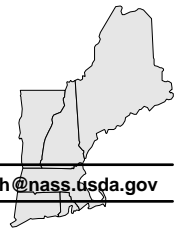




# New England Agricultural Statistics



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For week ending 5/4/08

## May Begins Wet and Cool

**GENERAL CONDITIONS:** For the week ending May 4, 2008, there were 3.9 days available for field work across New England. Topsoil moisture was rated 1% short, 64% adequate, 35% surplus. Subsoil moisture was rated 1% short, 64% adequate, 35% surplus. Pasture condition was rated as 5% very poor, 1% poor, 26% fair, 58% good, 10% excellent. The week began with wet conditions where areas saw between 1.60 and 3.92 inches of rain. The heaviest rain was seen in the North and in coastal areas. Conditions improved mid-week to partly cloudy skies across New England. Rain moved back into the region Friday night and continued to fall throughout the weekend. Areas picked up an additional 0.21 to 1.99 inches of precipitation. High and low temperatures were below average throughout the week with lows ranging from the upper 30s to low 40s and highs in the mid 50s. Rivers are high across the region and some flooding has been reported after the heavy rains this week. Farmers were busy applying manure, fixing fences, putting cattle out to pasture, liming and fertilizing fields, plowing and disking, and applying herbicides and fungicides to fruit crops.

**FRUIT:** Due to the nice April weather, pruning in orchards has been completed and apple trees are starting to bloom. Most growers are applying fungicides to their orchards after the heavy rain experienced this week. Most fruit tree crops came through the winter in good condition, however some apple trees suffered damage from deer browsing and bark scraping. Frosts in the South mid-week did some damage to peaches, pears and strawberries. Maine wild blueberry growers are busy applying fungicides, herbicides and velpar to their fields. Non-crop fields are being burned and mowed. Plant growth is about one week ahead of normal. Cranberry vines have wintered well with no leaf drop. Growers are busy cleaning ditches and are getting ready to apply pre-emergent herbicides.

**VEGETABLES:** Early season vegetables such as string beans, fava beans, lettuce, peas, and cabbage are being planted whenever possible. The sweet corn crop is off to a slow start. Frost during the week damaged the small amounts of sweet corn already sprouted and asparagus which has already sprouted due to the warm temperatures in April.

**FIELD CROPS:** Despite the nice weather during April, very little field corn has been planted and field preparations for corn in the North are just starting. The rainy week halted field work across the region. Farmers have been busy seeding new hay fields in Vermont and established hay fields are greening up across New England. Massachusetts potatoes farmers had 20% of their crop planted at week's end while Rhode Island trailed with 15% planted. Pastures were starting to green up and some cattle were let outside.

### SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
<b>Topsoil</b>			
Very Short	0	-	0
Short	1	-	5
Adequate	64	-	70
Surplus	35	-	25
<b>Subsoil</b>			
Very Short	0	-	0
Short	1	-	3
Adequate	64	-	65
Surplus	35	-	32

### FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Stage	Condition
Apples	Bud Stage/Early Bloom	Good
Peaches	Bud Stage/Early Bloom	Fair/Good
Pears	Bud Stage/Early Bloom	Fair/Good
Blueberries		
Highbush	Dormant/Bud Stage	Good/Fair
Wild	Bud Stage	Good/Excellent
Cranberries, MA	Dormant	Good
Strawberries	Dormant/Bud Stage	Good

### FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	2008	2007	5-yr Avg	Condition
--Percent Planted--				
Barley, ME	0	<5	5	N/A
Oats, ME	0	0	5	N/A
Potatoes				
Maine	0	0	0	N/A
Mass	20	35	35	Good
Rhode Island	15	20	30	Good
Silage Corn	0	<5	5	N/A
Sweet Corn	10	10	10	Good
Tobacco				
Broadleaf	0	0	0	N/A
Shade	0	0	0	N/A
Dry Hay	-- Percent Harvested --			
First Cut	0	0	0	Good

Weather Summary For New England Agricultural Statistics  
Prepared By AWIS, Inc.

