



New England Agricultural Statistics Service

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Crop Weather

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May 28, 2002 - 4 pm

For week ending 5/26/02

Cool Temperatures Slow Germination

GENERAL CONDITIONS: For the week ending May 26, 2002, there were 5.7 days suitable for field work across New England. Topsoil moisture was rated 1% very short, 8% short, 80% adequate, 11% surplus. Subsoil moisture was rated 5% very short, 22% short, 69% adequate, 4% surplus. Pasture condition was rated as 1% very poor, 4% poor, 16% fair, 75% good, 4% excellent.

A cool, but dry week allowed many farmers to return to their fields across most of New England. The cooler temperatures across the region prevented soil temperatures from rising and slowed the germination of crops planted in previous weeks. Early morning frost kept fruit and vegetable growers busy trying to prevent damage to their vulnerable crops. Major farm activities included: planting field corn, vegetables, sweet corn, tobacco, potatoes, oats and barley; harvesting spinach, asparagus, lettuce and rhubarb; spreading manure; applying fertilizer; plowing and disking; irrigating orchards and cranberry bogs for frost protection.

SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
Topsoil Moisture			
Very Short	1	1	6
Short	8	6	34
Adequate	80	70	53
Surplus	11	23	7
Subsoil Moisture			
Very Short	5	7	5
Short	22	20	32
Adequate	69	67	57
Surplus	4	6	6

FRUIT: Cold mornings during the first half of the week kept many orchardists and berry growers busy applying protective sprays in order to minimize frost damage. Despite their efforts, temperatures dropped low enough to cause damage to some orchard and berry crops. Strawberries were particularly hard hit by frost in many areas across New England. Bees were placed in wild blueberry fields, although the cool weather has slowed the crop from blossoming. Cranberry bogs had advanced to the "hook" stage at many locations and were expected to bloom soon. Cranberry growers stayed busy scouting for insects, applying insecticide where necessary and protecting from frost.

FIELD CROPS: The dryer weather allowed farmers to make good progress planting field corn. Some locations were severely hit by frost and farmers were forced to replant acreage. Harvest of first cut haylage and dry hay was underway region wide by the end of the week. Potato planting in Rhode Island was complete by week's end and Massachusetts planting progress was close behind. In Maine, oat and barley seedings had exceeded the half way point as of May 26, 2002. Potato growers in Maine also took advantage of the dryer weather and planting also advanced past the halfway mark.

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

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

* PF = Petal Fall, FB = Full Bloom

VEGETABLES: Dry weather conditions during the second half of the week allowed vegetable growers to make good progress planting sweet corn and spring vegetables. Frost received early in the week damaged some sweet corn and vegetables that had emerged, forcing farmers to reseed at some locations. In addition to frost damage, some fields which received excessive moisture in previous weeks were slow to germinate. Asparagus, spinach, and lettuce were harvested during the week.

FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	2002	2001	5-yr Avg	Percent Emerged	Condition
-- Percent Planted --					
Barley, ME	65	85	70	20	Good
Oats, ME	60	80	70	15	Good
Potatoes					
Maine	55	85	65	0	Good
Mass	90	90	90	25	Good/Fair
Rhode Isl	100	99	95	25	Good/Excellent
Silage Corn	55	80	55	10	Fair/Good
Sweet Corn	50	65	55	20	Fair/Good
Tobacco					
Shade	20	55	55	--	Good/Fair
Broadleaf	10	5	15	--	Good/Fair
Dry Hay					
First Cut	15	5	10	--	Good/Fair

