

The Week in Florida Agriculture

June 23-29, 2008

Peanut pegging is 44 percent complete, compared to 24 percent this time last year. The condition is rated 1 percent poor, 67 percent fair, 25 percent good, and 7 percent excellent.

Irrigated corn is described as good with ears developing. Pecans and cotton are in fair to good condition.

Early planted crops are developing well. All peanut and cotton crops have emerged and soil moisture is good enough to practice adequate weed control.

Watermelons are in mid-harvest. Some seedless varieties are showing signs of hollow heart.

Crops have been aided by rain, but more is needed to return to normal.

Seafood: July is a good month for Florida's supply of spotted sea trout (speckled trout).

Livestock and Pastures: In the Panhandle and northern areas, pasture condition is in fair condition. Grass is recovering from drought conditions, but is very short and recovery will take time due to overgrazed conditions. The drought has reduced hay production. Most cattle in the north are in fair to good condition. Pasture in the central areas is poor to excellent and the condition of cattle is poor to good. In the southwestern areas, pasture condition is fair to good, and cattle condition ranges from poor to excellent. Statewide, cattle condition varies from poor to good.

Drought Update: Rain has been scattered with most areas receiving over an inch. Nearly the entire southern and central Peninsula received considerable precipitation, and areas all across the citrus belt received ample amounts of rainfall. Crops remain stressed in areas that did not receive sufficient rainfall. Pasture condition has improved in most of the state, however, much more rain will be needed for normal forage growth. Grass, recovering from drought conditions, is very short and recovery will take time due to overgrazed conditions. Drought has reduced hay production.

Citrus: The tropical weather continues to be an asset to fruit growth and tree foliage. Oranges were as large as golf ball size, while grapefruit were about two to three times as large. Trees in well kept groves were in good condition for next season's crop. Production practices are on schedule in all areas and included herbicide application, spraying, mowing and brush removal. Some growers are combining efforts and are using aerial applications for Psyllid control. Valencia harvest continues to be active in southern areas where the majority of remaining fruit is located. A few processing plants plan to run Valencia oranges into the second week of July. Grapefruit processing is nearly completed with small amounts of red varieties continuing to be juiced. Honey tangerine harvest has been completed for the season.