For the Period: Monday April 28, 2008  
To: Sunday May 4, 2008

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 INCHES		DFN	DAYS
					TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN				INCHES	DFN		
<b>MAINE</b>															
Augusta State_A	30	61	45	-5	54	+31	8	+8	4.30	+3.39	4	4.73	+1.18	6	
Bangor Intl_Arp	25	61	43	-6	30	+16	3	+3	3.78	+2.99	4	4.65	+1.55	7	
Bethel	25	57	42	-7	25	+10	1	+1	3.09	+2.25	4	3.54	+0.18	8	
Caribou Municip	26	61	42	-4	2	-7	0	+0	1.49	+0.84	3	2.12	-0.24	7	
Dover-Foxcroft	24	61	41	-6	14	+5	0	+0	4.24	+3.40	4	4.67	+1.32	7	
Frenchville	27	57	40	-4	0	-4	0	+0	2.24	+1.56	2	2.59	+0.11	5	
Houlton	22	63	43	-3	6	-3	0	+0	1.57	+0.87	2	1.95	-0.59	6	
Livermore Falls	26	57	42	-5	30	+21	3	+3	3.83	+2.96	4	4.47	+0.87	7	
Moosehead	22	54	38	-5	6	+5	0	+0	2.58	+1.83	3	3.30	+0.37	7	
Portland_ME	29	53	44	-5	30	+18	5	+5	3.62	+2.72	4	3.98	+0.18	6	
<b>NEW HAMPSHIRE</b>															
Benton	24	56	41	-8	57	+29	3	+3	2.49	+1.79	5	3.18	+0.52	7	
Berlin_AG	26	62	43	-6	46	+25	1	+1	2.19	+1.41	4	2.77	-0.44	6	
Concord	24	58	44	-7	69	+39	11	+11	2.96	+2.26	5	3.27	+0.49	9	
Diamond Pond	25	57	41	-2	31	+26	0	+0	2.61	+1.82	4	3.92	+0.96	8	
Keene_AP	25	59	44	-6	74	+49	5	+5	2.42	+1.61	4	2.69	-0.22	7	
North_Conway	25	59	42	-7	33	+11	3	+3	3.85	+2.93	5	4.35	+0.50	8	
RocheSter	26	60	45	-7	54	+17	9	+9	3.44	+2.48	5	3.84	-0.12	7	
<b>VERMONT</b>															
Burlington Intl	30	69	47	-4	136	+92	25	+23	1.28	+0.60	4	2.27	-0.36	7	
Island Pond	25	63	42	-4	45	+32	0	+0	2.24	+1.52	4	3.36	+0.72	9	
Montpelier	24	62	43	-5	78	+52	8	+8	1.71	+1.07	5	2.23	-0.13	8	
Pownal	26	62	45	-5	90	+60	7	+7	2.32	+1.27	6	3.04	-1.07	11	
Rochester	25	63	43	-5	54	+33	0	+0	2.15	+1.17	4	3.07	-0.55	7	
Rutland_AG	26	65	45	-8	91	+32	12	+6	1.65	+0.94	4	2.56	-0.05	6	
Springfield_VT	25	59	44	-6	81	+53	6	+6	2.62	+1.71	4	3.14	-0.46	7	
Sutton	24	59	40	-6	44	+35	1	+1	2.42	+1.69	5	3.43	+0.64	11	
<b>MASSACHUSETTS</b>															
Boston/Logan_In	40	60	50	-4	81	+19	15	+15	1.78	+0.99	5	2.27	-1.04	9	
Fitchburg	29	61	46	-4	104	+83	17	+17	2.71	+1.93	6	3.15	-0.02	8	
Greenfield	28	62	45	-9	102	+43	8	+8	2.40	+1.52	6	2.90	-0.55	9	
New_Bedford	28	58	48	-7	57	-8	7	+7	2.63	+1.76	6	3.26	-0.49	10	
Otis_AFB	28	55	46	-4	28	+5	0	+0	2.57	+1.67	6	3.27	-0.36	10	
Plymouth	28	58	47	-4	60	+34	9	+9	2.48	+1.50	6	2.89	-1.06	11	
Walpole	29	59	46	-6	84	+43	12	+12	2.37	+1.50	6	2.87	-0.98	10	
Chicopee/Westov	25	63	47	-9	117	+17	15	+9	2.58	+1.67	6	3.21	-0.43	10	
Worthington	26	60	45	-4	65	+38	3	+3	2.34	+1.29	6	2.81	-1.09	10	
<b>RHODE ISLAND</b>															
Providence	34	60	50	-4	122	+72	14	+14	2.71	+1.80	5	3.10	-0.69	8	
Woonsocket	28	61	47	-5	92	+55	11	+11	2.62	+1.65	6	3.39	-0.52	9	
<b>CONNECTICUT</b>															
Bridgeport/Siko	36	59	51	-4	106	+38	13	+11	2.12	+1.21	5	2.45	-1.11	7	
Hartford/Bradle	28	63	48	-8	146	+64	26	+20	2.31	+1.40	6	2.72	-0.92	7	
Norfolk	26	60	45	-5	71	+48	4	+4	2.35	+1.30	6	2.86	-1.34	7	
Thomaston_Dam	28	60	47	-6	100	+52	7	+7	2.45	+1.40	6	2.94	-1.09	9	
Willimantic	28	61	49	-4	130	+85	14	+14	2.29	+1.31	6	2.77	-1.15	8	

