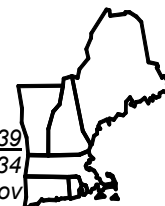




New England Agricultural Statistics Service

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



NASS

22 Bridge St. Third Floor
PO Box 1444
Concord, NH 03302

Aubrey R. Davis, Director
www.usda.gov/nass

603-224-9639
Fax: 603-225-1434
nass-nh@nass.usda.gov

Crop Weather

Volume 23, Number 5

(issued weekly on the Internet, May - October)

May 27, 2003 - 4 pm

For week ending 5/25/03

Crops Need Heat and Sunshine

GENERAL CONDITIONS: For the week ending May 25, 2003, there were 4.4 days available for field work across New England. Topsoil moisture was rated 2% very short, 3% short, 71% adequate, 24% surplus. Subsoil moisture was rated 3% very short, 4% short, 77% adequate, 16% surplus. Pasture condition was rated as 0% very poor, 4% poor, 21% fair, 55% good, 20% excellent. Planting continued in New England when weather permitted. Most states received rain during the latter half of the week, slowing field and pollination activities. Temperatures in the southern New England states were well below normal. Major farm activities included: planting vegetables, sweet corn, field corn, potatoes and small grains; transplanting shade tobacco; spreading manure; applying fertilizer, herbicides and fungicides; irrigating for frost protection; harrowing; pruning; plowing; discing.

FRUIT: Tree fruit crops reached petal fall stage last week and remained in good to fair condition. Mowing, pruning and spraying continued. Bee activity was low due to the cool, wet weather. Extended wet weather has also increased the risk of disease. Bees continued their work in Maine wild blueberry fields on days when the weather cooperated; most field burning has been completed. Fertilizer was applied to cranberry bogs in Massachusetts and growers are on the lookout for insects and fungus. Strawberries were also fertilized and growers irrigated for frost protection.

SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
Topsoil Moisture			
Very Short	2	2	1
Short	3	5	8
Adequate	71	75	80
Surplus	24	18	11
Subsoil Moisture			
Very Short	3	4	5
Short	4	6	22
Adequate	77	81	69
Surplus	16	9	4

FIELD CROPS: Cool temperatures and rain continued to slow crop growth and hindered field activities. Farmers are awaiting dry conditions to cut the first crop of hay. Field corn planting continued and some manure applications were made to fields. Potato planting in Massachusetts and Rhode Island was close to being on schedule by week's end, with emergence well underway. Maine did not receive as much rain as it's southern neighbors, giving potato and small grain farmers ample opportunity to do some catching up on planting. Shade tobacco growers had completed 45 percent of transplanting by the end of the week.

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

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

* FB = Full Bloom

VEGETABLES: Farmers planted such vegetables as beans, cucumbers, greens, peas, peppers, tomatoes and winter squash last week. Asparagus, rhubarb and spinach were harvested. Sweet corn fields were sprayed for weeds; emergence reached 15 percent last week. The gloomy Memorial Day weekend weather discouraged some consumers from visiting local farm stands.

FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	2003	2002	5-yr Avg	Percent Emerged	Condition
-- Percent Planted --					
Barley, ME	70	60	80	<5	Good
Oats, ME	70	55	75	<5	Good
Potatoes					
Maine	50	50	70	--	Good/Fair
Mass	85	90	90	25	Good
Rhode Isl	95	99	95	20	Good
Silage Corn	40	50	55	10	Good/Fair
Sweet Corn	45	50	55	15	Good/Fair
Tobacco					
Shade	45	20	45	--	Good/Fair
Dry Hay					
First Cut	<5	10	10	--	Good/Fair

