



New England Agricultural Statistics Service

a field office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service
United States Department of Agriculture

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Crop Weather

Volume 21, Number 3

(issued weekly on the Internet, May - October)

May 21, 2001 - 4 pm

For week ending 5/20/01

Dry Conditions Continue

STATE WEATHER SUMMARY

For the Week Ending Sunday, May 20, 2001

State	Air Temperatures				Precipitation	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	26	70	49	-4	0.01	1.38
NH	18	76	50	-4	0.00	1.11
VT	25	74	51	-4	0.00	0.73
MA	31	81	54	-3	0.00	0.35
RI	38	79	56	-2	0.02	0.11
CT	36	81	56	-3	0.00	0.04

Prepared by AWIS, Inc.

For the week ending May 20, 2001, there were 6.6 days available for field work across New England. Topsoil moisture was rated 24% very short, 42% short, 34% adequate, 0% surplus. Subsoil moisture was rated 9% very short, 33% short, 57% adequate, 1% surplus. Pasture condition was rated as 2% very poor, 16% poor, 59% fair, 23% good, 0% excellent. Major farm activities included: planting row crops and vegetables, spreading manure, applying fertilizer, plowing, spraying for weeds, fixing fence and equipment, and irrigating.

FIELD CROP PROGRESS ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	- Percent Planted -			2001 % Emerged	2001 Condition
	2001	2000	5yr-Avg		
Potatoes					
Maine	75	30	40	--	---
Mass	85	75	75	35	Good/Fair
Rhode Isl	90	85	75	30	Good
Oats, ME	55	35	55	10	Excellent
Barley, ME	75	35	55	10	Excellent
Silage Corn	60	20	30	15	Good
Sweet Corn	50	35	35	25	Fair/Good
Tobacco					
Shade	10	20	25	--	Fair/Good
Dry Hay					
First Cut	- Percent Harvested -				
	<5	<5	<5	--	Fair/Good

FIELD CROPS: Insignificant rainfall in New England did not greatly impact the dry soil, so farmers were actively irrigating where necessary. The weather allowed operators to continue to plant row crops, plow fields, spread manure, apply fertilizer, fix fences, and spray for weeds. Planting of potatoes in Maine, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island was ahead of last year and the 5-year average. Field corn for silage was reported as good

to excellent in the northern New England states, but only fair to good in the southern states. Reported transplanting of shade tobacco ranged from 1% complete in Connecticut to 50% complete in Massachusetts. First cut hay was harvested in some areas; in other areas, the hay was reported as being "non-existent," due to the lack of rain.

VEGETABLES: Planting of broccoli, sweet corn, onions, carrots, cucumbers, winter squash, peas, lettuce and cabbage continued. Uneven germination of sweet corn due to lack of rain has been detected. Asparagus and rhubarb currently being harvested. Vegetable growers are irrigating due to continued dry conditions. Some farmers are hesitant to plant until the ground receives some moisture.

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Stage	Fruit Set	2001 Condition
Apples	Petal Fall	Avg	Good
Peaches	Petal Fall	Avg/B.Avg	Fair/Good
Pears	Petal Fall	B.Avg/Avg	Poor
Strawberries	Early Blm	--	Good
Cranberries, MA	Bud Stage	--	Good/Fair
Blueberries			
Highbush	Full Blm	--	Good/Fair
Wild, ME	Early Blm/Full Blm	--	Good

FRUIT: Growers were actively spraying fruit crops. Apple blossoms that survived the previous week's frost looked good. Fruit set for apples, peaches, and pears in southern New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut ranged from average to below average. Strawberries were starting to bloom and irrigation continued; some damage from root weevils was reported. Second fungicide application was made for mummyberry disease in wild blueberries. Pre-emergence herbicides were applied to cranberries; most bogs have now been drained.

To receive this report every Monday evening, send an e-mail message to listserv@newsbox.usda.gov and in the body, type **subscribe usda-new-eng-crop-weather**

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Director: Aubrey Davis Deputy: David Luckenbach

For the Week Ending Sunday, May 20, 2001

The 41 stations shown below are limited by space but are well distributed across the region.
All 86 stations appear on the Internet and in e-mail subscriptions.