For the Week Ending Sunday, May 26, 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		
MAINE															
Augusta_ME	36	79	53	-5	123	-13	5	-5	0.01	-0.83	1	3.82	+0.34	12	
Bangor	31	77	52	-4	94	-7	3	-2	0.00	-0.78	0	2.76	-0.49	11	
Bethel	29	81	50	-7	112	+1	9	+1	0.00	-0.84	0	4.65	+1.34	11	
Cari bou	32	76	51	-3	53	-21	5	+3	0.55	-0.15	4	3.06	+0.31	16	
Dover-Foxcroft	27	78	51	-5	40	-36	0	-1	0.04	-0.79	1	2.04	-1.22	9	
Frenchville	33	75	50	-3	35	-18	5	+5	0.16	-0.57	4	2.67	-0.14	16	
Houlton	27	78	51	-4	75	+0	6	+3	0.17	-0.60	3	2.70	-0.29	16	
Livermore_Falls	25	83	50	-6	89	+13	5	+4	0.04	-0.80	1	4.36	+0.97	12	
Moosehead	30	77	49	-3	37	-4	0	+0	0.04	-0.73	2	2.85	-0.21	14	
Portland_ME	32	81	52	-5	118	+25	5	+5	0.00	-0.77	0	4.39	+1.06	9	
NEW HAMPSHIRE															
Benton	27	76	48	-9	123	-9	27	+11	0.09	-0.72	3	3.60	+0.58	15	
Berlin_AG	27	76	49	-7	102	-10	8	-4	0.02	-0.82	2	4.41	+1.24	15	
Concord	25	83	51	-7	236	+83	64	+47	0.01	-0.69	1	4.50	+1.70	11	
Diamond_Pond	27	72	44	-7	35	-11	1	+1	0.25	-0.69	3	3.76	+0.30	17	
Keene_AP	28	81	51	-10	240	+28	64	+30	0.02	-0.86	1	4.53	+1.15	14	
North_Conway	27	81	52	-6	145	+14	23	+10	0.00	-0.91	0	4.71	+1.07	12	
Rochester	28	85	53	-7	198	+19	38	+14	0.00	-0.84	0	5.14	+1.55	9	
VERMONT															
Burlington_VT	30	77	52	-8	206	+14	55	+24	0.04	-0.66	1	3.74	+0.96	13	
Island_Pond	26	75	46	-8	89	+9	15	+11	0.17	-0.72	4	4.00	+0.78	18	
Montpelier	25	74	48	-9	154	+26	40	+25	0.18	-0.59	3	3.85	+1.00	17	
Pownal	28	75	48	-9	164	+28	42	+24	0.33	-0.72	2	5.33	+1.19	17	
Rochester	27	75	46	-10	117	+2	26	+14	0.01	-0.97	1	5.80	+1.88	12	
Rutland_AG	28	74	48	-13	155	-71	30	-14	0.00	-0.83	0	3.91	+0.83	13	
Sutton	26	76	47	-7	98	+21	18	+14	0.16	-0.70	2	4.57	+1.40	17	
Townshend_Lake	29	84	50	-9	193	+18	42	+16	0.01	-0.76	1	5.99	+2.78	14	
MASSACHUSETTS															
Ashburnham	30	82	51	-7	211	+89	44	+36	0.00	-0.84	0	5.39	+2.23	11	
Boston	42	84	57	-4	324	+90	78	+57	0.00	-0.70	0	4.69	+1.71	10	
Greenfield	24	83	53	-9	258	+21	62	+28	0.04	-0.87	3	5.81	+2.31	16	
New_Bedford	33	81	54	-7	287	+51	54	+33	0.00	-0.82	0	5.32	+1.97	11	
Otis_AFB	37	77	53	-5	225	+98	28	+23	0.00	-0.84	0	4.70	+1.28	8	
Plymouth	32	83	53	-6	239	+97	46	+39	0.00	-0.86	0	5.11	+1.45	12	
Walpole	32	86	55	-4	289	+108	79	+62	0.02	-0.75	1	5.68	+2.49	12	
Westover	32	84	54	-9	334	+19	103	+48	0.03	-0.91	1	4.98	+1.31	14	
Worthington	25	79	49	-8	184	+53	43	+30	0.07	-0.98	3	5.67	+1.47	16	
RHODE ISLAND															
Providence	36	85	55	-5	313	+108	72	+56	0.03	-0.81	1	5.36	+1.91	13	
Woonsocket	31	85	52	-7	284	+107	75	+63	0.02	-0.89	1	6.80	+3.09	12	
CONNECTICUT															
Bridgeport	38	81	56	-6	322	+73	71	+32	0.00	-0.86	0	6.29	+2.70	12	
Hartford_AP	30	87	54	-8	368	+80	115	+63	0.05	-0.88	2	4.58	+0.85	13	
Norfolk	29	81	50	-7	220	+93	56	+45	0.04	-1.01	1	5.20	+1.06	12	
Thomaston_Dam	28	84	52	-7	275	+78	71	+46	0.02	-0.96	2	5.18	+1.12	15	
Willimantic	29	84	52	-8	309	+113	90	+66	0.15	-0.76	1	5.04	+1.21	13	

STATE WEATHER SUMMARY
For the Week Ending Sunday, May 26, 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	23	84	50	-5	0.00	0.55
NH	13	85	49	-8	0.00	1.04
VT	20	84	48	-9	0.00	0.86
MA	21	86	53	-6	0.00	0.10
RI	31	85	54	-5	0.00	0.03
CT	28	87	53	-8	0.00	0.15

Prepared by AWIS, Inc.

