

The Week in Florida Agriculture

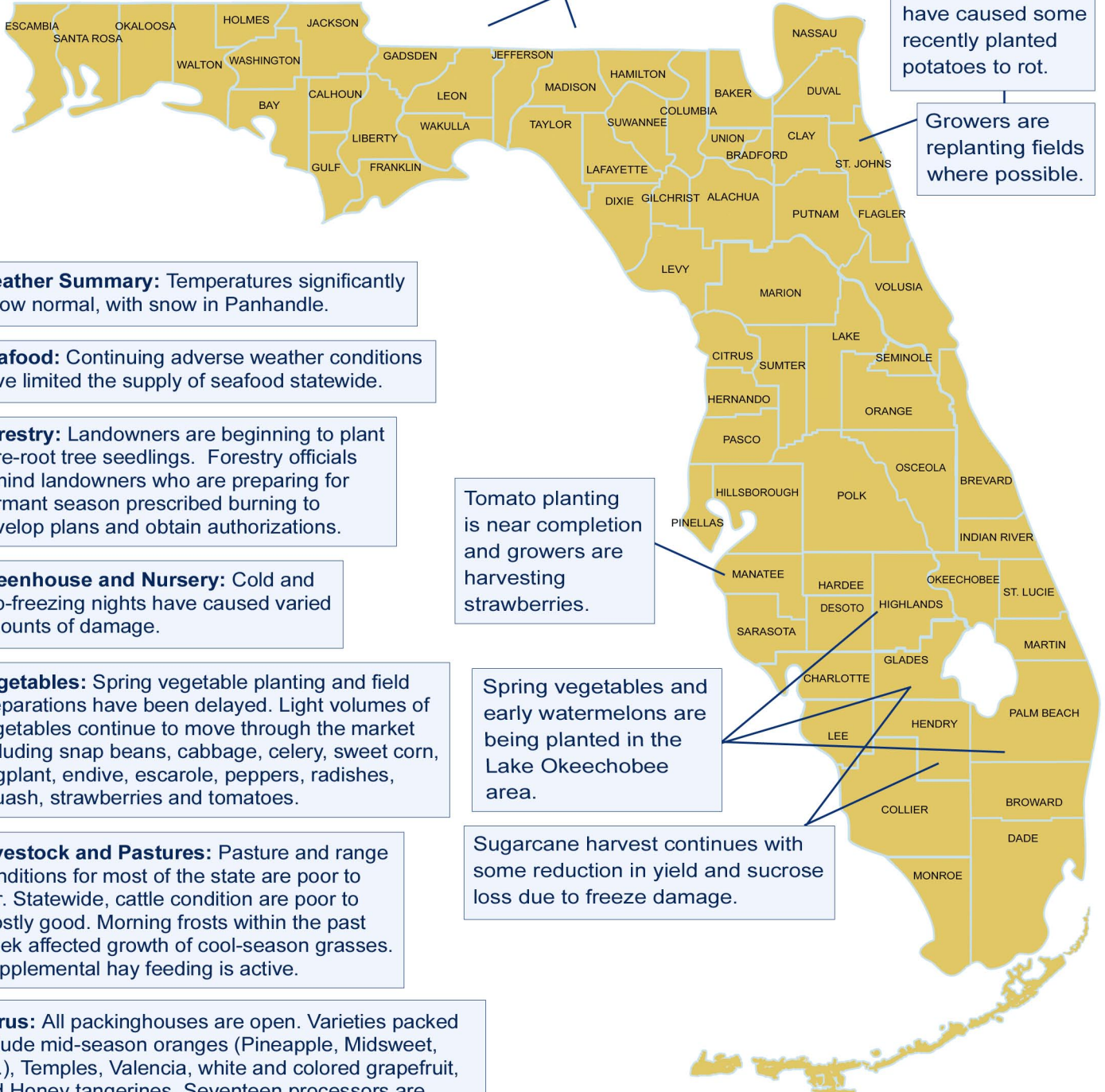
February 8-14, 2009

Excessively wet fields, cold temperatures and snow brought fieldwork to a standstill.

In the Panhandle and Big Bend, non-citrus fruit trees were starting to bud and were at risk for damage from hard freezes.

Flooding and standing water have caused some recently planted potatoes to rot.

Growers are replanting fields where possible.



Weather Summary: Temperatures significantly below normal, with snow in Panhandle.

Seafood: Continuing adverse weather conditions have limited the supply of seafood statewide.

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.

Greenhouse and Nursery: Cold and sub-freezing nights have caused varied amounts of damage.

Vegetables: Spring vegetable planting and field preparations have been delayed. Light volumes of vegetables continue to move through the market including snap beans, cabbage, celery, sweet corn, eggplant, endive, escarole, peppers, radishes, squash, strawberries and tomatoes.

Livestock and Pastures: Pasture and range conditions for most of the state are poor to fair. Statewide, cattle condition are poor to mostly good. Morning frosts within the past week affected growth of cool-season grasses. Supplemental hay feeding is active.

Citrus: All packinghouses are open. Varieties packed include mid-season oranges (Pineapple, Midsweet, etc.), Temples, Valencia, white and colored grapefruit, and Honey tangerines. Seventeen processors are open and accepting fruit. Early, midseason, and late oranges and grapefruit comprise the majority of fruit going to the plants. Harvesting of early and mid-season oranges is the predominant grove activity.

Tomato planting is near completion and growers are harvesting strawberries.

Spring vegetables and early watermelons are being planted in the Lake Okeechobee area.

Sugarcane harvest continues with some reduction in yield and sucrose loss due to freeze damage.