



New England Agricultural Statistics Service

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Crop Weather

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For week ending 8/4/02

Drought Conditions Persist in New England

GENERAL CONDITIONS: For the week ending August 4, 2002, there were 6.6 days suitable for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated as 4% very poor, 7% poor, 29% fair, 48% good, 12% excellent. Hot, dry weather engulfed New England last week. Drought-like conditions continue throughout most states. Growers continue to irrigate, where available. Major farm activities included: planting vegetables; harvesting tobacco, highbush blueberries, peaches and vegetables; weeding, cultivating fields; applying fertilizer; cutting dry hay and chopping haylage; mowing orchards and around fields; monitoring for pests and disease; applying fungicides and insecticides; getting equipment ready for harvest. County fairs began!

FRUIT: Raspberry, highbush blueberry and peach harvest continued last week. Apple and wild blueberry harvest got underway. Strawberry harvest came to a close and renovation of fields progressed. Pear condition continues to be rated as very poor in Connecticut and good to fair in other states. Cranberries in Massachusetts are not receiving enough precipitation to size up which could reduce the crop volume. Irrigating continued where available.

SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
Topsoil Moisture			
Very Short	11	15	19
Short	34	23	47
Adequate	50	52	34
Surplus	5	10	0
Subsoil Moisture			
Very Short	9	11	15
Short	30	21	42
Adequate	59	66	43
Surplus	2	2	0

FIELD CROPS: Farmers continued cutting the second and third crop of hay last week, as the first cut was wrapping up. Maine oat and barley crops are in great condition with harvest of oats getting underway. Potato harvest began in Maine and continued in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Massachusetts shade tobacco was 35 percent harvested by week's end; broadleaf harvest kicked in with 25 percent picked. A storm on August 2 caused scattered damage in tobacco. Damage to Christmas trees was reported as the dry weather has cooked them and caused brown spotting.

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	-- Percent Harvested --			Condition
	2002	2001	5-yr Avg	
Apples	<5	<5	<5	Good/Fair
Peaches	45	10	20	Good/Fair
Pears	--	--	--	Very Poor
Blueberries				
Highbush	40	30	45	Good
Wild, ME	<5	10	10	Good
Cranberries, MA	--	--	--	Good/Fair
Strawberries	100	100	100	Good/Fair

VEGETABLES: Vegetable growers continued to irrigate where possible in areas where little or no rain fell. Sweet corn harvest continued and the crop was rated in good to fair condition last week. Beans, beets, broccoli, cabbage, cucumbers, greens, lettuce, peas, peppers, radish, spinach, squash, tomatoes and zucchini continued to be harvested.

FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	-- Percent Harvested --			Condition
	2002	2001	5-yr Avg	
Barley, ME	--	--	--	Excellent/Good
Oats, ME	<5	<5	<5	Excellent/Good
Potatoes				
Maine	<5	<5	<5	Excellent/Good
Mass	5	5	10	Good
Rhode Isl	20	10	10	Good
Silage Corn	--	--	--	Good/Fair
Sweet Corn	25	25	25	Good/Fair
Tobacco				
Shade	35	35	40	Good/Fair
Broadleaf	25	30	25	Good/Fair
Dry Hay				
First Cut	95	99	95	Good
Second Cut	60	75	55	Good
Third Cut	10	10	5	Good