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 WEATHER SUMMARY**  
For the Week Ending Sunday, May 4, 2008

State	Air Temperatures				Precipitation	
	L	HI	AV	DF	LO	HI
ME	22	63	42	-6	1.49	4.66
NH	8	62	42	-6	1.63	3.85
VT	15	70	43	-6	1.25	2.68
MA	22	67	47	-5	1.30	2.71
RI	28	61	49	-4	2.10	2.71
CT	25	63	48	-6	1.77	2.87

**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:** Farmers have completed some forage seedings. Field corn is not yet planted. Apple trees are starting to bloom. **Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland:** Most tree fruit crops came through the winter OK. Frosts last week required farmers to pump water and irrigate strawberries and blueberries. Sweet corn is up in some areas under plastic. A little field corn planted for grain but none planted for silage yet. Manure still being applied to fields. Commercial fertilizer so costly that there is not much put on first cutting of hay. Cattle being put out to pasture. **Marsha Jette (FSA), New London:** Dairy producers taking advantage of warm weather, preparing fields and those with drier soils have begun planting corn for silage. Sweet corn has popped up in several fields. Sales at greenhouses are slow because of the cool weather. Vegetables are on schedule with peas being harvested. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Spring began with a very warm dry period, conditions returning to more normal this week with cooler wet weather. Most of the manure has been spread, many fields have been harrowed. Sweet corn and field corn planting has begun. Holding back to let the soil warm up. Frost on April 30th and May 1st did damage to peaches, pears, strawberries and ornamental flowering shrubbery. Vineyards are about a week to ten days ahead of normal. Warmer weather brought out flea beetles nibbling on some of the grape buds. Spraying to control where needed. Pruning in orchards and vineyards is finished. Tying up grape vines and putting in new plantings. Fertilizer and fuel prices a concern for all farmers. Some farms cutting labor to have funds for crop input needs. **Nancy Welsh (FSA), New Haven:** Heavy rains early this week and later in the week brought field work to a quick halt. The rain was really welcome because it had gotten very dry out here. There have been reports that some sweet corn was planted April 18th along with string beans, fava beans, lettuce, peas and cabbage. **Jude Boucher (Ext), Tolland:** Entered the week with the ground dry and hard. Widespread frost Wednesday night (25-27 degrees). Newly emerged sweet corn OK, some older plantings may have been affected. CT River flooding for 4th time in 2008 due to Monday/Tuesday rains (2-3" in eastern CT). **Richard Meinert (Ext), Litchfield:** Some corn went in during the good weather in April. Not much happened this week with 3+ inches of rain, and then hard freezes and frost. Soil temps are still low, even the weeds are taking their time getting going this season.

