from the dry weather. All farms are actively harvesting fall crops including squash, mums and pumpkins. Corn silage seems to be ripening slowly, most growers are planning to start harvest this week. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** Fall harvest is in full swing. Harvesting third cutting of hay, pears, apples, corn silage, potatoes and many more fall crops. Growers report yields are down slightly due to the dry year, but quality is good. A very nice gentle rain on Sunday. **Gary Guida, Worcester:** Well, yet another week without rain - although forecasting some for Sunday. Sweet corn holding up well. Harvesting pumpkins, winter squash, gourds, tomatoes, and summer squash. Only good rain will do now is help last sections of corn and recharge groundwater. Busy week again at farm stands as autumn crop sales are picking up, but sweet corn is still a big seller. Mum's the word.

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire: Mostly dry all week, with some rain late on Sunday. Third and remainder of second cutting hay harvests continue. Regrowth on alfalfa is good, and while regrowth on grasses is slower, fields generally look green and lush. Late summer seedings are starting to green up. Field corn continues to mature - kernels are denting and corn is about 1/3 milk line. Chopping has started along the Connecticut River. Orchards are busy with PYO and apple harvest. Farm stands and farmers' markets still have an abundance of various vegetables. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Heavy soaking rains, well over 2 inches over the past week, have done much to alleviate drought concerns. Field corn generally at soft dough stage, beginning to dent in some plantings. Nice looking second cut hay being taken, with some decent third crop coming along. Late season veggies now available, winter squash and pumpkins showing up at farm stands. Fall soil testing beginning. Appears to have been more mention of both bear and bird damage on various crops this season. Perhaps attributing this to dry weather and somewhat sparse wild apple and other fruits. **Tom Buob (Ext), Grafton:** Harvest of corn silage has begun, despite the lack of maturity. Dry weather has halted growth and corn has dried down significantly, especially on sandy soils. Rain on Sunday will help regrowth on hay crop but came too late for most corn. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Fruit: McIntosh and Gala apple harvest, also starting to harvest some early Cortland. Warm temperatures have delayed the coloring of red-colored apple varieties. Peach, pear, plum and fall raspberry harvest continued. Vegetables: Harvesting wide array of summer and fall vegetable crops. Farmers kept busy irrigating crops not harvested and starting to clean up harvested fields. Field Crops: Hay cutting continued. Farmers finished making new forage seedings. Farmers starting corn silage harvest. **David Seavey (Ext), Merrimack:** Apple harvest in full swing. Pumpkins, squash, fall raspberries and other fall crops are harvested. Crop residues turned under on harvested fields. Corn silage harvest has begun. Lots of needed rain came at week's end. Drought related problems prevalent. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** Picking late blueberry varieties, fall raspberries, peaches, pumpkins, and a whole array of vegetables. A significant amount of apples ready to be harvested (such as McIntosh) were knocked down to the ground as a result of strong winds that happened on Wednesday afternoon. Wind damages not completely assessed. Cleaning apple and fruit orchards from drops and broken branches.

Harvesting apple varieties and packing. Sunday evening's soaking rain was welcomed. **Pam Marvin (FSA), Sullivan:** Silage corn harvest is in full swing. Various yields due to the drought. Apple picking has begun with reports of apples being smaller than normal, but an overall good crop. Strong winds last week did minor damage to crop fields, mostly slightly blown over corn. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** Dry weather continued last week. However, some rains during the weekend brought some relief. Third cut hay harvesting continued. Harvesting of sweet corn, squash, tomatoes, cucumbers, etc. continues. Harvesting of apples continues. More rain is needed.

RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport: The weather ran from cool to hot and from high winds to no air. Still harvesting potatoes, sweet corn, most summer vegetables, winter squash, gourds, decorative crops and some haying done. The lack of water is the main topic of conversation and what type of relief will the future bring. **Marilu Soileau (FSA), All Counties:** Rain is great for all of us BUT rainy Sundays are devastating to our pick your own fruit operations. Sunday is traditionally the busiest day of the week. Mid-September is the make or break time for orchardists. Potatoes are small and marketing them is difficult. Silage corn harvest is gearing up but yields will be down. It will take many more rainy days to relieve the drought anxiety. Animal operations are preparing to enlarge ponds and fracture wells on a case-by-case basis. Loan inquiries have increased in recent days.

VERMONT - John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille: We're finally getting some much needed moisture although it's getting a little late in the growing season to help most crops. Corn silage harvest is gaining some momentum with reasonable yields. When grass starts growing again there should be more third cut. **Bill**

Snow (Ext), Orange: Corn silage harvest starting up with clouds of dust behind equipment. Much needed rainfall occurred on Sunday with 2 inches in my rain gauge. Still need much more before the ground freezes. No frosts reported which is unusual in this area by this date. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** Rain over the weekend will help to ease the drought conditions. Farmers are getting ready to begin harvesting corn silage. Many farms are harvesting third cut hay. Crop is short due to the lack of moisture. Corn is beginning the dent stage. **Lynette Hamilton (FSA), Windham:** Much needed rain fell on Sunday into Monday, about one and one-half inches - that is a start but will need more before winter. Silage corn harvest is in full swing with a lot of variation in quality and quantity. A lot of excellent third cut alfalfa went in last week as dry feed. **Richard Noel, Franklin/Grand Isle:** We finally received some rain, over 3 inches this past week and it's all soaked in, no standing water hardly visible. Ground was very dry and some springs were running short of water. Corn harvest has begun on the early planted corn, but farmers are going to wait, probably until close to frost, for the later planted corn. Grass looks pretty poor, this rain will help perk it up. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Another summer-like week. Some haying, spreading manure, getting geared up for chopping corn. Received some badly needed rain on Sunday. **Sherwin Williams, Rutland:** Farmers starting to chop corn. Seeded down more land to winter rye. Potatoes ready for digging. Had a nice rainy day Wednesday. A good big half-inch. First rain in two weeks. It was badly needed. It will help the last of garden crops, late cabbage, broccoli and beets. Still picking real nice mid-season corn. Early seeding of winter rye, looks good in spite of dry weather. Have a good week.

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