

The Week in Florida Agriculture

December 14-20, 2009

Wet conditions across the Panhandle continue to hinder fieldwork and harvest of cotton and soybeans.

Some peanuts have been dug but not harvested as wet conditions prevented heavy machinery from moving onto fields.

A significant amount of cotton and soybeans are still in the field and some will be abandoned.

Wet conditions have delayed winter wheat planting.

Winter pasture growth is good.

Caladium bulbs are being harvested.

Weather Summary: Beneficial rain was received in the southern peninsula.

Harvesting of sweet corn and herbs continues at a fast pace ahead of approaching cold weather.

Forestry: Landowners are beginning to plant bare-root tree seedlings. Forestry officials remind landowners who are preparing for dormant season prescribed burning to develop plans and obtain authorizations.

Seafood: Red grouper, scamp, mangrove snapper, beeliner snapper, swordfish, mako shark, amberjack and yellowfin tuna are plentiful.

Vegetables: Tomatoes are being planted for late winter and spring harvest. Some splitting of tomatoes and bruising of bell peppers is being reported. Volumes of most items remain light and with growers struggling to meet holiday demand. Snap beans, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, endive/escarole, peppers, radishes, squash, strawberries, and light volumes of cabbage are being marketed.

Livestock and Pastures: Statewide, the pasture condition is very poor to excellent, with most fair. Statewide, cattle condition is poor to excellent, with most good.

Citrus: Varieties being packed include early oranges (Navel and Hamlin), white and colored grapefruit, and tangerines (predominately Sunburst, with a few Honey and Dancy varieties). Seventeen processors are open and accepting fruit. Early and midseason oranges and grapefruit comprise the majority of fruit going to the processing plants.

Fall tomato harvest has ended.

Recent rains have caused diminished vegetable quality.

Sugarcane harvest is active with good yields reported.