For the Week Ending Sunday, August 4, 2002

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	TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN	TOTAL INCHES	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL INCHES	DFN	DAYS
MAINE														
Augusta_ME	62	89	74	+5	1260	-23	523	+42	0.57	-0.17	3	0.87	-2.01	8
Bangor	57	89	73	+5	1175	+13	464	+65	0.51	-0.19	3	1.31	-1.64	8
Bethel	56	90	72	+4	1109	-59	407	+11	0.74	-0.12	4	1.92	-1.32	11
Caribou	57	81	68	+3	907	-54	297	+29	0.18	-0.80	4	2.41	-1.34	17
Dover-Foxcroft	54	83	68	+2	866	-146	267	-36	0.39	-0.38	3	1.55	-1.63	9
Frenchville	56	79	67	+4	815	-75	262	+33	0.46	-0.45	4	1.71	-1.81	15
Houlton	52	83	68	+3	949	-48	317	+22	0.46	-0.45	4	3.60	+0.12	16
Kennebunkport	60	95	74	+2	1081	-353	395	-196	0.17	-0.53	2	2.86	+0.08	10
Livermore_Falls	54	93	72	+6	1160	+156	461	+170	0.40	-0.43	4	1.21	-1.93	9
Moosehead	51	83	68	+4	827	-11	240	+32	0.60	-0.29	4	2.07	-1.55	10
Portland_ME	63	91	74	+6	1249	+97	503	+106	0.39	-0.24	3	3.27	+0.58	10
NEW HAMPSHIRE														
Benton	56	87	72	+6	1135	+41	430	+105	0.18	-0.69	2	2.18	-1.03	8
Berlin_AG	56	87	71	+5	1086	-14	389	+45	0.85	-0.09	4	3.69	+0.22	11
Concord	59	92	75	+6	1487	+177	675	+180	0.08	-0.69	3	1.30	-1.66	10
Diamond_Pond	54	79	68	+6	736	+4	203	+70	0.65	-0.46	4	2.56	-1.67	13
Keene_AP	57	91	75	+4	1479	+9	653	+48	1.33	+0.47	3	2.31	-1.01	7
North_Conway	57	92	74	+7	1339	+114	581	+145	0.30	-0.60	4	1.58	-1.84	13
Rochester	61	94	75	+6	1417	+25	606	+52	0.00	-0.82	0	0.74	-2.43	4
VERMONT														
Burlington_VT	61	90	76	+6	1509	+93	689	+116	0.38	-0.51	2	2.34	-1.02	6
Island_Pond	53	88	71	+7	1013	+119	350	+129	0.48	-0.59	4	2.66	-1.28	12
Montpelier	56	87	71	+5	1211	+100	471	+119	0.42	-0.38	4	2.49	-0.41	10
Pownal	58	85	72	+5	1272	+128	505	+137	2.18	+1.27	3	4.34	+0.70	9
Rochester	58	89	72	+6	1176	+97	454	+121	0.15	-0.83	2	2.88	-0.70	9
Rutland_AG	59	88	73	+3	1281	-181	518	-75	0.87	-0.04	2	3.19	-0.36	8
Sutton	55	87	71	+8	1049	+139	368	+132	0.51	-0.54	4	3.33	-0.57	11
Townshend_Lake	60	92	75	+5	1391	+17	589	+46	0.17	-0.67	1	1.00	-2.15	5
MASSACHUSETTS														
Ashburnham	62	90	75	+7	1428	+242	614	+207	0.48	-0.33	3	2.77	-0.55	8
Boston	69	95	80	+7	1834	+184	919	+178	0.13	-0.57	2	1.53	-1.06	8
Greenfield	60	94	77	+5	1613	+42	750	+74	3.01	+2.17	3	4.49	+1.13	9
New_Bedford	64	95	78	+4	1644	+6	738	+8	0.24	-0.59	2	0.45	-2.44	5
Otis_AFB	68	93	78	+8	1534	+223	672	+162	0.44	-0.26	1	0.70	-1.92	4
Plymouth	62	94	77	+6	1567	+194	712	+154	0.41	-0.40	2	0.68	-2.44	6
Walpole	65	94	78	+8	1649	+227	781	+205	0.54	-0.28	2	2.43	-0.70	7
Westover	63	93	78	+4	1814	+14	905	+61	1.16	+0.39	3	2.88	-0.31	8
Worthington	57	90	73	+6	1309	+154	542	+168	0.77	-0.21	3	5.12	+1.20	9
RHODE ISLAND														
Providence	69	95	81	+9	1847	+286	927	+245	0.64	-0.13	2	1.00	-1.91	5
Woonsocket	64	94	77	+7	1644	+244	772	+224	0.35	-0.56	1	1.83	-1.74	6
CONNECTICUT														
Bridgeport	70	96	81	+6	1914	+242	971	+201	1.23	+0.42	2	2.36	-1.03	5
Hartford_AP	64	95	79	+6	1923	+186	985	+180	0.90	+0.14	2	3.08	+0.22	6
Norfolk	63	92	76	+9	1511	+350	677	+296	0.98	+0.00	3	3.37	-0.42	7
Thomaston_Dam	59	95	77	+8	1689	+303	801	+268	1.12	+0.18	3	2.68	-1.09	6
Willimantic	62	91	77	+7	1696	+285	807	+253	1.30	+0.39	3	3.57	-0.18	7

STATE WEATHER SUMMARY
For the Week Ending Sunday, August 4, 2002

Summary based on NWS data.
DFN = Departure From Normal (Using 1961-90 Normals 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.

