



New England Agricultural Statistics Service

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Crop Weather

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For week ending 8/17/03

Another Tropical Week in New England

GENERAL CONDITIONS: For the week ending August 17, 2003, there were 5.0 days available for field work across New England. Topsoil moisture was rated 0% very short, 2% short, 72% adequate, 26% surplus. Subsoil moisture was rated 0% very short, 15% short, 64% adequate, 21% surplus. Pasture condition was rated as 0% very poor, 2% poor, 16% fair, 69% good, 13% excellent. Hot, humid and rainy conditions remained in New England throughout most of the week, continuing to thwart field activities and delaying crop harvest. Growers were heartened when skies cleared and humidity lifted at week's end. Major farm activities included: cutting haylage and making dry hay; harvesting broadleaf and shade tobacco, potatoes, apples, peaches, highbush blueberries, wild blueberries and vegetables; spreading manure; mowing; pruning; weeding; monitoring fields; applying insecticides and fungicides between showers.

FRUIT: Growers harvested peaches, apricots and early apples last week. Monitoring, mowing and pruning continued when weather allowed. Highbush blueberries, wild blueberries and raspberries were also harvested between showers. Highbush blueberries fared poorly in Maine last week; elsewhere good to fair conditions prevailed. Maine wild blueberry harvest jumped ahead to the half-way mark, just short of the five-year average. Massachusetts cranberries continued to size in the hot, humid weather amidst disease pressures.

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	-- Percent Harvested --			Condition
	2003	2002	5-yr Avg	
Apples	5	10	10	Good/Fair
Peaches	40	60	50	Good/Fair
Pears	--	<5	<5	Good/Fair
Blueberries				
Highbush	70	80	75	Good/Fair
Wild, ME	50	45	55	Good
Cranberries, MA	--	--	--	Good/Fair

VEGETABLES: A wide variety of vegetables were harvested last week, such as beans, beets, broccoli, cabbage, cucumbers, greens, lettuce, peas, radishes, snap beans and summer squash. The consistently hot, damp weather adversely affected some vegetable crops by promoting mildew and rotting. Roughly 40 percent of New England's sweet corn crop was harvested as of August 17, and the crop was reported in good to fair condition.

SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
	-- Percent --		
Topsoil Moisture			
Very Short	0	0	36
Short	2	1	34
Adequate	72	62	28
Surplus	26	37	2
Subsoil Moisture			
Very Short	0	0	25
Short	15	7	42
Adequate	64	74	31
Surplus	21	19	2

FIELD CROPS: Damp, humid conditions continued to discourage hay making in New England last week. First crop hay harvest has been slowly winding down over the past four rainy weeks. The second and third crops of hay remained behind last year's progress and five-year averages, mainly due to a wet harvest season. In many areas, field corn growth and condition has greatly improved with the recent hot, rainy weather; crop condition was reported as excellent to good in Vermont and good elsewhere. Potato harvest inched from five to ten percent complete last week in southern New England; growers had difficulty harvesting in the muddy fields. Some potato fields in low-lying areas of Maine might be abandoned due to water rot. Late blight was detected in northern Maine and the affected field has been destroyed. Shade and broadleaf tobacco harvests were approaching the half-way mark by week's end. Some broadleaf tobacco fields were destroyed in Connecticut due to damage from blue mold.

FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	-- Percent Harvested --			Condition
	2003	2002	5-yr Avg	
Barley, ME	--	5	20	Good/Fair
Oats, ME	--	5	10	Good/Fair
Potatoes				
Maine	--	<5	<5	Good/Excellent
Mass	10	20	20	Good
Rhode Isl	10	35	30	Good/Excellent
Silage Corn	--	--	--	Good
Sweet Corn	40	45	50	Good/Fair
Tobacco				
Shade	45	75	75	Fair/Good
Broadleaf	40	70	65	Fair/Good
Dry Hay				
First Cut	99	99	99	Good/Fair
Second Cut	55	75	70	Good/Fair
Third Cut	10	35	20	Good

For the Week Ending Sunday, August 17, 2003

All 86 stations appear on the Internet and in e-mail subscriptions.
Due to space restrictions, only 41 stations appear below. These stations are well distributed across the region.