For the Week Ending Sunday, May 25, 2003

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_State_A	43	86	57	+0	113	-15	19	+10	0.51	-0.33	3	1.97	-1.52	10
Bangor_Intl_Arp	42	86	57	+3	114	+20	18	+14	0.46	-0.33	1	1.97	-1.28	7
Bethel	35	88	56	+0	91	-13	12	+5	0.35	-0.49	3	2.43	-0.88	11
Caribou_Municip	37	86	58	+6	71	+2	18	+17	0.02	-0.68	1	1.90	-0.84	13
Dover-Foxcroft	39	84	54	-1	60	-11	6	+6	0.39	-0.43	3	2.07	-1.19	10
Frenchville	34	85	59	+7	76	+27	26	+26	0.00	-0.73	0	0.85	-1.95	8
Houlton	38	86	59	+6	83	+13	16	+14	0.09	-0.68	2	2.22	-0.76	11
Livermore_Falls	36	89	56	+2	88	+17	11	+11	0.35	-0.49	2	2.17	-1.23	10
Moosehead	35	87	54	+4	49	+12	7	+7	0.14	-0.63	2	1.72	-1.34	11
Portland_ME	42	80	56	+2	114	+27	16	+16	0.70	-0.07	3	1.83	-1.52	12
NEW HAMPSHIRE														
Benton	41	81	57	+2	109	-16	13	-2	0.22	-0.58	3	2.14	-0.86	11
Berlin_AG	37	84	57	+3	108	+3	18	+7	0.16	-0.68	2	1.62	-1.54	8
Concord	38	86	57	+0	175	+30	29	+14	0.72	+0.02	4	2.98	+0.18	12
Diamond_Pond	31	78	53	+4	56	+13	5	+5	0.18	-0.75	3	3.58	+0.15	15
Keene_AP	36	82	55	-5	168	-33	16	-15	0.34	-0.53	3	2.24	-1.12	10
North_Conway	43	87	59	+3	132	+9	18	+6	0.31	-0.59	3	2.68	-0.97	12
Rochester	40	88	57	-3	122	-47	17	-5	0.56	-0.28	4	2.44	-1.17	11
VERMONT														
Burlington_Intl	37	82	60	+2	229	+47	30	+1	0.36	-0.34	2	2.97	+0.19	10
Island_Pond	30	82	57	+5	103	+28	9	+6	0.26	-0.62	3	3.25	+0.06	12
Montpelier	37	80	56	+1	124	+3	15	+1	0.00	-0.77	0	1.36	-1.47	7
Pownal	39	80	56	+0	141	+12	11	-6	0.49	-0.56	4	4.02	-0.12	13
Rochester	32	84	55	+0	105	-3	9	-2	0.42	-0.56	2	3.39	-0.52	12
Rutland_AG	39	82	57	-4	138	-77	17	-24	0.48	-0.34	4	3.52	+0.46	12
Sutton	35	83	56	+4	107	+35	9	+6	0.64	-0.21	4	3.48	+0.34	15
Townshend_Lake	39	84	56	-3	118	-48	7	-17	0.54	-0.23	4	3.13	-0.08	13
MASSACHUSETTS														
Ashburnham	38	82	55	-1	155	+40	15	+8	0.73	-0.10	4	2.91	-0.25	11
Boston/Logan_In	46	82	57	-4	236	+13	44	+26	0.68	-0.02	4	1.24	-1.76	12
Greenfield	36	83	57	-4	199	-27	21	-10	0.65	-0.26	5	2.89	-0.61	13
New_Bedford	37	78	55	-6	157	-68	4	-15	0.91	+0.10	4	1.49	-1.87	12
Otis_AFB	41	77	55	-2	139	+20	4	+0	1.40	+0.56	4	1.84	-1.59	11
Plymouth	36	78	55	-4	162	+28	9	+3	1.00	+0.13	4	1.58	-2.10	13
Walpole	39	85	56	-3	209	+37	31	+16	0.67	-0.10	4	1.54	-1.67	13
Chicopee/Westov	36	82	56	-7	236	-66	31	-20	0.45	-0.48	5	3.12	-0.54	13
Worthington	34	80	54	-4	119	-5	7	-5	0.53	-0.52	4	2.96	-1.24	11
RHODE ISLAND														
Providence	43	81	56	-4	225	+30	21	+7	0.69	-0.15	4	1.45	-2.01	12
Woonsocket	37	82	55	-4	178	+10	13	+3	0.70	-0.21	4	1.26	-2.46	12
CONNECTICUT														
Bridgeport/Siko	43	76	57	-5	212	-25	18	-18	0.66	-0.21	5	1.98	-1.62	14
Hartford/Bradle	38	83	57	-5	285	+10	42	-6	0.76	-0.18	4	2.12	-1.61	12
Norfolk	38	78	53	-4	128	+8	6	-4	0.29	-0.76	4	2.10	-2.04	12
Thomaston_Dam	36	84	56	-3	219	+32	22	-1	0.51	-0.47	4	2.55	-1.52	15
Willimantic	35	83	55	-4	216	+30	19	-3	0.72	-0.19	4	1.48	-2.36	13

STATE WEATHER SUMMARY
For the Week Ending Sunday, May 25, 2003

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	26	89	56	+2	0.00	0.96
NH	29	92	56	+0	0.05	1.21
VT	28	90	56	+1	0.00	0.64
MA	32	86	55	-3	0.15	1.77
RI	37	82	55	-4	0.14	0.73
CT	34	84	55	-5	0.29	1.09

Copyright 2003: AWIS, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
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.

