



# New England Agricultural Statistics Service

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## Crop Weather

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For week ending 5/19/02

### Another Cool, Wet Week in New England

**GENERAL CONDITIONS:** For the week ending May 19, 2002, there were 4.1 days suitable for field work across New England. Topsoil moisture was rated 1% very short, 6% short, 70% adequate, 23% surplus. Subsoil moisture was rated 7% very short, 20% short, 67% adequate, 6% surplus. Pasture condition was rated as 6% poor, 19% fair, 69% good, 6% excellent.

Cool damp weather continued last week throughout most of New England. Rain slowed planting in some areas. Farmers are continually on the alert for frost. Major farm activities included: planting field corn, early vegetables, sweet corn, tobacco and potatoes; harvesting asparagus; spreading manure; seeding new alfalfa and grass hay; applying fertilizer; plowing and disking; fixing fences; irrigating orchards for frost protection.

**FRUIT:** Fruit tree growers continued to monitor and prepare for cold temperatures at night and early mornings. Many orchard growers had to apply a protective spray to prevent frost damage. The cool, wet weather was not conducive to good pollination. Maine wild blueberry growers continued to apply pre-emergence fungicide for mummyberry disease. Massachusetts cranberry growers prepared for their first fungicide spray.

#### FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

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

**VEGETABLES:** Planting of sweet corn and other early spring crops continued. The lack of warm weather slowed the germination of seeds planted the previous weeks. Some farmers reported replanting of crops planted early in the season because of the cold weather. Some asparagus and spinach crops were harvested.

#### SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
<b>Topsoil Moisture</b>			
Very Short	1	3	24
Short	6	11	42
Adequate	70	72	34
Surplus	23	14	0
<b>Subsoil Moisture</b>			
Very Short	7	10	9
Short	20	22	33
Adequate	67	62	57
Surplus	6	6	1

**FIELD CROPS:** Potato planting in Maine was slowed last week due to the snow and rain showers. Massachusetts and Rhode Island potato growers neared completion with planting of this year's crop. All across New England, planting of field corn continued behind last year and 5-year average rates because of the wet weather. The cool temperatures slowed the growth of field corn planted in the previous week. Many fields were too wet to enter with machinery. Many hay fields will be ready for harvest shortly.

#### FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	2002	2001	5-yr Avg	Percent Emerged	Condition
-- Percent Planted --					
Barley, ME	35	70	55	0	Good
Oats, ME	30	50	50	0	Good
Potatoes					
Maine	20	65	45	0	Fair
Mass	80	80	80	20	Good/Fair
Rhode Isl	95	90	85	25	Good/Excellent
Silage Corn	25	55	35	<5	Fair/Good
Sweet Corn	30	50	35	15	Fair/Good
Tobacco					
Shade	5	0	<5	--	Good/Fair
Dry Hay	-- Percent Harvested --				
First Cut	0	5	<5	--	Good