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_State_A	57	85	73	+6	1584	+56	701	+106	0.88	+0.11	5	3.89	+0.88	19	
Bangor_Intl_Arp	53	88	73	+7	1564	+172	688	+190	0.37	-0.40	1	1.69	-1.24	9	
Bethel	55	87	72	+6	1414	+24	572	+85	0.76	-0.15	4	5.44	+1.96	15	
Corinna	53	85	72	+7	1453	+109	606	+153	1.16	+0.32	2	3.34	+0.10	12	
Dover-Foxcroft	51	81	69	+5	1177	-41	423	+46	0.50	-0.34	2	3.02	-0.16	19	
Frenchville	55	81	68	+6	1195	+132	425	+146	1.10	+0.14	2	5.07	+1.38	15	
Houlton	47	84	70	+6	1362	+169	547	+184	0.75	-0.19	3	6.34	+2.70	18	
Livermore_Falls	51	91	73	+9	1490	+288	654	+292	0.52	-0.41	4	4.98	+1.56	20	
Moosehead	50	84	69	+7	1125	+112	392	+131	2.14	+1.30	4	5.44	+1.95	19	
Portland_ME	57	88	73	+6	1520	+129	641	+134	0.23	-0.40	3	2.48	-0.08	12	
NEW HAMPSHIRE															
Benton	51	84	70	+6	1397	+105	551	+154	1.20	+0.29	5	6.35	+2.88	17	
Berlin_AG	56	83	71	+7	1438	+137	578	+159	0.24	-0.75	3	5.27	+1.53	13	
Concord	62	89	76	+9	1784	+235	844	+240	0.79	+0.02	4	6.77	+3.69	13	
Diamond_Pond	52	78	67	+7	1044	+166	338	+166	0.46	-0.73	4	5.10	+0.60	20	
Keene_AP	63	88	76	+7	1729	+2	771	+39	0.48	-0.43	4	4.80	+1.29	15	
North_Conway	57	85	73	+7	1606	+157	717	+188	0.93	+0.02	4	8.13	+4.58	18	
Rochester	59	87	73	+5	1588	-58	701	+23	0.69	-0.15	4	4.27	+0.97	14	
VERMONT															
Burlington_Intl	61	87	76	+8	1900	+235	884	+193	0.00	-0.94	0	4.48	+0.91	13	
Island_Pond	56	82	71	+9	1337	+272	504	+234	1.90	+0.78	5	6.39	+2.11	21	
Montpelier	58	83	72	+8	1427	+115	560	+136	1.78	+0.87	3	7.61	+4.36	16	
Pownal	58	82	72	+7	1480	+124	559	+109	1.51	+0.53	4	8.50	+4.73	17	
Rochester	59	87	73	+9	1452	+171	580	+174	0.81	-0.24	5	6.10	+2.13	17	
Rutland_AG	58	84	73	+5	1572	-142	659	-56	0.56	-0.42	5	7.03	+3.29	17	
Sutton	58	83	71	+9	1338	+255	500	+215	1.83	+0.71	5	6.79	+2.56	19	
Townshend_Lake	60	86	74	+7	1590	-30	680	+20	1.44	+0.53	5	7.71	+4.27	20	
MASSACHUSETTS															
Ashburnham	63	86	75	+9	1673	+266	744	+247	1.32	+0.53	3	5.83	+2.56	17	
Boston/Logan_In	66	89	78	+7	1962	+17	965	+57	0.29	-0.42	4	4.05	+1.32	15	
Greenfield	64	89	77	+7	1820	-22	828	+11	2.81	+1.97	4	9.76	+6.40	18	
New_Bedford	63	88	76	+4	1774	-172	826	-82	0.80	-0.18	4	4.11	+0.68	18	
Otis_AFB	64	88	77	+7	1755	+178	836	+189	1.53	+0.76	5	5.98	+3.10	19	
Plymouth	60	86	76	+6	1715	+75	780	+85	1.77	+0.86	5	8.40	+5.07	18	
Walpole	65	87	77	+8	1855	+172	884	+179	0.32	-0.59	2	6.97	+3.64	16	
Chicopee/Westov	64	90	78	+5	1893	-213	881	-140	0.55	-0.22	3	4.81	+1.73	16	
Worthington	59	84	73	+7	1455	+84	568	+108	1.42	+0.48	4	7.35	+3.47	15	
RHODE ISLAND															
Providence	69	88	78	+7	1955	+105	945	+103	0.60	-0.24	4	7.15	+4.03	15	
Woonsocket	65	88	77	+9	1809	+154	843	+171	0.50	-0.41	4	6.04	+2.43	16	
CONNECTICUT															
Bridgeport/Siko	68	90	78	+5	1996	+15	978	+28	0.06	-0.68	1	5.13	+1.96	15	
Hartford/Bradle	65	90	79	+7	2062	+32	996	+26	0.15	-0.68	3	6.01	+2.96	16	
Norfolk	63	87	74	+8	1513	+136	604	+137	1.27	+0.22	4	6.06	+2.11	18	
Thomaston_Dam	61	90	77	+9	1886	+250	871	+220	0.23	-0.75	3	6.45	+2.62	16	
Willimantic	65	88	78	+9	1923	+257	921	+243	0.39	-0.51	2	3.64	-0.02	17	