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: Weather has been rainy and cool, slowing field work this week. **Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland:** A cool, wet week. Early in the week some made grass silage, either chopping or putting up wrapped bales. With heavy rain over the weekend many fields are saturated and it will be a while before farmers can return to their fields. Vegetable producers might find it challenging to transplant or apply sprays on planted fields. **Marsha Jette (FSA), New London:** Farmers busily harrowing in rye and planting corn, trying to beat the predicted rainstorms of the weekend. Slow start to first cut of hay. Various producers worried about crops rotting due to recent heavy rainstorms. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Gray, cool, wet week. Manure spreading. Harrowing where possible. Spraying apples. Harvesting asparagus and haylage. Sun and warmth needed. **Nancy Welsh/Karen Lockman (FSA), New Haven:** Heavy rains and cool temperatures continue. Fields are too wet to plant. Bedding plant business is down. Fruit is forming on peach trees. Hay is standing tall waiting to be cut. **Joyce Meader (Ext), Windham:** First cutting haylage being chopped and packed into silos. Excellent quality - before the rains came. Now grass farmers are watching the stalks mature, waiting for the next dry spell to finish the first cutting. Then on to corn planting. **Richard Meinert (Ext), CT Cooperative:** Rain, Rain GO AWAY! Rain made it extremely difficult to get any field work done this week. Everything seems to be holding its breath waiting for sun.

MAINE - Marvin Hedstrom, Northern Aroostook: Potatoes and small grains: A good week for getting the crops planted. Soil conditions were very good. Soil is working up very well. A lot of acres were planted this week. The pressure was on for lime applicators and blenders delivering fertilizer to the field. Hats off to them for the great job they have done. A few small grains have emerged. **Pam Hickey (Ext), Central Aroostook:** Farmers have been very busy working the land. The weather has been improving so that all farmers are out in the fields. Temperatures have been variable, but farmers are taking advantage of the warmer temperatures and are getting the crops in the ground. **Steve London (Ext), Southern Aroostook:** Potatoes and small grains: We have had good weather this week, temperatures were a little cool a few days. Planting is going well. **Donna Lamb (Ext), Piscataquis:** Just when you think the weather is warming up and the soils are warm and ready to plant, we received cold rain over the weekend. Some folks fertilized their hay fields before the rain. At the first of the week a few fields were planted. Manure continues to be applied as soil conditions permit. Berry crops are very slow in starting to send out leaves and flower buds. **Janet King (FSA), Somerset:** Where is the sun? **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Warm, dry weather last week had everyone very busy. Lots of planting and field preparation. Rain over the long weekend has brought all this to a halt, as fields are saturated for now. Early planted corn is up and strawberries are starting to flower in fields where mulch was removed early. Apples are beginning to flower as well. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Bees have been put out on blueberry fields. Silage corn being planted on dry days. Burning of blueberry fields is complete. Fresh greens are ready. A cloudy, cool and damp weekend was not what farmers, market gardeners and bees were looking for. Continued overcast weather has hindered most farming activities. **Dr. David Yarborough (Ext), Washington:** Wild blueberries: Plants emerging on non-crop fields. Bees in most crop fields for pollination. **Michael Tardy (FSA), Androscoggin:** The week started out looking good, but then the rains came. We did see many farmers out in the fields harrowing and planting. Lots of seeds got put in the ground, now we need to have some sun and heat to help them grow. The apple and strawberry crops need that sun, also. Driving by the market garden sites, we see lots of plastic. Hopefully, those plants underneath will flourish. **Parker Rand (FSA), Cumberland/York:** Rain and cold. Farmers are planting during breaks in the weather, but the soil is not warming up so plants are slow to emerge. Some have started chopping grass, but the season is way behind. Pray for some sun. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** It was perfect timing for a good soaking rain (unless you were camping out). The hay crop and pasture grasses jumped up out of the ground. Transplanted vegetable seedlings were very happy. The only negative factor was the lack of bee activity on fully blossomed fruit trees. **Laura Rand (FSA), Oxford:** The week has been wet and cold. Producers are busy tilling the soil and trying to get some seed planted. Pastures are looking greener.

