

# 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

Volume 29, Number 21

(Issued weekly on the Internet, May – October)

September 21, 2009 – 4 pm

For week ending 9/20/09

## Cool and Dry

**GENERAL CONDITIONS:** For the week ending September 20, 2009, there were 6.8 days available for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated 1% very poor, 16% poor, 32% fair, 46% good, and 5% excellent. It was another dry week with cooler temperatures in New England. Highs ranged from the low 60s to mid-70s with nighttime lows dipping down into the upper 20s in some of the northern regions. Isolated areas received light rain showers during the week, but most of New England remained dry. Many areas were issued frost advisories during the weekend. A few areas were missed altogether, however most experienced their first frost of the season. No significant crop damage was reported as a result of weekend frosts. The week ended with sunny skies and mostly average temperatures in the upper 60s to mid-70s. Although concern is growing over the lack of rain, the dry weather promoted excellent harvest conditions. Farmers harvested a multitude of crops and farmer's markets and pick-your-own operations remained busy.

**FRUIT:** The apple harvest picked up speed in many areas throughout New England. Even though apple scab has been found in some orchards, the crop remains in good condition. The pear harvest was still going strong last week, however peaches were almost done. The highbush blueberry crop was 100 percent harvested at week's end, on par with last year and normal. Some Massachusetts cranberry growers began harvesting last week, however most growers were still waiting for berries to color up.

**VEGETABLES:** The sweet corn harvest was winding down during the week in most areas. A few other summer vegetables such as tomatoes, peppers, and summer squash could still be found at farm stands; but winter squash, cabbage, Brussels sprouts and pumpkins were more common. There have been the typical late blight problems and powdery mildew seemed common. Vegetable growers were also busy during the week disking fields, seeding cover crops and irrigating.

**FIELD CROPS:** Farmers continued to harvest second and third cut hay even though drying conditions weren't as favorable due to the cooler temperatures. Corn was being chopped across New England last week, however there were still many farmers in the northern states that have not begun harvest at all. Maine's oat and barley crops were completely harvested by week's end, both ahead of last year and normal. The potato harvest in Maine gained momentum during the week and ranged from 5 percent complete in central Aroostook County to 30 percent complete in the southern part of the County. The shade tobacco harvest was complete by week's end, however there were still a couple of broadleaf fields yet to be cut in Connecticut. Along with the fall harvest, growers also kept busy planting cover crops and spreading manure.

### SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
<b>Topsoil</b>			
Very Short	9	2	1
Short	29	29	16
Adequate	59	62	77
Surplus	3	7	6
<b>Subsoil</b>			
Very Short	7	2	2
Short	21	17	7
Adequate	69	73	86
Surplus	3	8	5

### FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Percent Harvested			Fruit Size	Condition
	2009	2008	5-yr Avg		
Apples	40	40	40	Avg/Above	Good
Peaches	95	95	95	Average	Good/Fair
Pears	65	55	55	Average	Good/Fair
Blueberries					
Highbush	100	100	100	Average	Good
Cranberries, MA	-	<5	<5	Avg/Above	Good/Excellent

### FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	2009	2008	5-yr Avg	Condition
--Percent Harvested--				
Barley, ME	100	95	90	Good/Fair
Oats, ME	100	85	80	Good/Fair
Potatoes				
Maine	10	20	15	Good/Excellent
Mass	70	50	50	Good/Fair
Rhode Island	55	90	80	Fair
Silage Corn	10	25	25	Fair/Good
Sweet Corn	95	95	95	Good/Fair
Tobacco				
Broadleaf	95	100	99	Fair/Poor
Shade	100	100	100	Good/Fair
Dry Hay				
Second Cut	95	95	95	Good/Fair
Third Cut	70	60	60	Good/Fair