State	Air Temperatures				Precipitation	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	50	95	71	+4	0.00	1.97
NH	49	98	73	+6	0.00	1.33
VT	51	95	73	+6	0.05	2.18
MA	57	97	77	+6	0.00	3.01
RI	64	95	78	+7	0.00	1.08
CT	59	96	78	+6	0.24	1.50

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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: It has been extremely hot and humid this past week. Field corn is doing well. Scattered thunder showers arrived at the end of the week. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Abundant blueberries with irrigation, ripening fast. Corn suffering extreme dry conditions, reviving with occasional thunder showers. Christmas trees cooked and brown in places. Pastures poor, hay varies from poor to good. Beef prices low due to dry pasture across the country. Sunflowers - awesome showoffs. Country fairs begin. **Nancy Welsh/Karen Lockman (FSA), New Haven:** Crops are burning up in the field where irrigation does not exist. Farm stands are busy. Market for produce is low. **Richard Meinert (Ext), CT Cooperative:** Dry weather has field corn tasseling short - 4-6 feet high in some cases, most 8 feet or so. Harvest tonnage will be light across the county.

MAINE - Marvin Hedstrom, Northern Aroostook: Potatoes: Growers applying fungicides and insecticides to potato crop. Beginning to get harvesting equipment ready. Crops continue to look good, however, growth has been slowed somewhat due to dry conditions. Rainfall is desperately needed in some areas. In other areas rainfall has been adequate. **Pam Hickey (Ext), Central Aroostook:** Fungicides are being applied. Blossoms have pretty much come and gone. The corn is growing excellent and looks good. Potatoes are in early bulking. Barley is soft to hand dough stage. Crop conditions are excellent. **Steve London (Ext), Southern Aroostook:** Potatoes are looking very good, very little corn borer activity. Some of the grain has lodged because of wind and rain, but is looking good for the most part. **Albert Dow (NRCS), Piscataquis:** Showers enough to curb harvesting hay, but not yielding enough water to bring the soil moisture up to what it needs to be. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Maine wild blueberries and sweet corn now available at most roadside stands. Very little rain received during the past week. Rain is needed in most areas. **David Yarborough (Ext), Washington:** Wild Blueberries: Fruit is approximately 80% blue, but ripening is very uneven. Crop development is a week or more behind normal. Harvest began in mid-coast region on Monday and is started on the blueberry barrens on Sunday. **Michael Tardy (FSA), Androscoggin:** The hot, dry weather is causing some concern among the corn growing folks. They see curled leaves begging for moisture. Some have seen uneven corn height. They think it is caused by the early wet weather and the seeds sitting in water for a long period of time. This is mostly evident in the low spots. Only in farming can people find problems caused by wet and dry on the same crop. Other growers are claiming a really good season. Apples are doing well, and market garden operators are telling me that all crops are doing pretty good. Some have had to irrigate at times. The grass crop has been abundant; some are having a difficult time finding storage. **Parker Rand (FSA), Cumberland/York:** All the small roadside stands are selling summer vegetables with sweet corn just starting to show up. Blueberry crop looks small, hay crop is excellent. We are still dry. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** The ground water is going back down. The rivers and streams are low again. The top soil is starting to dry out and crops are beginning to show stress. We need some rain.