STATION	AIR TEMPERATURE				CUM SINCE MAR 1 GROWING DEGREE DAYS				1-WEEK PRECIP			4-WEEK CUM PRECIP		
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	BASE-50F TOT	BASE-60F DFN	TOT	DFN	TOTAL INCHES	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL INCHES	DFN	DAYS
MAINE														
Augusta_ME	37	65	51	-5	199	+107	64	+60	0.34	-0.50	4	0.53	-3.01	8
Bangor	34	65	50	-5	166	+101	48	+48	0.83	-0.01	5	1.00	-2.25	9
Bethel	33	68	51	-5	159	+87	36	+34	0.11	-0.73	2	0.36	-2.95	3
Cari bou	37	65	49	-3	132	+85	27	+27	0.47	-0.23	4	0.64	-2.02	8
Dover-Foxcroft	34	66	49	-4	115	+67	19	+19	0.90	+0.13	5	1.27	-1.99	9
Frenchville	33	63	48	-3	117	+86	26	+26	0.36	-0.34	3	0.75	-1.97	7
Houl ton	30	66	48	-4	123	+76	27	+27	0.89	+0.12	4	0.94	-1.95	6
Livermore_Falls	29	67	49	-4	163	+115	48	+48	0.71	-0.13	4	1.13	-2.32	7
Moosehead	29	62	46	-4	92	+70	12	+12	0.39	-0.38	4	1.23	-1.83	8
Portland_ME	39	69	53	-2	178	+118	49	+49	0.26	-0.55	1	0.37	-3.10	3
NEW HAMPSHIRE														
Benton	30	66	49	-6	159	+66	34	+24	0.57	-0.20	2	1.20	-1.72	5
Berlin_AG	31	65	50	-4	151	+75	27	+21	0.24	-0.55	2	0.50	-2.66	6
Concord	31	73	53	-3	231	+124	73	+64	0.09	-0.61	1	0.19	-2.61	3
Diamond_Pond	29	64	47	-3	102	+74	20	+20	0.97	+0.07	3	1.87	-1.44	6
Keene_AP	30	73	53	-6	224	+71	64	+43	0.00	-0.84	0	0.98	-2.30	1
North_Conway	32	67	53	-3	216	+127	69	+62	0.02	-0.88	1	0.36	-3.34	3
Rochester	35	70	53	-4	235	+109	91	+79	0.27	-0.60	2	0.73	-2.98	5
VERMONT														
Burlington_VT	33	68	54	-4	261	+123	81	+62	0.09	-0.61	1	0.89	-1.89	3
Island_Pond	30	66	49	-2	113	+60	17	+17	0.73	-0.11	1	1.69	-1.35	4
Montpelier	30	66	51	-5	162	+73	38	+29	0.03	-0.72	1	0.22	-2.49	4
Pownal	35	73	52	-4	203	+107	54	+42	0.00	-1.05	0	0.21	-3.93	1
Rochester	30	69	50	-4	143	+64	21	+15	0.00	-0.98	0	0.20	-3.66	3
Rutland_AG	30	69	51	-8	169	+3	33	+5	0.04	-0.73	1	0.50	-2.45	4
Sutton	36	66	51	-1	139	+89	30	+30	0.25	-0.57	1	1.26	-1.77	3
Townshend_Lake	32	70	53	-5	172	+48	36	+22	0.12	-0.69	3	0.31	-2.90	4
MASSACHUSETTS														
Ashburnham	40	72	54	-2	233	+150	73	+71	0.05	-0.73	1	0.17	-2.99	4
Boston	48	78	56	-3	331	+160	122	+114	0.07	-0.64	3	0.08	-3.02	4
Greenfield	32	78	54	-5	244	+71	78	+59	0.01	-0.87	1	0.03	-3.46	2
New_Bedford	42	75	55	-4	237	+63	69	+60	0.05	-0.76	1	0.06	-3.36	2
Otis_AFB	45	70	54	-2	198	+112	63	+63	0.06	-0.78	2	0.07	-3.41	3
Plymouth	41	73	53	-3	219	+122	60	+59	0.09	-0.82	2	0.12	-3.65	3
Walpole	39	75	55	-3	298	+169	112	+104	0.10	-0.67	2	0.10	-3.25	2
Westover	37	79	56	-5	327	+87	115	+81	0.00	-0.91	0	0.15	-3.49	3
Worthington	33	74	52	-3	201	+110	59	+52	0.03	-1.02	3	0.04	-4.11	4
RHODE ISLAND														
Providence	47	77	56	-2	313	+165	112	+106	0.02	-0.82	1	0.03	-3.48	2
Woonsocket	38	79	56	-2	304	+179	111	+106	0.08	-0.83	2	0.09	-3.68	3
CONNECTICUT														
Bridgeport	46	76	59	+0	328	+144	94	+71	0.00	-0.91	0	0.04	-3.60	1
Hartford_AP	39	79	57	-4	343	+128	119	+87	0.01	-0.97	1	0.37	-3.35	4
Norfolk	43	72	53	-2	235	+148	76	+71	0.04	-0.99	4	0.17	-3.97	6
Thomaston_Dam	37	79	56	-1	264	+121	81	+68	0.00	-0.98	0	0.07	-4.03	2
Willimantic	39	80	56	-2	324	+183	108	+96	0.01	-0.94	1	0.01	-3.88	1