For the Period: Monday September 14, 2009  
 To: Sunday September 20, 2009

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	---	---
<b>MAINE</b>														
Augusta_State_A	39	78	57	-2	1897	-73	662	-77	0.16	-0.55	2	3.54	+0.71	9
Bangor_Intl_Arp	35	77	55	-4	1792	-6	624	+6	0.20	-0.61	2	2.64	-0.56	6
Bethel	34	73	55	-3	1605	-169	478	-116	0.23	-0.54	2	2.01	-1.28	7
Caribou_Municip	29	64	50	-4	1512	+100	509	+131	0.30	-0.50	2	0.59	-2.81	6
Dover-Foxcroft	31	74	51	-5	1477	-65	456	+4	0.11	-0.80	3	0.97	-2.62	7
Frenchville	31	62	48	-5	1372	+60	433	+110	0.50	-0.34	3	1.24	-2.32	5
Houlton	28	72	50	-4	1491	+15	505	+81	0.15	-0.69	2	0.78	-2.75	6
Livermore_Falls	30	77	54	-2	1637	+125	526	+97	0.27	-0.57	1	1.50	-2.00	5
Moosehead	32	67	50	-4	1228	-51	340	+30	0.03	-0.81	1	0.62	-2.78	6
Portland_ME	37	79	59	+0	1946	+123	707	+72	0.03	-0.67	1	4.97	+2.17	6
<b>NEW HAMPSHIRE</b>														
Benton	33	68	53	-4	1547	-76	475	-1	0.14	-0.57	2	1.37	-1.83	9
Berlin_AG	33	71	54	-3	1528	-103	440	-57	0.42	-0.34	1	2.11	-1.25	5
Concord	31	79	57	-3	2046	+72	770	+35	0.06	-0.57	2	3.08	+0.38	8
Diamond_Pond	31	62	46	-7	885	-204	148	-57	1.33	+0.42	3	1.98	-2.08	8
Keene_AG	34	79	58	-3	2077	-134	817	-86	0.00	-0.70	0	3.12	+0.11	6
North_Conway	34	77	56	-2	1662	-166	503	-130	0.02	-0.75	1	2.35	-0.97	5
Rochester	37	77	58	-3	2050	-69	779	-62	0.00	-0.74	0	3.29	+0.30	5
<b>VERMONT</b>														
Bennington_AP	32	74	55	-3	1991	+263	692	+144	0.01	-0.88	1	1.55	-2.15	6
Burlington_Intl	37	74	58	-1	2202	+101	880	+46	0.54	-0.23	3	1.33	-2.01	9
Island_Pond	34	65	52	-2	1471	+133	443	+118	0.94	+0.18	3	1.75	-1.80	10
Montpelier	34	70	55	-2	1838	+187	638	+129	0.20	-0.43	2	1.39	-1.54	9
Rochester	34	72	55	-3	1659	+24	529	+30	0.29	-0.57	2	1.85	-1.92	7
Rutland_AG	32	71	55	-5	1851	-333	618	-262	0.07	-0.76	1	1.86	-1.66	7
Springfield_VT	35	75	57	-1	2019	+230	733	+141	0.14	-0.67	4	2.22	-1.21	11
Sutton	33	64	52	-3	1361	+11	371	+34	0.16	-0.61	3	1.26	-2.28	10
<b>MASSACHUSETTS</b>														
Boston/Logan_In	49	80	63	-2	2534	-26	1119	-60	0.00	-0.70	0	4.82	+1.89	5
Fitchburg	37	81	60	+3	2470	+681	1074	+476	0.01	-0.66	1	2.35	-0.48	6
Greenfield	37	78	58	-5	2086	-291	787	-236	0.00	-0.77	0	3.61	+0.38	6
New_Bedford	36	78	60	-6	2280	-314	923	-287	0.17	-0.60	1	5.74	+2.31	7
Otis_AFB	39	75	59	-4	2328	+222	956	+114	0.16	-0.61	2	8.85	+5.75	8
Plymouth	37	77	60	-3	2274	+114	919	+36	0.06	-0.92	2	5.07	+1.16	8
Walpole	38	78	59	-2	2187	+16	860	-16	0.00	-0.84	0	3.36	-0.19	4
Chicopee/Westov	34	80	58	-7	2355	-372	982	-318	0.00	-0.84	0	2.34	-1.02	7
Worthington	34	76	55	-4	1749	-15	565	-4	0.01	-0.83	1	3.01	-0.50	5
<b>RHODE ISLAND</b>														
Providence	43	80	63	-2	2527	+85	1113	+20	0.00	-0.82	0	3.25	-0.09	5
Woonsocket	38	80	60	-1	2312	+174	941	+106	0.00	-0.90	0	3.37	-0.26	6
<b>CONNECTICUT</b>														
Bridgeport/Siko	47	81	64	-3	2629	-7	1218	-43	0.02	-0.69	1	1.41	-1.46	6
Hartford/Bradle	38	81	61	-2	2616	+7	1185	-25	0.00	-0.90	0	2.01	-1.58	6
Norfolk	38	70	56	-3	1869	+106	631	+62	0.00	-0.98	0	2.29	-1.74	6
Thomaston_Dam	39	78	60	-2	2324	+204	959	+139	0.07	-0.84	2	2.70	-1.14	8
Willimantic	38	80	60	-2	2539	+375	1120	+266	0.00	-0.93	0	1.67	-1.99	6