MASSACHUSETTS - Arthur Williams (FSA), Berkshire: Some farmers are finishing up corn planting, more vegetable fields cultivated. There is some harvesting of spring vegetables including asparagus, rhubarb, greens. Orchards in full bloom, no bad news so far. Temperatures have been cool but no hard, killing frosts have been reported. 0.25 to 0.5 inches of rain this week. Cool temperatures have slowed down growth progress. Also, very overcast with little sun Wednesday through Saturday. Nursery business very busy with landscaping and Memorial Day business. **Paul Russell (FSA), Southeast Massachusetts:** Cool, wet weather continues. Southeastern Mass has only recorded a couple of days above 70 degrees and a couple in the 60's this year, therefore everything is behind. Growers are scratching around and trying to plant the dry areas. Cranberry growers are applying fertilizer but the bogs are not responding because of the lack of light and heat. **Kip Graham (FSA), Worcester:** Too wet to get into fields for any field work. Still spraying apples and pruning peaches. Too early to tell on disease and insects - about two weeks behind. Some peach injury due to cold winter. Some varieties will be very light. We may have scab problems because of extended wet periods. Too much water this year (opposite of last year). Still too early to tell on size of apples and peaches. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: Cool, wet weather has significantly slowed down plant development and provided perfect conditions for fungi to infect the leaves and stems. Plants are probably 14 days behind what would be normal development for this date. Late cultivars have still not assumed full green color. Precipitation has also delayed herbicide applications. Insect populations have been slow to emerge, but they will explode when the warm, dry weather reappears. Cranberry weevils have been treated in several beds. **John Devine (FSA), Franklin:** It's been a cool and rainy week in Franklin County. Temperatures have averaged about 20 degrees lower than normal and it's evident in many of the crops planted. In spite of these conditions tobacco growers have started planting to stay on schedule. They're worried that the weather may change quickly and result in all their transplants being ready at once. I'm expecting a lot of hay and/or haylage to be cut once the weather improves. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr./Julie Jacque (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** Another very cool and rainy week. Strawberry producers were irrigating at the beginning of the week for frost protection. 90% of the potato crop is planted with 20% emerged. Tobacco growers started planting shade and broadleaf tobacco. Tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers and winter squash are slowly starting to be planted. Plastic is being removed from some of the sweet corn and this sweet corn is about 8" tall. Orchardists are mowing and applying fungicides sprays. Harvesting of rhubarb and asparagus continues. All crops need more heat and sunshine.

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll: Two hot, sunny days at the beginning of the week, then cool and wet for the remainder. Grass is growing great, will it ever dry out enough to cut? Apples, pears and blueberries are in full flower but the bees seem a bit scarce, unsure of pollination status. Ticks and blackflies seem to be the only ones enjoying the weather. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** A couple of warm and sunny days early, but generally a cool, damp week. Many farms are running late with field operations. Field corn planting is winding down, farms are starting to mow grass for baleage and haylage. Alfalfa is in pre-bud stage. Vegetable farms are still setting out transplants. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Corn seedlings going along at a rapid pace despite some wet weather. Majority of field corn now in. Pastures and hay land benefitting from cool, wet spring conditions and growing well now. Dandelions in full bloom, a welcome pollen source for bee-keepers trying to rebuild hives after a hard winter. Early vegetables, greens and peas planted. Some now emerging. Occasional frosts still a concern up here. Appear to be seeing more tent caterpillar webbing than usual. **Tom Buob (Ext), Grafton:** Corn planting continuing as weather permits. First cutting just beginning. Rain has helped soil moisture but is slowing both corn planting and hay harvest. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Fruits: Most apples and pears are past petal fall stage into fruit set stage while later blooming areas in county are at petal fall stage. With all the rain during week, orchardists making sure to have protective fungicide sprays applied. Moved bees out of orchards. Blueberries are blooming. Strawberries starting to bloom. Damage from root weevils starting to show up in some strawberry fields. Vegetables: Harvesting asparagus, rhubarb 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, discing, fertilizing and laying down plastic mulch and drip irrigation tape. Weed spraying sweet corn fields. Field Crops: Spreading manure, plowing, discing, fertilizing and planting corn on fields that are not too wet. Grasses and forage crops starting to grow better. **David Seavey (Ext), Merrimack:** Good planting weather for ornamental trees and shrubs, fruit trees and small fruits. Wet fields have delayed planting of row crops. Fungicides applied for apple scab. Asparagus and rhubarb being harvested. Perennial plants were fertilized before Memorial Day weekend rains. Bloom period in orchards was extended due to cool weather. Early planted field corn and sweet corn are up, but heat units needed. Haylage chopping delayed but hayfields and pastures have lush growth. Some manure spreading on corn fields earlier in the week. Rainy weather caused a decline in plant sales at garden centers. Approximately 60 to 70 percent of corn was planted before weekend rains. Orchards coming to petal fall and plum curculio sprays. Early highbush blueberries have finished bloom. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** Very wet and cloudy week. Need sun and warm weather. Crops growing very slowly. Some seeds and seedlings rotting in the soil. Poor crop pollination due to wet weather. Preparing fields between showers. Fertilizing well-established strawberries and other small fruits. **Pam Marvin (FSA), Sullivan:** Rain, rain, rain! What corn land has been planted is emerging nicely. Apple trees are in full bloom. Alfalfa fields are looking very healthy and are just about ready for first cut. More corn land needs to be planted, is getting tougher with each passing rain shower. Vegetable fields are coming up nicely, could use some warm, dry days to further growth. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Stafford:** The first few days of the week were warm and sunny with very little wind. This was ideal for pollination. The last half of the week was cool and rainy. This was ideal weather for diseases. Fruit growers were busy spraying protective fungicide sprays. Early season vegetable planting continued this week. Hayfields and pastures continued to grow very well due to combination of sun and rain. Garden centers and nurseries experienced good sales in the first half of the week, but there was a slowing down due to the cool and rainy weekend.

RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport: Some nice sun and heat at the beginning of the week let farmers do some major catch up for field work. Potatoes are finished, some emergence and herbicide application being completed. Fields being worked for sweet corn and summer vegetables, still waiting for some good haying weather. Coolness and rain at the end of the week put a halt on some roadside stands and garden center sales.

VERMONT - John St. Onge/Kim Peterson (FSA), Lamoille: Major planting progress was made last week by most farmers. Weekend rain didn't add up to much (0.50 inch) but was helpful anyway. Need some decent weather so first cut can start and a little more heat for the corn crop to get moving. Herbicide spraying in corn has been challenging due to intermittent showers. Grazing conditions have been generally good. **Lynette Hamilton/Perley Sparrow (FSA), Windham:** The rains can stop for a while, we received two more inches over the weekend and the corn fields are getting muddy. Cutting haylage may be tricky if the rain keeps coming. Apple growers are spraying for apple scab with all this wet weather. Pastures are making a come back from last year's drought and are growing faster than being grazed. **Jeff Carter (Ext), Addison:** A few dry days allowed seed bed preparation for new seedings and corn silage planting. 20% of seedings and corn went in over a period of four days between rain storms. Some manure being applied to corn land. Fertilizer spread on grassy hay fields. Earliest planted corn just now at spike stage. Weeds growing well, hard to spray weeds for corn with muddy fields. The pasture and hay fields seem to be slow, dandelions right on schedule. Soils too wet to do any field work right now. **Gary Braman (FSA) Orange/Windsor:** The week's weather was a mixture of a couple of 80 degree days and several days of rain with cooler weather. Great for grass growing and good for corn germination. A cold, wet May makes for a barn full of hay! A siting of first cutting started in the Connecticut River Valley. Still somewhat behind last year. **Sherwin Williams, Rutland:** 95 percent of land plowed. Sprayed potato land, strawberry beds and early sweet corn fields for weed control. Finished last planting of peas and started planting beans. 0.096 inches of rain for the week (excludes weekend). Great week for good weather and for working the land, also for seed that have been planted. Peas looking great. Warm days did great job for early sweet corn. Excellent cutting of asparagus for week. Now we hope for no frost for rest of month. **Chris Benedict (Ext), Chittenden:** This week ended with good moisture levels, but combined with cool temperatures raised disease concern issues. We have finally reached full bloom (90%) and some good fruit set has occurred. **Heather Darby (Ext), Franklin:** Manure still being spread. Cows out to pasture. Haying has not started. Lots of corn being planted this week as weather helped dry soil.

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**

Aubrey R. Davis, Director
Statisticians: Emily McAllister, Robin Helrich

Joe Samson, Deputy Director
Stat Assistant: Wayne Colpitt

PERMIT NO. G-38
 USDA
 POSTAGE & FEES PAID
 FIRST CLASS
 PRESORTED

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
 NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
 POST OFFICE BOX 1444
 CONCORD NH 03302-1444
 ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED