

# The Week in Florida Agriculture

November 9-15, 2009

Rain from Tropical Storm Ida delayed the harvesting of cotton, peanuts and soybeans.

Peanut harvesting is 93 percent complete, compared to 97 percent at this time last year and a five-year average of 98 percent.

Cabbage and broccoli are being planted.

Potato fields are being prepared. Cabbage planting continues.

Strawberries and greens are being planted.

Planting of cool-season forages continues. More rain is needed for growth in the Big Bend and central peninsula.

Windy conditions in the southern peninsula caused blooms to be blown off and scarring of some crops.

Estimated crop losses due to Tropical Storm Ida: soybeans 10 percent, peanuts 30 percent, cotton 20 percent, forage/hay 60 percent, pecans 30 percent.

**Weather Summary:** Tropical Storm Ida brought rain to the Panhandle.

**Forestry:** Land owners are preparing for winter tree planting and prescribed burning.

**Seafood:** Red grouper, black grouper, spiny lobster, red snapper, stone crab claws, red snapper and Gulf brown shrimp are plentiful.

**Vegetables:** Light volumes of sweet corn, radishes and watermelon are being harvested. Snap beans, cucumbers, eggplants, okra, peppers, squash, tomatoes, and avocados are being marketed.

**Livestock and Pastures:** Rain from Tropical Storm Ida improved pasture soil moisture in the Panhandle and northern areas. Central and southwest areas were hurt by drought. In the Panhandle and northern areas, pasture condition is poor to excellent, with most fair to good. Tropical Storm Ida provided welcomed moisture for winter pastures. Planting of cool season forages continues and some small-grain winter forage is up and may be ready for grazing by Thanksgiving. Perennial pastures are in decent condition but growth has almost stopped due to cool nights. Some supplemental hay is being fed. Cattle condition ranges from poor to excellent with most good. In the central areas, pasture condition is very poor to excellent with most fair to good. Rain from TS Ida improved pasture soil moisture and pasture growth; however, cooler night temperatures have slowed growth of grasses. Cattle condition is poor to excellent. In the southwest, pasture condition is poor to excellent with most fair to good. Armyworms are still causing damage, though less than in previous weeks. Some spraying to control the worms continues. Statewide, cattle condition is poor to excellent with most good. The calving season is under way.

**Citrus:** High temperatures for the week were mostly in the mid- to upper-80s, with lows in the 40s for most of the citrus region. A cool front at the end of the week brought the average temperatures down to the 60s, but temperatures returned to normal by the weekend. Rainfall increased very slightly, with a few stations receiving a half inch. This did little to relieve the mild drought conditions still being experienced in the northern and Indian River districts. Growers are applying supplemental sprays and fertilizers to maintain healthy citrus trees. Other grove activity includes limited mowing, irrigation, and general maintenance. Forty packinghouses are open and shipping fruit, with only a few left that could open. Varieties being packed include early oranges (Navels, Ambersweet, and Hamlin), white and colored grapefruit, and early tangerines (Fallglo and Sunburst). Nine processors are open and accepting fruit.