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 precipitation of 0.01 inch or more.  
 Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit.  
 Copyright 2009. AWIS, Inc. All Rights Reserved.  
 For detailed ag weather forecasts and data visit the AWIS  
 home page at [www.awis.com](http://www.awis.com) or call toll free at 1-888-798-9955.

**State Weather Summary**  
 For the Week Ending Sunday, September 20, 2009

STATE	AIR TEMPERATURES				PRECIPITATION	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	28	79	53	-3	0.00	0.50
NH	24	80	55	-3	0.00	1.33
VT	30	76	54	-3	0.01	0.94
MA	31	81	59	-3	0.00	0.17
RI	38	80	62	-1	0.00	0.00
CT	35	82	60	-3	0.00	0.65

**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:** Yields of early harvested silage corn are down about one third. **Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland:** A very nice week for harvesting crops, seeding turf grass, and visiting farmers markets and farm stands. Pumpkin harvest where they can be found. Corn silage progressing to about a third done. Some very nice third/fourth cut grass hay put up. A couple of broadleaf fields yet to be cut. Some frost in outlying valleys but none along CT River. **Richard Meinert (Ext), Litchfield:** Farm stands are sprouting shipping containers of pumpkins. Buying in supplies is the only way to make up for the 60+% crop loss on area pumpkins. **Barbara Pagano (FSA), New London:** Good weather all last week makes cutting hay and harvesting corn better. **Nancy Welsh (FSA), New Haven:** Crop conditions continued to deteriorate from excessive rainfall and pressure from diseases. Silage corn harvest is in full swing and producers are reporting reduced tonnage about one third of normal and the grain content is less than normal. That, plus poor hay yields is causing concerns about having enough feed next winter. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** An excellent week for crops, corn chopping doing well, some farms are all done with the silage pile covered, others waiting for maturity. Corn production is off about one third this year and quality is an issue. Sweet corn, Ginger Gold apples, peaches are superb. Good color, excellent flavor. Pumpkins are a problem, vigorously flowering too late, immature pumpkins on the vine. Tomatoes gone on some farms, others doing better. Overall production is better than anticipated with the wet spring and summer; definite losses in all crops with most effect on hay, pumpkins, tomatoes and corn. Hail damage to apples and vine crops still evident but most have made it to harvest. Also making cider.

