

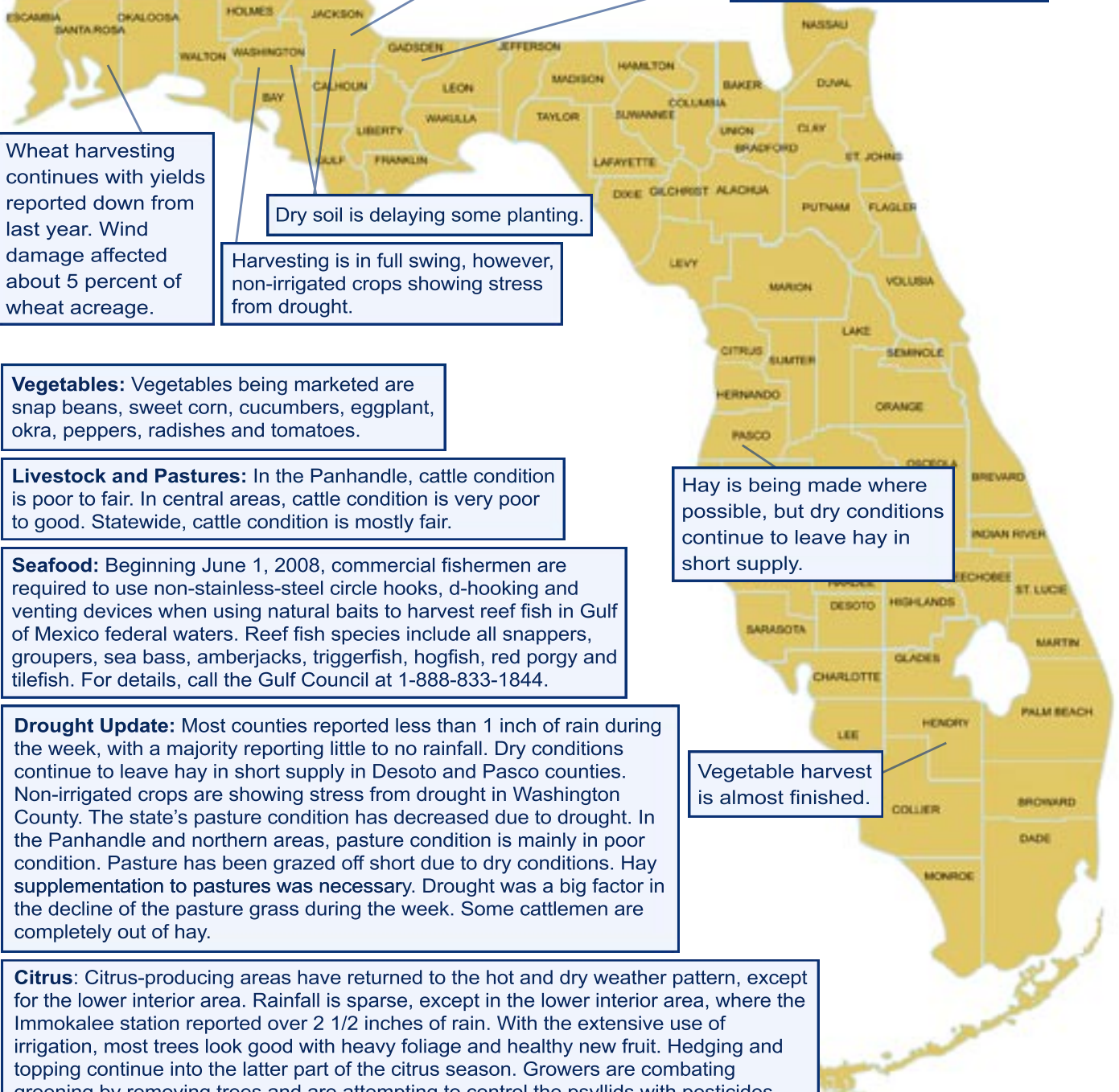
The Week in Florida Agriculture

May 26 - June 1, 2008

Peanut planting is 90 percent completed, compared to 64 percent this time last year.

Wheat and oat harvest is under way with good yields.

Tomato harvesting is expected to begin soon with the crop reported as excellent.



Wheat harvesting continues with yields reported down from last year. Wind damage affected about 5 percent of wheat acreage.

Dry soil is delaying some planting.

Harvesting is in full swing, however, non-irrigated crops showing stress from drought.

Vegetables: Vegetables being marketed are snap beans, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, okra, peppers, radishes and tomatoes.

Livestock and Pastures: In the Panhandle, cattle condition is poor to fair. In central areas, cattle condition is very poor to good. Statewide, cattle condition is mostly fair.

Seafood: Beginning June 1, 2008, commercial fishermen are required to use non-stainless-steel circle hooks, d-hooking and venting devices when using natural baits to harvest reef fish in Gulf of Mexico federal waters. Reef fish species include all snappers, groupers, sea bass, amberjacks, triggerfish, hogfish, red porgy and tilefish. For details, call the Gulf Council at 1-888-833-1844.

Hay is being made where possible, but dry conditions continue to leave hay in short supply.

Drought Update: Most counties reported less than 1 inch of rain during the week, with a majority reporting little to no rainfall. Dry conditions continue to leave hay in short supply in Desoto and Pasco counties. Non-irrigated crops are showing stress from drought in Washington County. The state's pasture condition has decreased due to drought. In the Panhandle and northern areas, pasture condition is mainly in poor condition. Pasture has been grazed off short due to dry conditions. Hay supplementation to pastures was necessary. Drought was a big factor in the decline of the pasture grass during the week. Some cattlemen are completely out of hay.

Vegetable harvest is almost finished.

Citrus: Citrus-producing areas have returned to the hot and dry weather pattern, except for the lower interior area. Rainfall is sparse, except in the lower interior area, where the Immokalee station reported over 2 1/2 inches of rain. With the extensive use of irrigation, most trees look good with heavy foliage and healthy new fruit. Hedging and topping continue into the latter part of the citrus season. Growers are combating greening by removing trees and are attempting to control the psyllids with pesticides. Valencia harvest has dropped below the 6 million-box weekly amount as hot temperatures slowed harvest. Availability of fruit remaining to be harvested decreasing as some fruit softness has resulted from the dry and hot weather. Some processing plants are planning to run Valencia oranges into the second week of July. Grapefruit utilization declining rapidly with small amounts continuing to be processed. Honey tangerine harvest nearing completion with packing houses closing for the season.