MASSACHUSETTS - Arthur Williams (FSA), Berkshire: What else but to cut hay and harvest veggies. No fruit problems yet. Only small showers and heavy dews to hold crops. **Kip Graham (FSA), Worcester:** Strawberry crop is about completed. Raspberry and highbush blueberries still being harvested and nearing completion. Peaches are in full swing. Pears are not doing as well as previous years. Most vegetables being harvested presently: beans, cabbages, broccoli, cukes (both pickling and regular), beets, peppers, radishes, eggplant, spinach, summer squash, zucchini, tomatoes, and sweet corn. First and second crops of hay pretty much harvested last week. A lot of hay got caught in the rain this past week. Some sidedressing fields with fertilizers continues. Irrigating where necessary. Application of fungicides and insecticides continues where necessary. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: Lots of berries but without natural water (precipitation), they won't size up like they could, thus reducing the

crop volume (which may not be a bad thing). Fruit rot developing in some beds. The insects still lay in wait, if you get lackadaisical. **David Rose (FSA), Bristol:** Another week without any significant rain. crops continue to grow but yields are below normal. all crops are being harvested. **John Devine (FSA), Franklin:** All crop harvesting is in full swing this week. Warm temperatures and intermittent rain have really pushed crops. Severe storms on Friday caused scattered damage in tobacco and sweet corn. Most valley silage corn has already tasseled and is forming an ear. Early varieties of potatoes are being harvested this week for both the fresh market and chip stock. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** Very hot and humid week. The week began very dry with farmers irrigating all summer crops and ended with a big rain storm that produced an inch plus of rain. This rain storm was just in time for a lot of crops starting to flower and produce fruit. Potato and tobacco harvest is in full swing. Some reports of blue mold in tobacco.

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll: Hazy, hot and humid; conditions are very dry. Second cutting hay is not growing due to a lack of available moisture. A few fields of first cutting still remain, with new blade growth filling in to make a mixture of over mature and new growth in the bales. Corn fields showing drought stress. Pumpkins and squash showing drought and disease damage. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** HOT! Weather has been generally favorable to corn - most field corn is silking. Humidity has made for less than ideal drying conditions for hay, but most producers are making progress in harvesting the remaining second cutting, and some are gearing up for a third cutting. Sweet corn is being harvested and looks good. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Hot sunny weather, yet occasional thunder storms, heavy downpours, even a little hail to make haying a challenge. Second cut haylage on most fields about done, alfalfa beginning to flower on later cuts. Manure spreading on just harvested fields. Field corn looking pretty good now. Sweet corn tasseling on shorter season varieties. Scouting for borer damage. Wild blueberries now ripening along with highbush. Good veggie and fruit selections at farm markets. **Tom Buob (Ext), Grafton:** Corn continues to tassel and silk. No significant rain this week. Corn on sandier soils beginning to show drought stress. Third cutting continues as second is finishing up. Quality is good to excellent. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Vegetables: Growers are busy irrigating fields - where irrigating crops is the highest priority. Harvesting an array of vegetables: beans, beets, cole crops, cucumbers, greens, peas, potatoes, radishes, summer squash, sweet corn, tomatoes, zucchini, and other vegetables. Farmers kept busy cultivating, hoeing weeds, monitoring pest pressures and spraying pesticides for insect and disease control where needed. Very good demand for produce at most local farmers' markets. Fruit: Orchardists harvesting early season apple varieties, peaches, blueberry and raspberry. Irrigating renovated strawberry beds, raspberry, blueberries and peaches. Orchardists busy monitoring for pests, spraying if needed, and mowing orchard floors. Field Crops: Hay cutting continued at a rapid pace during the week with the second cut being made. The remaining first cutting is only good for mulch hay. Silage corn put on rapid growth this past week after thunder storms occurred along with the humid weather. **David Seavey (Ext), Merrimack:** Blueberries and raspberries harvested. Sweet corn sales are excellent. Vegetable crops irrigated and weeded. Warm season vegetable crops benefitting from hot weather. Scouting and spraying for insects and disease. Farmers are cutting hay. Second crop looks good. Several fungus diseases now appearing on squash and tomatoes. Sales of tunnel tomatoes are excellent. A great year for bedding plant sales. Rainfall is needed. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** A very hot and humid week. Rain is badly needed. Harvesting early apple varieties, peaches, apricot, blueberries, raspberries and a whole array of vegetables. Weeding and irrigating vegetables. **Pam Marvin (FSA), Sullivan:** Most summer vegetables are on the market now and looking good. Blueberry harvest is in full swing and having a good year. Lots of hay being made due to the dry weather. Have had a couple of spot showers but many areas missing them. Could use more rain as some of the sandier soil corn fields are starting to show a little curling. The

humidity has helped the corn to grow as most fields are about a week or two behind in maturity due to the wet spring.

RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport: A spate of rain on Friday did very little to relieve the dry conditions. Field corn showing signs of drought, and where available irrigation continues. Summer vegetables being harvested and second cut hay being done.

VERMONT - John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille: Another nice week for fieldwork. Much of the corn crop started tasseling last week. Overall crops doing well despite the excessive rain in June. **Bill Snow (Ext), Orange:** Currently going through a dry spell with very little rainfall which we needed to help dry out some areas. Some nice dry hay put up during the week. Corn starting to show tassels which is later than normal. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** Corn is beginning to catch up on most fields. There is still a wide variation in height within each field. Corn is 12"-24" tall in the wetter spots to 6 -7' tall on the drier spots in each field. Second cut looks really good. The drier weather the last 2 weeks have helped the harvest. **Lynette Hamilton (FSA), Windham:** Another week of high temperatures and high humidity and the only thing that like that is corn and the corn in Windham County looks excellent. Third

cut alfalfa is ready to go. Apples growers have started to pick some early Mac and the Paula Reds will be ready to pick in about a week or ten days. **Jeff Carter (Ext), Addison:** Hay harvest. Corn in tassel. Grass growth stopped. dry soils continue, some manure on hay land. **Richard Noel, Grand Isle/Franklin:** Six days without rain, one of the longest weeks without rain since April. Plenty of hay and grass being harvested, pastures are in great shape and manure being spread on grass land. Some seedings still being done. Corn doesn't look too great, some will never recover from the excess rain at the beginning of the season. Anybody with surplus crop is going to be glad they have some! **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Hot summer week. Second cut of hay coming along. Not very many corn tassels visible yet. **Sherwin Williams, Rutland:** Early sweet corn harvest in full production. Sprayed early squash for blight. Early potatoes in the market. Getting lots of broccoli and leafy crops. Good crop of early sweet corn. Mid-season varieties coming fast. All corn looks good. Have had enough showers to keep it growing. Bean crop good. Even picking shell beans. Cucumbers coming fast. All crops looking good. A quarter inch of rain last week and lots of sun. Have a nice week.

July 2002 Crop Weather Summary: High heat and humidity prevailed at the end of June and continued into July, accelerating crop growth previously slowed by cool spring conditions. Lack of rain throughout New England forced growers to irrigate where available. Planting and emergence of most crops was complete by the start of the month. New England field crops experienced minimal armyworm activity, compared to last year's devastating infestation. Crop specialists attributed the insect reduction in part to the cool, wet conditions in the spring. As of mid-month, first cut hay harvest was winding down with the crop in good to fair condition. Regrowth for second cut was initially good, however prolonged dry conditions are expected to reduce yields. Second crop harvest was close to the halfway mark by month's end, with third crop cutting just getting underway. Silage corn remained in good to fair condition throughout the month of July, with leaves starting to curl from lack of moisture at some locations. Potato harvest was just getting underway in late July in Massachusetts, and Rhode Island growers were gearing up for harvest. Maine potato growth was excellent during the month, with heat shower activity keeping the crop ratings high as harvest approached. The potato growing regions in the state remained late blight free during the month of July, and spray programs were in full force to prevent the onset of disease. Maine's major grain crops, oats and barley were also rated in excellent to good condition at month's end. Shade tobacco harvest was underway in the Connecticut River Valley by mid-July, with a good to fair crop expected. Farmers began cutting broadleaf tobacco at the end of the month, and expect harvest to proceed quickly to get the crop in the sheds disease free. Blue mold is prevalent in the Valley, and spray programs are in full force to control it's spread. The condition of New England apples and peaches remained good to fair throughout the month; full crop prospects expected to be reduced by damage from July hail storms and lack of moisture. Pears were rated in very poor condition in Connecticut due to frost and hail in the spring. Strawberry harvest in New England was wrapped up by the end of the month. Massachusetts cranberry growers were forced to irrigate heavily at month's end to help berries size up. Maine wild blueberry harvest had yet to begin as of July 28; the crop was one to two weeks behind normal due to cool, wet conditions during pollination.

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