**MAINE – Doreen Conlogue (FSA), Aroostook:** Last week was great for field work but still very dry - unfortunately there is no rain in the forecast. Potato harvest should be in full swing beginning this week. **Pam Hickey (Ext), Central Aroostook:** Farmers are harvesting potatoes - approximately 5% are harvested in the Central Aroostook area. Broccoli harvest continued. Oats and barley are harvested for this area. Crops look great. The weather has been beautiful for harvesting - let's hope the weather continues to be nice to get the crop out of the ground. Although in this area, we could use just a little more rain to help the soil moisture. **Sandy Truslow (FSA), Cumberland/York:** Another beautiful week. Our area seems to have missed any significant frost. Farmers are busy cutting third crop hay, which is reported to be very good. Fields have dried out and manure is being spread. Apples are reported to be a good size this year, and the harvest and pick your own apples are now in full swing. Corn silage generally has smaller ears and stalks than normal. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** First frost hit spots in the county but was not well spread. Corn is still gaining but definitely below average yield expected. Squash will be scarce and pumpkin harvest will be below average. Lots of manure being spread. The leaves are changing color especially north of the mountains. **Valerie Porter (FSA), Hancock/Penobscot/Piscataquis:** Third cutting of hay is in full swing and producers have started chopping corn. Crop looks okay but could be a lot better. Apples and late crops are being harvested in the second week. Crops that didn't make it won't now due to cold temperatures setting in. Pastures and ground need rain. Showers are predicted this week but let's hope it's enough. Manure has been spread on fields and more to come. Most crops that did not rebound from June and July weather had no help with the warm August. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Fall is almost here and thus far, the weather has been beautiful. There will be little third crop harvested due to the late harvest of first and second crop. With harvest just underway, the pumpkin crop appears to be fair and winter squash is fair to good. The apple harvest is in full swing with reports of an average yield for most apple varieties. We have experienced some frost in low lying areas which has really not affected crops. It is anticipated the harvest of silage corn will start

next weekend or early the following week. Another beautiful week is forecasted in the mid-coast area. **Kathy Hopkins (Ext), Somerset:** Another week of sunshine. We could use some rain. **Janet King (FSA), Somerset:** We are in need for rain; many areas are very dry with a threat of fires. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Dry weather continues and fields that were too wet to drive on a month ago are rock hard. Corn silage harvest is starting to gear up although maturity of plants is way behind schedule. Apple harvest is going very well. Some spots have experienced a frost in Waldo County.

**MASSACHUSETTS - Aimee Thayer (FSA), Berkshire:** A beautiful week with fall like weather. First frost on the 19th in central and northern Berkshire. Sweet corn harvest is over. Field corn harvest may start next week in earnest. Foliage is ahead of usual this year. Business at orchards, stands and markets is good. **Lori Carver (FSA), Franklin:** Autumn must be right around the corner as we had a light frost in the hills on Saturday and Sunday. Apple harvest is in full swing as is the winter squash and pumpkin harvest. The final hay crop is coming off as dairy farmers switch gears to the corn harvest. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** Another very nice week for fall harvest. Fall raspberry and corn silage harvest has started. Potatoes, cabbage, apples, pumpkins and winter squash harvest continues. A cover crop of rye is being applied to many harvested fields. Dairy farmers are spreading manure after their last cut of hay. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: Harvesting started last week, with both dry and wet harvesting taking place. Things are going slowly, as growers wait for more color. Nights have been cool to speed the process, and Saturday into Sunday was likely a night they had to run the sprinklers to protect the berries from frost. Wareham and Bourne saw the highest amounts of rainfall the previous weekend, with upwards of 7.5 inches in places. There will be plenty of water available this fall. So far, fruit rot has not been a big issue for growers.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE - Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll:** Cool, dry, and bright blue skies. Lovely, but cool weather; frost warnings posted in several locations over the past week. No reports of any frost in the county, but with the weather the way it is, I can't imagine that frost is far away. More color on maples, especially in the low areas. Pumpkins, winter squash, mums and Indian corn at the farm stand. Blueberry harvest winding down; apple picking up. Judged forages at the Rochester Fair; hay looked great, considering the wet summer! **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Another week of bright sunny weather, though temperatures were markedly cooler. The big push for chopping corn has begun, and most farms have been able to make good progress. Ideal conditions for harvesting dry hay and haylage/baleage for the last of third cutting. Continuing to see more fall crops offered at markets and farm stands. Great week for apple picking. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Sunny but colder weather. Some hay being mowed but tough to dry for baling. First frost this weekend throughout many areas in the county. Corn silage harvest just beginning. Sweet corn, winter squash available, also corn stalks, mums and pumpkins on sale for the fall decoration market. Typical late season plant problems, powdery mildew seems common this year. Ground pretty dry as only a little rain this week, not much this month. Canada geese are flying. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** Corn harvest is well under way. The custom harvesters are taking advantage of the good field conditions. Some final cuttings of hay and alfalfa will be taken later this fall. The corn looks better than expected on many fields. Some fields however have a substantial reduction in yield due to the wet conditions that prevailed through most of the summer. Some producers of dry hay are reporting yield losses, and many are reporting quality losses due to the wet weather this summer. The drier conditions that have prevailed since the end of August have been a welcome blessing to many farmers. A few farms have reported losses in grazing this past summer due to very wet soils. **Heather Bryant (Ext), Grafton:** Light frost in the