Summary based on NWS data.

DFN = Departure From Normal (Using 1961-90 Normal s Period).

Precipitation (rain or melted snow/ice) in inches.

Precipitation Days = Days with precip of 0.01 inch or more.

Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit.

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For detailed ag weather forecasts and data visit the AWIS home page at www.awis.com or call toll free at 1-888-798-9955.

REPORTERS COMMENTS, By County: Reporters are from Extension Service (Ext); Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS), or other knowledgeable individuals.

CONNECTICUT - Howard Rood (FSA), Fairfield/Litchfield: We have had only scattered light showers this week. Most of the fields are dry. Crops need rain. Heavy frost early in the week may have hurt the apple crop. **Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland:** Cool and continued dry for the week. Field corn planting progressed. Cole crop and shade tobacco were transplanted. Irrigating sweet corn and other crops. **Marsha Jette (FSA), New London:** Producers are concerned with loss of first-cutting hay which is nonexistent in some areas. Talk of holding off on corn planting because of the very dry conditions. Heavy damage to grapes, peaches, apples, blueberries and strawberries. Greenhouse growers are holding off on setting out plants, as they are concerned with late frost on top of the dry weather. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Planting corn, 50 to 60% done. Neighbors complain about the dust. Petal fall spray in orchards. Monitoring frost damage to fruits. Very poor quality of first cutting hay; very dry and topping out at one foot tall. Rain needed to activate herbicides and to get crops growing. Fixing equipment. Turkeys in the fields eating bugs and corn seed. Time to do a rain dance. Parched earth looks like July and frost badly injured fruits, vegetables, oaks, ash and ornamentals. **Nancy Welsh/Karen Lockman (FSA), New Haven:** Dry is the only word to describe weather conditions. Temperatures vary from warm in the 80s to low 70s. Winds are drying out soils even more. No rain was seen this week. Fruit growers are finding more damage from frost. Vegetable producers need rain for squash and lettuce.

MAINE - Dee Potter (Ext), Northern Aroostook: Lots of progress made on potato and small grain planting. Pastures are progressing slowly due to lack of rain. **Albert Dow (NRCS), Piscataquis:** Rain (.4 inch) came at the weekend. Pastures are slow coming due to lack of moisture. **Janet King/Jennifer Zweig (FSA), Somerset:** Corn planting is going slow due to lack of rain. Fields are being plowed and fertilizer is being spread. Need rain! **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** One day of rain has helped improve conditions. Hopefully more corn will now germinate. Lots of field activity, but no grass silage harvest yet. Last year's alfalfa plantings look really good. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Weed control on non-bearing blueberry fields has begun. Bees are out, but need warm weather to work. Some areas received up to an inch of much needed rain over the weekend! Hay crop is slow growing due to dry weather. **David Yarborough (Ext), Washington:** Wild Blueberries: Fields finished being pruned by burning or mowing. Pre-emergence herbicide application being made to non-bearing fields. Plants beginning to emerge in non-bearing fields. Second fungicide application being made for mummyberry disease. Bees beginning to be moved into bearing fields. Very warm days have advanced plant development one to two weeks early. **Michael Tardy (FSA), Androscoggin:** Great progress on all field work with the dry weather. Crop conditions reported as generally good. If we go much longer without rain, there may be problems. **Parker Rand (FSA), Cumberland/York:** So far, it's been a great season for all outside activities. Some corn is emerging while some is being planted, apple blossoms are beautiful and the fiddleheads have gone by. Last week's light rain was not enough, we need several days of good rain. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** Last week's rain came at a very important time. Pasture and hay was at a standstill. Newly planted seed needed the moisture to germinate. Soil conditions are excellent for planting. **Laura Rand (FSA), Oxford:** Producers continue to spread manure, lime and fertilizer, and plant crops. Apple trees were in full bloom over the week. Predicted rainfall never materialized; things are very dry. Need rain. **Erin Chadbourne (Ext), Central Aroostook:** Potato, grain, and broccoli planting is still underway, along with some ground preparation work. The barley crop is coming up uniformly and nicely.