For the Week Ending Sunday, May 19, 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	BASE-50F		BASE-60F		TOTAL INCHES	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL		DFN	DAYS
					TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN				INCHES	DFN		
<b>MAINE</b>															
Augusta_ME	36	66	48	-8	94	+8	4	+1	2.28	+1.44	6	4.32	+0.77	12	
Bangor	40	65	48	-6	66	+6	2	+2	1.39	+0.55	4	3.18	-0.06	13	
Bethel	31	69	44	-11	88	+21	9	+8	2.65	+1.82	5	5.08	+1.77	12	
Cari bou	28	59	44	-8	29	-14	0	+0	1.23	+0.53	5	2.66	+0.02	14	
Dover-Foxcroft	32	57	43	-10	20	-24	0	+0	1.07	+0.30	4	2.12	-1.15	9	
Frenchville	26	56	43	-8	13	-15	0	+0	0.88	+0.18	5	2.82	+0.11	13	
Houlton	27	63	44	-8	49	+6	2	+2	1.36	+0.59	5	2.78	-0.09	16	
Livermore_Falls	30	70	44	-8	67	+23	5	+5	2.47	+1.63	5	4.83	+1.37	12	
Moosehead	32	60	42	-7	23	+3	0	+0	1.52	+0.75	5	3.00	-0.06	14	
Portland_ME	34	69	48	-6	92	+37	3	+3	2.90	+2.08	5	5.46	+1.96	12	
<b>NEW HAMPSHIRE</b>															
Benton	30	66	43	-11	105	+18	27	+18	2.44	+1.67	7	4.21	+1.30	14	
Berlin_AG	32	67	44	-10	80	+9	8	+3	2.69	+1.91	7	4.71	+1.55	14	
Concord	28	79	49	-7	202	+102	60	+52	2.83	+2.13	6	5.18	+2.38	12	
Diamond_Pond	29	55	39	-11	24	-2	0	+0	2.00	+1.11	6	3.95	+0.66	18	
Keene_AP	28	79	48	-11	208	+64	62	+43	2.35	+1.51	5	4.91	+1.64	15	
North_Conway	33	69	46	-10	116	+33	21	+15	2.88	+1.98	7	5.38	+1.67	14	
Rochester	32	77	47	-10	163	+45	32	+21	3.28	+2.40	5	6.27	+2.54	11	
<b>VERMONT</b>															
Burlington_VT	35	71	48	-9	175	+45	48	+31	2.51	+1.81	5	4.22	+1.45	14	
Island_Pond	29	60	42	-10	76	+27	13	+13	2.41	+1.57	7	4.30	+1.29	16	
Montpelier	32	66	44	-11	135	+52	40	+32	2.40	+1.66	7	4.27	+1.59	16	
Pownal	30	73	45	-10	147	+57	42	+31	3.09	+2.04	6	5.83	+1.69	19	
Rochester	32	69	44	-10	110	+36	26	+21	3.88	+2.90	7	6.54	+2.69	13	
Rutland_AG	33	73	45	-13	140	-17	30	+4	2.85	+2.08	7	4.54	+1.61	16	
Sutton	32	65	42	-10	80	+34	18	+18	2.58	+1.77	7	4.96	+1.95	17	
Townshend_Lake	28	78	45	-12	167	+51	42	+29	3.68	+2.86	6	6.93	+3.72	16	
<b>MASSACHUSETTS</b>															
Ashburnham	31	76	48	-7	185	+108	41	+40	3.67	+2.90	6	6.15	+2.99	14	
Boston	40	78	54	-6	274	+112	67	+60	3.32	+2.60	5	5.52	+2.40	12	
Greenfield	32	81	51	-8	224	+61	59	+42	3.85	+2.98	6	6.62	+3.14	17	
New_Bedford	38	77	53	-6	253	+88	47	+39	3.91	+3.09	5	6.95	+3.50	15	
Otis_AFB	37	70	52	-3	197	+117	23	+23	3.00	+2.16	4	5.91	+2.42	11	
Plymouth	32	73	52	-5	207	+117	38	+38	3.95	+3.04	7	6.35	+2.57	14	
Walpole	31	79	51	-6	246	+125	69	+62	4.23	+3.46	6	6.75	+3.37	15	
Westover	37	79	52	-9	291	+62	95	+64	3.22	+2.31	6	5.64	+2.00	16	
Worthington	27	74	46	-9	163	+78	43	+37	4.17	+3.12	6	6.55	+2.41	17	
<b>RHODE ISLAND</b>															
Providence	35	77	53	-5	273	+134	63	+58	3.94	+3.10	6	6.38	+2.85	16	
Woonsocket	32	75	51	-6	254	+137	67	+63	4.27	+3.36	5	7.75	+3.97	15	
<b>CONNECTICUT</b>															
Bridgeport	38	78	54	-5	278	+104	61	+40	3.68	+2.77	5	7.29	+3.65	16	
Hartford_AP	35	81	53	-8	325	+121	107	+78	3.03	+2.05	5	5.49	+1.78	15	
Norfolk	32	74	48	-7	192	+111	53	+49	3.48	+2.46	5	6.24	+2.10	15	
Thomaston_Dam	32	79	51	-6	248	+113	70	+58	3.48	+2.50	6	6.15	+2.05	17	
Willimantic	30	77	51	-6	277	+144	83	+72	3.60	+2.64	6	5.74	+1.84	16	

**STATE WEATHER SUMMARY**  
For the Week Ending Sunday, May 19, 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.

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State	Air Temperatures				Precipitation	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	21	75	45	-8	0.47	3.68
NH	13	79	45	-10	1.93	4.72
VT	23	78	44	-11	1.84	5.88
MA	27	81	51	-6	2.74	4.44
RI	32	77	52	-5	2.60	4.27
CT	30	82	52	-7	2.58	4.15

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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 was a rainy and very cool week. Frost late in the week may have damaged some tree crops. **Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland:** Heavy rain on Monday yielded over 2.5 inches with another inch on Saturday. Planting field corn progressed, however had to look for dry soils. Frost in valleys still a threat. Some started setting broadleaf tobacco on Friday. Shade tobacco also set out. **Marsha Jette (FSA), New London:** Although field work has been held up with recent week of rain, producers are breathing a sigh of relief with much needed moisture. Waiting for warmer weather, some early planted sweet corn experienced frost damage. Southern part of the county expects to begin picking early strawberries within ten days. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Record cold weather for May at 32 degrees. Concern for fruit set, still dry but getting some heavy showers, planting is in full swing, hay crop is coming along unevenly, fresh asparagus being marketed along with bedding plants and hanging pots. **Nancy Welsh/Karen Lockman (FSA), New Haven:** Weather has been not cooperative for this time of year. Five days of rain has many farmers working on other things. We have had one night of frost. The frost earlier in the month has caused damage on mainly peaches, pears, strawberries and apples. Vegetable producers replanted what was already in the ground.

**MAINE - Marvin Hedstrom, Northern Aroostook:** Potatoes: Can you believe the weather this past week, seven inches of snow fell on Tuesday in Northern Aroostook County. Growers got out early in the week and this weekend to plant, otherwise the week was mostly lost due to weather. Some lime spreading but that activity was curtailed by weather. Some concern about condition of potato seed that has been in the ground for some time. **Pam Hickey (Ext), Central Aroostook:** Farmers are still attempting to work land and plant potatoes and grains. The cool wet weather has slowed this process down. Hopefully, we will receive some warmer days to help get the crops planted. **Steve London (Ext), Southern Aroostook:** We have had snow and rain this week and did not do much field work. **Albert Dow (NRCS), Piscataquis:** Farmers are planting. Weather is unseasonably cold. Most pastures are not quite ready for grazing. **Donna Lamb (Ext), Piscataquis:** Manure spreading, plowing and some planting are farm activities for the past week. **Janet King (FSA), Somerset:** Spring seem to be taking a long time getting here this year. Some farmers have planted some sweet and silage corn. Rain is a welcome site but we could use some warmer weather for the planting and spring crops. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Cool wet weather has slowed crop work. Heavy frost last night. Strawberries may have been damaged. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Fresh greens are in and should be ready this week. Some corn is up. A week of wet, cool weather has held up outdoor work. Bees are in the fields, waiting for the blueberry blossoms to open. **David Yarborough (Ext), Washington:** Wild Blueberries: Fungicides continued to be applied to protect plants from mummyberry disease. Bees being placed out in wild blueberry fields not finding any open blossoms. Cool weather continues to delay bloom. Many small spanworm seen but cool weather keeping feeding activity low. **Michael Tardy (FSA), Androscoggin:** We need warmth! We need dry weather! We need whatever it takes to get these crops in the ground and growing. The complaints are never ending with crop growers. Mother Nature has not been very helpful. Farmers are getting manure spread and some fields are plowed or harrowed for planting. Everyone was anticipating an early season, but we just have to take what comes. The grass crop should be great, if the producer can get to it. Market gardeners have got some crops planted, plastic covers some sweet corn and seedlings are flying out the doors. Perhaps the next week will carry a heat wave our way. **Parker Rand (FSA), Cumberland/York:** Still spreading manure and fertilizer, plowing, and planting. Some are a little hesitant about planting due to cold wet conditions. Small garden vegetables (beet, lettuce, carrots) are doing well. Greenhouse operators say plant sales are slow because of cold weather. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** Soil conditions are still very cold. If the weather breaks this week, all planting activities will be going full blast. The hay crop is primed to grow. Hopefully the apple blossoms will bring warm weather and bees. Time to clean the pool? **Laura Rand (FSA), Oxford:** Rain, cold, windy, and not very pleasant weather seemed to be the norm over the week. Areas received up to 2 inches of snow the first part of the week and some received wet snow on Saturday. Nights have been down in the mid to upper 30's and the ground received enough rain to stop all field work for the best part of the week. Soil has been prepared and ready to go; some seeds are planted, however, Mother Nature doesn't appear to want to proceed! Most everyone is a little behind in field work due to this week's weather. A couple of warm days will push everything up and back on schedule. Amazing how our lives depend on the weather.

**MASSACHUSETTS - Arthur Williams (FSA), Berkshire:** Wet, cold week. Some chemicals and fertilizer applied to the fields. Two to four

inches of wet snow on Saturday. Up to three inches of rain during the week. **Paul Russell (FSA), Southeast Massachusetts:** Cool wet weather has slowed all activity. Seeds are not germinating, plants aren't growing, all crops are behind schedule. Received over 4" of rain last week which puts southeastern Mass about normal for the year. Cranberry growers are still concerned about frost as they apply fertilizer and are preparing for their first fungicide spray. Vegetable growers did not get much accomplished as wet weather prevented field work, dairy farmers are preparing for the first cutting of hay which has been help by the rain. **Kip Graham (FSA), Worcester:** Taking advantage of the days available to get into fields. Its been too wet much of the week. Getting fields ready and planting corn has begun. Its been cold and damp slowing down bloom development on fruit and berries. Some early planting of vegetables begun. Grub control undertaken in some areas. Fruit emergence slowed down due to cold and rain. Rain preventing frost pockets. Fruit and berries are looking good up to this moment. **David Rose (FSA), Bristol:** Most of the week was spent planting and preparing fields. Over 2 inches of rain Saturday has slowed field work. Most fruit crops looking good. Cooler than normal temperatures have slowed growth. **John Devine (FSA), Franklin:** The big news this week was the snow on Saturday. This established a new record for the latest date of measurable accumulation in Franklin County. This was followed by two nights of frost. Many growers were out irrigating for frost protection. All crops have been slowed by the cool and rainy conditions over the past two weeks. One exception has been the hay crop, which is growing in leaps and bounds. Rye has also been growing very well. This has created some problems for anyone who didn't start conventional tilling early. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** It was a wet, cold week. Frost two nights, May 19th and 20th with temperatures in the mid to upper 20's. Growers were irrigating all night long. Some irrigation pumps were running 10 hours straight. Protective sprays were being applied to orchards. The potato crop is 95 percent planted. **Gary Guida, Worcester:** Well, another interesting and challenging spring in New England. Got 2 inches of snow Saturday and a nice hard freeze Sunday morning (being sarcastic). Peaches and apples have extensive damage. Growers who transplanted without crop protection lost all. How cold was it here? 22 degrees. Fortunately corn not up yet, and we didn't transplant crops. Wait and see for strawberries. Bedding plant sales good rebound on Sunday. Mostly perennials as consumers cautious about weather and full moon on 26<sup>th</sup>.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE - Amy Ouellette (Ext), Belknap:** Heavy rains during week saturated fields and made planting nearly impossible. Little or no corn planted during week. Irrigation turned on over strawberry fields for frost protection on May 18 & 19. Corn still being covered with plastic. Unusual temperatures have caused damage to even some cold tolerant annuals. Snow throughout county on May 18 slowed garden center and farm stand business considerably. Most apple cultivars in full bloom. **Bruce Clement (Ext), Cheshire:** Is the drought over yet? Rain, rain, and more rain combined with cold temperatures have stalled plant germination and growth (except grasses). Most of the silage corn acreage has been planted except on upland soils, but little of it has germinated. Same story with new seedlings. Early vegetables (spinach, peas, lettuce) are standing still. Some frost damage as well. Bottom line: we've got adequate moisture, now we need warm weather. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Cold wet weather through much of the week. Corn planting is delayed. Connecticut and Androscoggin rivers running at high levels. Fields quite wet, need some dry weather to get crops in. Manure hauled, some early vegetable planting being done. Some farmers wondering whether they'll be cutting grass before field corn planting. Cold temperatures seen to be holding back growth. Still cold nights with frosts. **Tom Buob (Ext), Grafton:** Cold weather continues. Forage crops growing slowly. Corn planting continues but none has emerged. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Fruits: Apples and pears are past petal fall stage in the Hollis area and are in petal fall stage in later blooming areas of the county. With all the rain during week, orchardists making sure to have protective fungicide sprays applied. Not as much damage to crop set as first thought to apple, pears and peach due to freezing temperature week of April 22. There was very minor damage to strawberries and some damage to cherry fruit set. Vegetables: Harvesting asparagus and some spinach. With the rain during week, it was very difficult to do any field work, including making successive plantings of sweet corn and trying to finish potato planting. In fields where soil dries quickly, some growers were plowing, disking fertilizing and laying down plastic mulch and drip irrigation tape. Weed spraying sweet corn fields. Field Crops: Fixing pasture fences during raining weather. Spreading manure, plowing, disking, fertilizing and planting corn on fields that are not too wet. **David Seavey (Ext), Merrimack:** Hayland and pasture seedings on well-drained soils. Seeding cool season vegetables. Fertilizing hayfields, tree fruits, blueberries, and field grown nursery stock. Orchards spraying for apple