northern part of the county on September 20. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Very localized frost reports on morning of September 20, but no major damage reported. Vegetables: Harvesting wide array of vegetables, including warm season vegetables like tomatoes and peppers. Harvesting cabbage, kale, Brussels sprouts, winter squash and pumpkins. Farmers kept busy disking, cleaning up and planting cover crops on harvested fields. Fruit: Apple harvest is in full swing with most growers concentrating on second picking McIntosh and Gala apples, and working on Cortland. Some orchardists are finding some apple scab fruit when harvesting due to the wet conditions we had this spring and summer. Fall raspberries and pear harvest continued with peach and plum harvest winding down. Field Crops: Silage corn harvest has started along with continuing second and third cuts of hay and haylage continues. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** Good apple crops. PYO apple operations very busy. Blueberries and peaches harvest almost done. Harvesting an array of vegetables, pumpkins, winter squashes. Mums available. Chopping field corn. Past irrigating vegetable fields. Some areas hit by light frost. A sunny week. Farm stands and farmers markets remain busy. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** Pleasant weather for field work. Hay producers were busy making hay and haylage. Fruit growers were busy harvesting apples and peaches. Blueberry harvesting is winding down and fall raspberry harvesting is just starting. Vegetable growers were busy harvesting an array of vegetables and sweet corn. They were also tilling the fields and planting cover crops. Greenhouse and garden center operations were busy selling fall mums, corn stalks and other fall decorations. The poinsettia crop is growing well for most greenhouse operations.

**VERMONT – Jeff Carter, (Ext), Addison:** Starting to harvest corn silage. Opening up field edges. Yields still very low. Haylage harvest

continues, some dry hay as well. Manure spreading on cut hay fields continues. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Another cool dry week. Scattered showers on Friday. Killing frost on Saturday night. Working on hay, haylage, spreading manure, getting ready to chop corn. Leaves beginning to turn. **Paul Stanley (CCA), Franklin:** The dry weather is continuing in Franklin County with a couple of reports on wells short of water for cattle. It is amazing how fast things can change when it comes to wet and dry conditions. Pastures are still doing well for the time of year and dry conditions. The growth would slow this time of year anyways, however, any moisture that does come our way will give grasses a little last spurt. Corn is drying down very nicely and will be even quicker with the help of a good frost Saturday night and some harvest has begun through the week. Hopefully the weather will keep things at a good condition for harvest. This would be very welcome in the economic times helping keep harvest costs down. Apple picking is now in full swing with reports of bountiful crop. The other veggie crops are coming to a close except for a lot of pumpkins beginning to show up. Fertilizer applications are about done with some potash applications going on alfalfa. This should be sparingly and done with some sort of nutrient plan and/or soil sample. Potash is very expensive and needs to be applied as needed only. **John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille:** We have managed to escape a killing frost in the valleys although some higher elevations not protected by fog have had their first frost. Haying continues for many that need to put up dry bales particularly for the horse feed market. The dry weather has been great for the veggie harvest. Corn silage harvest is later than usual but harvest weather is looking good so far. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** It was another really nice week for putting crops. Most farmers were finishing up haying and will be starting to cut corn. Saturday was our first frost of the season. Pastures are poor to fair due to the late season and much drier weather over the past few weeks.

To receive this report every Monday evening, send an e-mail message to [listserv@newsbox.usda.gov](mailto:listserv@newsbox.usda.gov) and in the body, type **subscribe usda-new-eng-crop-weather**

**Gary R. Keough, Director**

**Jennifer M. Zaleski, Statistician**  
**Kathy Schmitt, Stat Assistant**