STATE WEATHER SUMMARY
For the Week Ending Sunday, August 17, 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	AV	DFN	LO	HI
ME	47	91	71	+6	0.01	2.45
NH	43	92	72	+7	0.19	3.53
VT	52	93	73	+8	0.00	2.54
MA	59	90	76	+7	0.13	2.81
RI	65	88	77	+7	0.50	0.74
CT	60	90	77	+7	0.02	1.27

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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: Heavy thunderstorms at the end of the week. Many fields are too wet to work. **Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland:** Scattered showers on Wednesday put down up to an inch of rain with more over the weekend. Harvesting sweet corn, beans, cabbage, squash, cucumbers, apples, peaches and blueberries. Spray schedule down to every third day! Tobacco harvest continues at a fast pace to keep ahead of blue mold and weather. Several more broadleaf crops destroyed due to blue mold infestation. Finally a few dry days at the end of the week to make hay. **Marsha Jette (FSA), New London:** Farmers are discouraged with the excessive rain of the past week. Second cutting of hay is taking longer than usual. Wavy corn fields of both silage and sweet are of major concern. Tomatoes are slow to ripen. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Passing thunderstorms and wind. Rainy and cloudy with two days of brilliant sunshine prompting haying. Blueberry picking continues. Fairs and festivals showing vegetable harvests with size a bit smaller. Wow, summer is ending all too soon. **Nancy Welsh/Karen Vozarik (FSA), New Haven:** Rainy, humid weather has taken a toll on vegetable crops again. Summer squash, cucumbers, eggplant, watermelons, peppers and tomatoes have all been flooded, then diseased, no matter how much herbicide was applied. It has been a tough year and it's not over yet. Silage corn spotty, does not look good depending on which part of the county you're in. Fruit and corn not especially sweet due to excess rain and no sun.

MAINE - Marvin Hedstrom, Northern Aroostook: Potatoes and small grains: The rains have finally stopped, allowing growers to continue spraying. Applying fungicides and some M-H-30. Sprayers are having a difficult time getting through the fields, having to be towed through the wet areas leaving deep ruts. Much of the potato crop in low, wet areas will not be harvested due to excessive water rot. Small grains about ready to be harvested but growers are waiting for fields to dry out before putting heavy combines into them. The first report of late blight was confirmed on August 14 and the infected area has since been eradicated. **Pam Hickey (Ext), Central Aroostook:** The recent sunny weather is welcomed. Growers are continuing to spray fungicides on a 5-day spray schedule. Adequate moisture has provided for the potato crop to grow rapidly. Canola crop is in its final stages and awaiting ripening off. Barley and oats are maturing. **Steve London, Southern Aroostook:** Farmers have started to harvest some oats. Both oats and barley are darker in color this year due to moisture. Potatoes are starting to bulk up well. No late blight in this area. **Albert Dow (NRCS), Piscataquis:** Fair weather finally arrived at the end of the week. Molds and fungi are afflicting some crops. **Janet King/Jennifer Zweig (FSA), Somerset:** Scattered showers throughout the week but the humidity finally broke. Hay is still being harvested. Sweet corn, cucumbers, tomatoes and string beans are all being harvested. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** We seem to be finally out of the hot, humid weather. Not too much farming activity during that stretch, except for manure spreading on grass ground. We did not get the rains that many parts of the state or New England did last week, so things are actually a little dry. Looks like a good hay making week ahead. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Blueberry harvest continued. Occasional showers throughout the week. After 10 days of foggy weather it was great to see the sun! **Dr. David Yarborough (Ext), Washington:** Wild blueberries: Crop harvest is finishing up in mid-coast region this week. Rain early in the month improved berry size and quality. Estimate of crop is up slightly to a bit better than average. **Michael Tardy (FSA), Androscoggin:** Another week of humidity and rain. The end of the week finally brought some dry, cool air. Crops are growing great; there is some concern about rotting because of the wetness. Many corn growers have told us that the corn is the best they have seen in years. Not much field work happened this week. Some folks are working between the raindrops to collect hay. It's been one of those years! **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** There was nearly a 100% loss of the highbush blueberry crop in this county. Raspberry production was nearly as bad. The harsh winter conditions appear to have been the culprit. Oats and barley are heavily lodged because of frequent showers. The excess moisture could end up rotting some of the