MASSACHUSETTS - Arthur Williams (FSA), Berkshire: Still planting corn, nearly done. Some mowing of forage for chopping. Increased use of the big plastic bags. Everything is dry, ground is very dusty. Some corn broke ground in 10 days and some in 14. Clouds that normally produce rain only resulted in drops here and there and the wind continues to blow. **Paul Russell (FSA), Southeast Massachusetts:** Conditions continue to be unseasonably cool and dry. Cranberry growers that kept water in the bogs late are starting to take it out. Some growers are reporting some frost damage as a result of the hard freeze on May 6 & 7. Bogs continue to look good as we head into bloom for early varieties. Vegetable planting

continues, however rain is desperately needed. Many growers are irrigating after planting to start the germination process. Shellfish growers are harvesting some products and preparing to plant. **William "Kip" Graham (FSA), Worcester:** Finishing first sprays. Only one brief shower since last report. Fields still dry. Preparing land for spring crops. Finishing manure spreading, top-dressing hay fields continuing. Apples getting hit by early frost, 60% browning, 20% damaging. Will know more by June drop to determine damages. Strawberries about 50% blacking blossoms from early frost. Extreme high and low temperatures affecting early plantings. The bees are out there doing their job! **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: Pretty quiet week in the industry. Two nights were potential frost nights, but did not turn out that way in most cases. Irrigation necessary as the dry pattern continues. No major insect outbreaks reported so far. Vines wintered well for the most part. Pre-emergence herbicides being applied, especially for dodder control. Everyone is hoping the promised rain materializes this week. **David Rose (FSA), Bristol:** Planting continues on all land. It is very dry. Harvesting of rhubarb and asparagus continues. Fruit set appears very good on all fruit trees. Hay is very short due to lack of rain. **John Devine (FSA), Franklin:** Planting continues in spite of drought conditions. Many vegetable farms have been irrigating to help germination. Forage growers are continuing to plant corn but are delaying herbicide application. Hay and pasture conditions are declining rapidly from the dry weather. First cut yields for mixed grass are anticipated to be below average unless rain comes soon. Shade tobacco transplanting started this weekend, broadleaf planting should begin soon. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** The temperatures were very cool and the crop fields are very dry. Growers are planting potatoes, sweet corn, carrots, winter squash, cucumbers and shade tobacco. Harvesting asparagus, rhubarb and some hay. Potatoes are 95% planted but need rain. Farmers are irrigating and some are holding back from planting because it is so dry. **Gary Guida, Worcester:** Soil is dry as powder! Other than planting corn we have stopped field work on vegetable crops. Soil much too dry to lay plastic. Rain forecast for Tuesday should put us back on schedule. Farm stand sales booming, with quality bedding plants in BIG demand. Sold Florida corn this weekend and the quality was excellent!

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Bruce Clement (Ext), Cheshire: Dry, cool conditions continued this week. Silage corn planting progressing quickly. Some manure spreading and seeding going in. Vegetable planting progressing well. Irrigation already being used. Fruit spraying primary orchard activity. Lack of rain is major concern for most growers. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Generally dry throughout week with field prep and planting going at a good pace. Field corn, sweet corn and hay crop seeding occurring, planting of early season vegetable crops and hi-tunnel tomatoes being done. Strawberry mulch now removed, very early bloom of highbush blueberries and apples. Top-dress fertilization of hayfields being done with hopes for a little rain to help it along. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Fruits: Apples, peaches and pears are well past petal fall. Still assessing damage of the freeze/frost events of May 7-8 to tree fruits' crop loss. Moved bees out of orchards. Strawberries starting to bloom. Fruit growers are applying sprays for pest control. Damage from root weevils is continuing to show up in some strawberry fields. Field Crops: Planting and weed spraying corn fields. Concerned about slow growth of grass in pastures and hayfields. Vegetables: Plowing, disking, and fertilizing fields and planting vegetables. Laying down plastic and drip irrigation. Regular plantings of sweet corn germinated. Harvesting asparagus and rhubarb. Very dry conditions have farmers concerned, many farmers having to irrigate planted crops. Very uneven germination of regular plantings of sweet corn is seen, not enough soil moisture for seeds to germinate. **David Seavey (Ext), Merrimack:** Sweet corn, field corn, onions, root crops and some cole crops are being planted. Nursery stock, strawberries and blueberries are being irrigated. Asparagus is being harvested. Fields are being fertilized and manure is being spread. Orchardists are applying petal fall sprays. Drought conditions have had an adverse effect on most crops. Seed germination of hay crop plantings is delayed, and growth of established grass hayland has been retarded. Some frost injury on apples, pears and peaches. Winter injury widespread on blueberries and raspberries. Some mortality reported on newly planted Christmas trees due to dry conditions. Apple scab shouldn't be a problem this year.

RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport: Hay being cut and the crop is thin. Field corn and sweet corn being planted. Fields being prepared for summer crops and potatoes emerging. Pasture is suffering without rain, along with crops. Roadside stands very busy over the weekend. The sun helped bring out the public. The lack of rain and results of some late frost are starting to appear. **Marilu Soileau (FSA), All Counties:** It is too dry!! The news reported this morning that even the ticks aren't doing well because of the lack of moisture. Hay is stalled and nowhere near ready for first cut. Farmers have delayed planting in many cases due to powdery condition of the soil. Things do not look good out here. Fruit growers are still assessing damage, although all indications are that the results of the frost/freeze are severe. Transplanting and manure spreading continues. Replanting sweet corn that was knocked out by the freezing temperatures. There is rain forecast for two days this coming week. Let's hope the meteorologists are right!

VERMONT - John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille: Planting conditions and weather to accomplish field work have been excellent. Most of the plantings have emerged and with some much needed rain we should be in good shape. **Bill Snow (Ext), Orange:** Still waiting for rain. No rain last week except northern counties received some Friday evening. Hay crop and pastures show slow growth because of the lack of rain. Forecast for this week is promising. If we don't get significant rain the hay and haylage crop will have low yields. Very critical time now. Some farms have completed corn planting, while others are just getting started. Field work is mostly to do with corn planting if not done. Others are getting equipment ready for haylage harvesting. **Larry Hamel (NRCS), Orleans:** Another busy week for farmers in Orleans County. A lot of fence repair, spreading fertilizer and manure, and planting corn. Good rain Friday with light sprinkles Saturday morning. Grass conditions are improving; some farmers are looking at first hay/grass silage cutting during Memorial Day

week. **Lynette Hamilton (FSA), Windham:** Apple trees look good; set of fruit has yet to be determined. Early strawberries are all blossom and under heavy irrigation, along with all the other vegetables. Most all of the field corn is planted and about half has germinated and is up. First cutting will be short due to lack of water; hope for rain this week. Maybe Richard Noell up in Franklin County should do an Indian rain dance! **George Cook (Ext), Lamoille:** Continued dry weather, need rain. Excellent opportunity for field work. Wide range of field activities, from spreading fertilizer and lime to plowing and planting. Fields and pastures look good. **Jeff Carter (Ext), Addison:** High level of field activity; planting corn with nearly all fields planted and sprayed, finishing seeding new hay crops, some oats starting to show. Spreading manure and incorporating in soil, spreading fertilizer on grass hay land. First crop hay yield will be lower than normal; grass volume not there. Some alfalfa winter kill. Pasture slow to regrow. Very dry soil conditions. **Richard Noell (FSA), Grand Isle/Franklin:** Corn planting coming along very well, seeding almost done. Rained .55 inches on Saturday; we need more than that to get the grass in gear! Haying will most likely start next week; June grass starting to show. All said and done, a nice spring for crops! **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Another dry week, not quite as warm as last week, but very dry. Farmers had been concerned about a late spring, but once the snow melted, the dry weather has allowed field work to progress very quickly. Activities this week include manure spreading, fixing fence, corn ground preparation, and some corn planting. Some dairy cows out on pasture, but there is not a lot of feed for them because it is so dry. **Sherwin Williams, Rutland:** Mid-season corn being planted. Half of the sweet corn has been planted. First plantings of summer squash and green and yellow peppers. Early corn and peas are emerging. Late plantings slow because of dry top soil. Still dry. Light frost over three nights. Had to irrigate for frost protection and new transplants.

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