

The Week in Florida Agriculture

February 22-28, 2009

Cold weather is hindering the preparation of bedding and laying of plastic in vegetable fields.

Cold weather has slowed growth of cool-season forages in the north. Farmers are having difficulty top-dressing small-grain fields.

Some vegetable growers have been able to prepare bedding.

Potatoes will have to be replanted due to cold weather and high moisture.

Harvesting of cabbage is behind schedule and crop development is slow.

Not many farmers have planted cool-season grains this year.

Planting of spring vegetables is under way.

In the southern and central regions, cold temperatures have slowed vegetable growth.

Weather Summary: Cold and wet weather continues.

Seafood: Red, yellowedge, scamp and snowy grouper, tilefish, amberjack, flounder, red snapper, oysters, and blue crab meat are plentiful.

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. The first week in March is "Prescribed Fire Awareness Week" in Florida.

Vegetables: Moving through the market are beans, cabbage, celery, sweet corn, eggplant, endive, escarole, peppers, radishes, squash, strawberries, and tomatoes. Cold weather caused extensive damage to bean crops throughout Florida.

Livestock and Pastures: Hay feeding is active throughout the state. Pasture conditions range from very poor to good, with most poor to fair. Statewide, cattle condition is very poor to excellent, with most fair to good.

Citrus: One packinghouse has closed for the season. Varieties being packed include midseason oranges, Temples, Valencia, white and colored grapefruit, Navels, a few tangelos, 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. Citrus bloom is observed on Valencia trees scattered throughout southern Hendry County groves signaling the natural start of next season's crop.