grain crop. We will need more sunshine to bring field corn to the grain stage. Silage will be heavy. **Laura Rand (FSA), Oxford:** What a glorious week it turned out to be! With the appearance of dry weather, producers are playing catch up. Pastures are green, sweet corn, blueberries, and assorted vegetables are being picked. Silage corn looks good and potato producers have been busy trying to keep ahead of the wet weather. Some areas have been receiving downpours of rain and storms.

MASSACHUSETTS - Arthur Williams (FSA), Berkshire: Haying started again with two days without rain and only a few clouds. Mature veggies being harvested in muddy conditions. Most sweet corn is being picked. The wild varmints get their pick first and let you know if the crop is ready. Another 4.5 inches of rain fell this week, "squish, squish." **Paul Russell (FSA), Southeast Massachusetts:** Conditions continue to be wet and dreary. Rain and humid conditions prevented most field activities. The overcast, wet weather is creating some quality problems in many crops such as: poor pollination of sweet corn, tomatoes splitting, fungus problem in vine crops and heavy insect pressure on all crops. Cranberry growers are concerned with the quality of the crop because of humid, wet weather. **Kip Graham (FSA), Worcester:** Another rainy, hot, humid week making field conditions and overall working conditions around the farm a little slower. Disease and insect problems are a constant battle. Scattered thunderstorms prevented some field work. Between rains, vegetables are being harvested and brought to the market. Orchardists are harvesting peaches and early apples. Pick-your-own blueberries still going on. Maintaining of orchards and vegetables constantly achieved. **David Rose (FSA), Bristol:** More rain this week. All crops being harvested. Disease is present. Fields are under water. Crop yields are low. **John Devine (FSA), Franklin:** Another muggy and wet week slowed most field activities. Scattered heavy rains drenched all unfortunate acreage. These were of the "hit or miss" variety where one end of town got soaked while the other stayed dry. Now, fields are saturated to the point where any fruit that touched the ground began to mold. This has been especially true with tomatoes and watermelons. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** High humidity and heavy rain showers throughout the week. Due to the prolonged wet period, insect and disease pressures are very high. Growers are having a very hard time controlling diseases because of the lack of dry time to spray fruits and vegetables. All fields are saturated with water and it is difficult to get large equipment in fields to harvest the crops. All crops are in good demand across the county. **Gary Guida, Worcester:** Corn borer and fall army worm showing up in sweet corn despite almost nightly spray ritual. I'm running 4% in one section of corn and 25% in another. Pumpkins and winter squash setting fruit. Hornworms in homeowners' gardens. Big consumer demand for sweet corn this week. Local fruit popular, as well.

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Amy Ouellette (Ext), Belknap: Vegetable crops are facing serious disease pressure due to wet field conditions. Corn earworms have arrived. Field work is weak because of all the rain. Pastures and hayland look great, but many are still waiting for dryer conditions in order to do a second cutting. Farm stand and farmers' market sales are strong. Fall mums are selling. **Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll:** Damp weather making it difficult to get second cutting in the barn and causing increased disease pressure on crops. Pumpkin, potato, tomato, bean and squash all suffering from lack of drying time between showers. Weed crop still growing remarkably well! **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** More soggy conditions early in the week, but at last some sunshine. Despite all the rain, most of the field corn looks good - ears are in blister or early milk stage. Regrowth on hayfields looks good, but the ground in many fields is too wet to harvest - dry weather will have producers rushing to catch up on second cutting and start third. PYO blueberries still going strong. Orchards will have early apples available soon. Farm stands full of wide range of veggies. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Intermittent rain showers making second cut hay somewhat challenging. Field corn responding well to warm weather and moisture, ears showing some development. Hay land, pastures also look good. An abundance of summer veggies available at local farm stands and markets, still some raspberries available. Highbush blueberries