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: Heavy frost damaged fruit tree crops in some areas, with some farmers reporting only an estimated 25% of normal crop will be harvested for apples, peaches, plums and apricots. Strawberries were also lost. **Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland:** Frost to freeze first half of week injuring tomatoes and peppers set out. Tobacco planting continued as did field corn and sweet corn. Chopping grass and baling some green rye for straw. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** A lot of corn getting planted, apples just finished an extended bloom of a couple of weeks, cold and wet, about eight frosts in two weeks time, blueberries are just past full bloom and peaches in shuck-split stage, asparagus nipped by frost, hay started light, matured early and is heading out fast, some planting stopped to get hay/haylage in at better quality, old farmers saying "Cold wet May means a barn full of hay." **Nancy Welsh/Karen Lockman (FSA), New Haven:** Weather is still unusual, cool days to warm and humid. Soils still are dry. First cutting has started. **Joyce Meader (Ext), Windham:** Haylage cut, stacked, and covered from some orchard grass fields. Time to plant corn, if not started already. The rest of the grass haylage will wait until corn is in. Seedlings looking good. Lots of warmth and intermittent rain.

MAINE - Marvin Hedstrom, Northern Aroostook: Potatoes: Weather is starting to cooperate with planting. Potato planting continues in earnest. Fields drying out quite well. With the equipment growers use these days, many acres can be planted in a good day. Also, small grains being planted, lime being spread. Seed in the ground looks good but due to cold soil temperatures, germination is slow. **Pam Hickey (Ext), Central Aroostook:** Farm activities are progressing. Farmers have had some warmer weather to help get the crops planted. It looks like we will continue to have warmer weather this week with only scattered showers. The crop should have a larger portion planted by week's end. Let's keep our fingers crossed. **Steve London (Ext), Southern Aroostook:** The temperature was a little cool the first part of the week with a little rain, but warmed up late Wednesday on. Farmers are working long days to make up some lost time. **Albert Dow (NRCS), Piscataquis:** Farmers have been seeding grass/legumes in rotation with their silage corn. The soil temperature is still not very high. Growers are in the midst of crop planting. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** What a difference a week of dry weather can make. Lots of field work was done. Corn planting was in full swing. Apples and strawberries all in full bloom this morning. Some corn emerged. First cutting of haylage has started on some farms. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Silage corn planted during the week now that the soil has dried out. The first baleage has been cut. Lettuce, radishes and greens now available at roadside stands. Fertilizer and sulfur being applied to blueberry fields. **David Yorborough (Ext), Washington:** Wild Blueberries: Bees being placed out in wild blueberry fields finding few open blossoms. Cool weather continues to delay bloom. Many small spanworm seen but cool weather keeping feeding activity low. **Michael Tardy (FSA), Androscoggin:** This has been a good week. The weather warmed up a little, rain stayed away most of the week, and farming got done. Some corn, potatoes and other crops are in the ground. This next week or two should be the busy ones, if Mother Nature cooperates. Most of the farmers want their corn in the ground by early June, which is right around the corner. The harvest of first crop hay is fast approaching and the grasses look good. As you drive by the farms, lots of outdoor activity can be observed. Most of it is work! **Parker Rand (FSA), Cumberland/York:** There was a heavy frost last week and some of the apple blossoms were hit. Lots of progress in land preparation, and planting, however plants are slow to emerge due to cold. Its time to start harvesting haylage. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** A BEAUTIFUL week for planting. We will need rain soon. Fruits are all in bloom. The smell of first cut hay is in the air. Life is good. **Laura Rand (FSA), Oxford:** Windy, sunny days have been the event for the week. Frost was received Monday and Wednesday nights and producers are reporting hits on strawberries and apples. Cool days have not done much to warm the soil, however, producers are busy planting corn and small vegetables. Grass looks lush in some areas and sparse in other areas of the county. Warmer days must be ahead!