scab between showers. Some frost in low-lying areas reported to cause damage to strawberry blossoms and possibly apple blossoms. Good planting weather for fruit trees, high bush blueberries and ornamental nursery stock. Blueberries and apples in full bloom. Corn planting delayed due to wet soils. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** Rain, snow, frost, wind and cold weather prevailed this week. Field work delayed because of the wet and cold conditions. Protective orchard sprays were difficult to be done because of rain and cold. Bee pollination was slowed due to weather. Frost has damaged some apple and peach blossoms. Planting fruit trees and small fruits. Preparing seed beds, discing and applying fertilizer and black plastic for vegetables. Plant growth was slow. **Pam Marvin (FSA), Sullivan:** With snow in most areas of the county on Saturday, unknown as to what affect it had on strawberry plants and early vegetables. Many silage corn fields are still being plowed, harrowed and seeded. Need a break in rain showers so producers can start chopping a good crop of alfalfa. Cooler than normal temperatures having an affect on the germination and growth of planted silage corn and early vegetables. Many days this week had strong gusty winds which has contributed to a lack of bees for pollination. **Geoffery Njue (Ext), Strafford:** Field work continues between rainy days. Harrowing and corn planting continued in the week. Many vegetable fields have been planted. Greenhouse tomatoes are looking good. Many farmers are hoping for warmer temperatures for quick germination. Most hay fields are looking good and close to be harvested. Fungicides applications going on for apple scab. Greenhouse operators had a good Mother's Day weekend.

**RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport:** A week full of contrasts. Good rain was welcomed, but held up farmers from continueing field work. Potatoes are emerging, cole crops are doing well, planting of field and sweet corn held up this week. Roadside stands watched as customers rode by on Saturday while more than two inches of rain fell. Birds are standing around applauding the bloom of strawberries and blueberries. **Marilyn Soileau (FSA), All Counties:** Plenty of rain this week, helped to hold off on drought warnings - still in a watch status. Light frost over the weekend. Farmers are plowing and harrowing in preparation for planting. Cool weather seems to have blooms stalled. Dogwoods and lilacs still in bloom.

**VERMONT - John St. One (FSA), Lamoille:** If the weather improves from last week's snow/rain maybe farmers can resume normal field activities. Plenty of moisture but need some heat. Planting is a little behind schedule but hopefully can catch up with a stretch of good weather. **Bill Snow (Ext), Orange:** Very cold and wet weather has delayed crop planting and growth of what corn was planted early. Snow covering the ground twice during the week. Significant rainfall during the week helped surface water supplies. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** Last week was very cold and wet. The area saw snow on several days. Landowners are spreading manure and commercial fertilizer on fields. Not much cultivation occurred last week due to the wet conditions. Most farms have begun to pasture their animals. **Lynette Hamilton (FSA), Windham:** Snow and frosty morning this past weekend has set all the producers in a tail spin. Irrigating strawberries and blueberries to keep from freezing at blossom time is a nightmare. There will be some replanting of corn where it has emerged and has been frozen. **George Cook (Ext), Lamoille:** Cold, wet, rainy week with over 3 inches of rainfall. Monday - heavy rain totaling 1.35 inches. Some corn planted, none emerged, need drying, warming sunshine to prevent seed rot. Other field work mostly on hold last week. Bulk fertilizer tenders sitting idle in fields. **Jeff Carter (Ext), Addison:** Continue to plant alfalfa and grass hay fields, planting corn between rains. Some manure spreading. Some fertilizing hay fields. Grass and alfalfa hay crop looks good. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** 2.5 inches of rain very welcome this week. Most of the manure spread and grass seedings in. Have not heard of any corn in the ground yet, but it is getting to be time. Some dairy cows out onto pasture. Still in the 30's many nights. **Sherwin Williams, Rutland:** First cutting of asp, slow, need sun and warmth. Still plowing under big crop of winter rye. Two inches of rain last week. Fertilizer applied before planting. Strawberries in blossom. Have used sprinklers to keep off frost. First planting of sweet corn just pricking the ground. Too cold. Early planting of peas up enough to follow rows. Radishes, spinach and lettuce beginning to show. A rainy week. "Think Sun" and hope for warm days. **Maria Garcia (Ext), Chittenden:** At this stage, it is difficult to determine fruit set. Temperatures have been unusually cold and pollination conditions poor.

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