noticeable by their absence. Greenhouse/nurseries now focusing on fall mums. Looks to be good fruit load on wild apple trees. Alder flea beetle larvae have defoliated many alder trees throughout county, very visible along roadsides. **Tom Buob (Ext), Grafton:** Third cut progressing as weather permits. Growth has been good to excellent due to rainfall and warm weather. Harvest hampered by frequent showers and rainfall. Corn looks good to excellent. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** Over all, the past week was pretty good. There were some scattered showers, very light in most areas, heavy thundershowers and winds in scattered locations. There were five days suitable for field work. Most of the second cutting of hay is done. Those who take a third cutting are getting ready. The corn looks good as a general rule. Drought dangers from earlier in the summer have subsided. We finally got the rain that we needed in this area of the state. Top soil conditions on the well drained fields are adequate. Soils with an impervious layer or perched water table are excessively wet. The sweet corn crop is looking very good. Blueberries are down from normal. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Vegetables: Rain first part of week, drier at week's end! Very good demand for produce at most local farmers' markets and farm stands. Growers harvesting an array of vegetables between showers: beans, beets, broccoli, cabbage, cucumbers, greens, lettuce, peas, potatoes, radishes, snap beans, summer squash, sweet corn and other vegetables. High disease and insect pressure! Farmers kept busy spraying pesticides for insects and diseases. Fruit: Orchardists harvesting peaches and Jersey Mac and beginning of Paula red apples. Many highbush blueberry growers are done harvesting 30 to 50% of crop and raspberry harvest continues with fall bearing varieties starting to bear. Orchardists busy monitoring for pests, summer pruning trees, mowing orchard floors and fixing up orchard roads. Field Crops: Rain showers stopped farmers from making dry hay, some making haylage at week's end. Silage corn is rapid growing, tassel and silking. **David Seavey (Ext), Merrimack:** Excessive growth of squash and pumpkins has prevented spray equipment from entering field. Farmers are spraying vegetable crops as ideal disease conditions prevail. All vegetables are being harvested. Excellent regrowth of hayfields and pastures. Excellent sweet corn crop. Some vegetables are yellowing due to nitrogen leaching and roots in water-logged soils. Difficulty in cutting second and third crop hay. Producers are spraying for corn borer and earworm.

RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport: This was a catch up week, baling hay, spraying sweet corn, fungicides on

potatoes, winter squash and pumpkins and top kill on some early varieties. Harvesting sweet corn, summer squashes, and starting some tomatoes. Roadside stands are thinning out of summer hanging baskets and filling up with local produce.

VERMONT - John St. Onge/Kim Peterson (FSA), Lamoille: Last week seemed to be the tail end of a very hot, humid, showery stretch of weather that has made fieldwork challenging. Waiting for drier weather for second cut. Most crops have been thriving, especially corn. **Lynette Hamilton/Perley Sparrow (FSA), Windham:** Apple picking season has started in Windham County with Paula Reds. Blueberries are still available but hard to find, the market demands are still high for Vermont blues. Field work this past week was no better than the week before with showers every day. The second (hay) crop is getting poor and very weedy. Third cut alfalfa is ready to harvest. Corn silage looks like a bumper crop this year if it stops raining so the ground will dry out. **Eric Winchester (FSA) Orange/Windsor:** We have had another week of very warm, muggy conditions. There were some more thunderstorms and several days with a fair amount of sun. Finally, toward the end of the week the air started to dry out. All the humidity has been bad news for vegetable growers. Lettuce, spinach, melons, cucumbers and even carrots have been adversely affected by mildew and rotting brought on by the damp conditions. The rain has made the pollinating insects' job all the harder, adding to the farmer's woes about crops such as squash and cucumbers. Farms are still working on second and third cut grass. Some grass crops have gone beyond their prime during the time when rain has made field work difficult. Overall, things continue to look good. Production of animal feed crops for the season looks promising. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Some locally damaging rain storms. Some fields dried out enough by end of week to allow haying to continue. Corn is really growing. **Chris Benedict (Ext), Chittenden:** The transition from last cover spray to preparation for the ripening of early varieties have occurred over the past ten days. Good working conditions last week aided this venture. From here life gets busy. **Sherwin Williams, Rutland:** Total of 2.061 inches of rain for the week, made for another very wet one. All crops except on heavy soil doing great. Mid-season sweet corn at its best in ear size and quality. Sprayed potatoes and squash for blight. Mold problem with beans. All cole crops producing in good shape. Let's hope for a dry spell. Have a good, dry week.

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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