MASSACHUSETTS - Arthur Williams (FSA), Berkshire: Applying fertilizer and planting field corn. Early seeded fields not greening up because of cold ground. Another wet week with nearly two inches of rain. Temperatures have been down in low 20's, low enough to hurt

strawberries, sweet corn, peaches and maybe other fruit crops. **Paul Russell (FSA), Southeast Massachusetts:** Very cool week, seed is not germinating and crops are not growing, most crops are 2 weeks behind schedule. Cranberry growers are applying fertilizer and are spraying insecticides for the cranberry weevil. Shellfish growers continue to harvest quahogs and oysters and enjoying excellent production. **Kip Graham (FSA), Worcester:** Fungicides still being applied. Some snow and sleet in some of the parts of the county. Some growers were out irrigating to help keep frost from hurting plants. Some strawberry growers reporting poor crops. Fields still being plowed and harrowed, manured and fertilized. Cool weather slowing up outdoor field work. Rain has been a welcomed sight, but still needing the sun and humidity to help plants to get that good start. Some corn is beginning to emerge. Soil is still on the colder side. Cabbage, lettuce, peas, beets, carrots, swiss chard and spinach are all doing well in this cooler weather. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: Bad week for cranberry growers getting a good night's sleep. Monday and Tuesday were serious frost nights and many were watching things closely the next two nights as well. No assessment of whether any damage occurred, but it was cold enough for severe consequences if the sprinklers weren't running. Growers are scouting for insects and treating where necessary. There should be hook in many beds later this week, meaning bloom is not far away. Adequate moisture so far, but many beds will experience root rot with so much water being used for frost control. **David Rose (FSA), Bristol:** Frost and freeze conditions last week damaged early sweet corn. Some of it will have to be replanted. Farmers continue to plant, all crops are being planted at this time. Emergence is slow due to the cold weather. **John Devine (FSA), Franklin:** Frost and freeze conditions effected all unprotected crops in Franklin County this week. Strawberries appear to be the hardest hit crop. Several growers have reported crop damage even though the plants were under row cover. All potatoes that had broken ground also appear to be damaged. Whether this freeze damage was significant enough to replant, remains to be seen. Early sweet corn also appears to be effected but growers are confident that the crop will be okay. Tree fruit growers are taking a "wait and see" attitude with their crops. Low-bush blueberry growers in the western sections of the county reported temps. in the low 20's on Tuesday morning. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** This week began very cool with frost on Monday and Tuesday. Some growers reported the freeze damaged their peach, apple, strawberry, blueberry and asparagus crops. Many growers were irrigating their crops for frost protection. Dairy farmers started harvesting hay. By week's end the crop looks good. **Gary Guida, Worcester:** Hard freeze destroyed or severely damaged blossoms on peach, apple, pears and lots of strawberries here in Northern Worcester County. Not much of a fruit year around these parts. Growers transplanting summer crops after freeze into fields. Memorial Day bedding plant sales very strong. Most people happy; they waited until the holiday to purchase vegetable plants for the garden. Sweet corn STILL not up yet.

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Bruce Clement (Ext), Cheshire: Sunny but continued cold weather in first half of the week; finally warmed up for the second half. Frosts in first part of week did extensive damage to strawberry crop. Silage corn planting about done along the river. Upland soils still wet and cold. Germination improved by the end of the week but still way behind normal. Haylage and baleage making started this week. Yields are on the low side. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Good week for field work, although still some frosts in mornings. All cornfields generally prepared for planting, most now seeded down. Topdress fertilizer being applied to hay and pasture land. New hay land seedlings being done. Early vegetable seedlings (peas and some sweet corn, etc.) going in. Looks like and abundance of dandelions in fields hit by armyworms and drought last year. Apples just starting to blossom this week! **Tom Buob (Ext), Grafton:** Corn planting finishing up. First cut starting and will probably progress as fast as weather will allow. Alfalfa still vegetative and grasses just starting to head. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Fruits: Strawberries are blooming along with blueberries. Frost occurred May 19, 20, 21, damaging strawberries that were not protected by irrigation, and some blueberries reported to be damaged. Apples and pears were not damaged. Moved bees out of orchards. Orchardists making sure to have protective fungicide sprays applied. Vegetables: Harvesting asparagus and some spinach. Field work included: making successive plantings of sweet corn and finishing potato planting. In fields where soil dried out, some growers were plowing, disking, fertilizing and

laying down plastic mulch and drip irrigation tape. Weed spraying sweet corn fields. Some tender vegetable crops, grown in the field, were damaged by the frost. Also, tomatoes and other vegetable crops in unheated high tunnels were damaged by frost. Growers were replanting damaged plants. Field Crops: Spreading manure, plowing, disking, fertilizing and planting corn on fields that are not too wet. **David Seavey (Ext), Merrimack:** Second application of nitrogen applied to highbush blueberries, corn and other planted vegetables. Fungicides applied to tree fruits and strawberries. Asparagus and rhubarb harvesting continues. Irrigation systems providing frost protection to strawberries. Cold weather hampering bedding plant sales. Some early cut hay but mostly haylage. Field work on heavy soils delayed due to wet conditions. Temperatures as low as 24 degrees reported. Cold temperature injury to tunnel tomatoes, apples, peaches, blueberries and strawberries. Some hail injury reported. Great transplanting weather for landscapers. Cold, wet weather is responsible for extending bloom time of apples and highbush blueberries and for predisposing plants to disease. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** Another night with frost and two days of hail. Very strong rain on Monday afternoon. Strawberries apples, and other crops have been damaged. Replanting sweet and field corn: seeds rotted with the wet weather. Still preparing vegetable fields: plowing, disking, fertilizing and laying black plastic. Planting vegetables. Cutting hay. Orchardists spraying with preventative fungicides. In general, crop growth has been slow. **Pam Marvin (FSA), Sullivan:** Frost early part of the week affected some blueberry and strawberry fields. Will wait and see how crop comes along. Good crop of haylage being cut. Final fields of silage corn being planted. Some first crop of baled hay being done. Warmer temperatures were a welcome to help in the germination process. Some re-seedings of grass fields being done. **Geoffery Njue (Ext), Strafford:** First cut is getting off to a slow start. Some producers were busy harrowing and planting because the soils were easier to work due to dry conditions. Cool conditions have slowed down germination. Some producers lost part of the strawberry flowers due to cold weather at the beginning of the week. Most vegetable crops have already been planted. Some greenhouse tomatoes growers had their first harvest of tomatoes. Greenhouse operations and garden centers had a busy weekend with gardeners buying transplants and plants because of the promising warm weather.

RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport: Good weather brought the roadside stands a banner Memorial Day. A good week for

hay and field work. Sweet corn being planted, potatoes emerging, cole crops doing well and small fruit crops looking great. Fields being readied for field corn, some manure being spread. **Marilu Soileau (FSA), All Counties:** Mowing in orchards and some hay fields. Planting and transplanting still taking place. The strawberry crop was hurt by several frosty early mornings recently. A South County producer has reported significant damage to his crop. Farmstands were very busy this past holiday weekend.

VERMONT - John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille: Spring finally sprung last week allowing for a flurry of field work. Planters were in high gear trying to catch up with planting. With adequate moisture the warm temperatures should get the corn growing. Grass looks good so should see some harvesting by the end of the week. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** A lot of field activity this past week. Most farmers have planted their corn. A few farmers have begun to cut their first crop of hay. Hay yields are good for this time of year. **Lynette Hamilton (FSA), Windham:** Weather beginning to warm up. Forecast showers of last week did not produce, but did have spotty showers over the weekend. **Jeff Carter (Ext), Addison:** Switch to harvesting first cut hay. Light yields. Still planting corn. Still some manure spreading. **Richard Noel (FSA), Grand Isle/Franklin:** Only 0.25 inches of rain in Franklin County, but not too much sun all week, soil still cool. Early seeded grasses up. Not much corn up, but a lot of corn going into the ground. Farmers have starting haying this week, a lot of hay mowed this weekend. Some are going to be haying and trying to plant corn too! The sun is shining and looks great right now. Have a great Memorial Day weekend. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Good spring weather. Warmed up over the weekend. Lots of corn being planted, with associated spraying. More cows out. Some have begun haying. 'Cold wet May- barn full of hay' might turn out to be true. Grass is really growing. **Sherwin Williams, Rutland:** Finished plowing all fields under cultivation. Fertilizer applied before and at planting. Four frosts in a row have stopped cutting of asparagus for several days. Rhubarb doing well and selling good also. Had to run water on berries four days in a row. One morning temperature - 2 degrees. Over all seed emergence has been very slow, too wet and cold. Last two days of sun has been a blessing to warm the soil and get the crops started. Hay looks good. Old saying my folks had, "Cold wet May makes a barn full of hay", may be true this year.

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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