**MAINE - Steve London, Aroostook:** There is nothing being done on the ground yet, but it is drying out fast and look for some work to be done this coming week. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** Spring is here in spurts. It has been too wet to do much fieldwork. Maple sap run was very late. The grass is growing fast. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Tuesday 5 1/2 to 6 inches of rain fell which resulted in a lot of run off if land had been prepared for planting. All field activities were halted due to the rainfall. Peas have been planted and are looking good. Cows will be out to pasture in another week. Due to heavy rains, lowbush blueberries are susceptible to monilina blight. Fungicide, herbicide and velpar have been applied to blueberry fields. The stage of development of the blueberry crop has slowed down considerably this week. There is standing water in some blueberry fields so most management practices have halted until fields are workable again. Frost was apparent in some areas three mornings this week. Some erosion reported in crop fields ready to plant from the 4/29/08 storm, but no other damage seems to have occurred due to the storm. The apple crop appears to be in bud stage. **Marcia Hall (FSA), Oxford:** After a long winter all are welcoming the sign of SPRING! Have received rain over the past week and rivers were very high with some flooding. Some field work has started in parts of Oxford County. In need of warm sunny days to dry out crop fields to get equipment onto. **Laura Rand (FSA), Penobscot:** Due to several inches of rain over the past week, the Penobscot County producers are being delayed in planting activities. Excess moisture and cold, wet days have pretty much halted planned planting activities. Early vegetables are being planted wherever

possible. Flower seedlings and plants are beginning to appear for Mother's Day. **Donna Coffin (Ext), Piscataquis:** Some farmers with well drained fields were able to till and plant peas before Monday. But after four inches of rain on Tuesday and another inch on Sunday the fields are too wet to work. Pastures are starting to green up. **Janet King (FSA), Somerset:** The heavy rain and snow melt has made the Kennebec River at over flood stage. Many fields are flooded along the Kennebec River. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Last weeks rain slowed field work. Prior to that, some small grains and forage seedings were completed and some manure was spread on corn ground. Continued rain over the weekend will continue to stall much work for the beginning of the week. **Dr. David Yarborough (Ext), Washington:** Wild blueberries: Non-crop fields are being burned and mowed and pre-emergence herbicides are being applied. Infection periods for mummyberry disease have been attained so applications of fungicides are being applied to protect the plants. Plant growth is about one week ahead of normal.

**MASSACHUSETTS - Aimee Thayer (FSA), Berkshire:** Happy spring from the Berkshires! We had a great maple syrup season this year with all producers reporting a large run with good quality syrup. Until the 2nd week of April we were experiencing drought conditions although the subsoil was saturated. The county had a 300 acre forest fire and Massachusetts halted the burning season. The 3rd week of April brought record temps in the 80's then last week we had 3+ inches of rain countywide which brought things back to normal. Also, several nights of frost damaged early asparagus which had sprouted due to the warm temps a week earlier. Orchardists are watching the budding stages of their trees due to the low temps at night. **Emily Desrosiers (FSA), Bristol:** Rains through last week have brought water levels up to normal. Low temps in the evenings caused frost warnings and concerns, but no crop damage has been reported or noted at this point. Plowing and planting is underway in many parts of the county. **Barbara Miller (NRCS) Franklin:** The week of April 28-May 4 saw mostly rain and cooler weather. The cultivation and other activities slowed some, but much had been accomplished. Manure is being spread, early vegetables are being planted. Pastures are getting green, and some animals are out. The cool, wet weather of this week has helped growth. A heavy frost on Thursday, May 1 was a set-back for sweet corn growers. Dairy farmers have not started planting much yet. **Janice Barnes, Franklin:** Three days of rain this week. Frost, with temps in the low 20's two days. Field corn acres getting coats of manure and plowed, no planting yet. Pastures greening up well with the rain this week, livestock getting put out in some areas. **Tom Monahan (NRCS), Berkshire/Hampden/ Worcester:** Week started off with wet weather and the first major scab infection of the season. Most growers are trying to cover their orchards with fungicides after this heavy rainfall. Two nights of heavy frost hit the area with signs of only slight damage to apples and stone fruit. Time will tell on the stone fruit. Sweet corn that was up took it pretty hard luckily; it was not developed along far enough to cause too much damage. Strawberries under row cover look good even after several hours of frost protection. **Carl Bannon, Franklin/Hampshire:** After a warm dry start it is now cool and wet and we have had frosts that have done some damage to asparagus and tree fruit. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Franklin/Hampshire/Hampden:** Farmers preparing soils to plant early season crops. Such as potatoes, sweet corn and cole crops. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: The cranberry vines seem to have wintered well, with no winter injury and no leaf drop. Early varieties have greened up nicely, primarily due to the warm weather of the week before last. With that, the frost tolerance temperature increased and cranberry growers had three frost events last week, requiring them to run their systems long time periods overnight. The region received between two to four inches of rain last week, beefing up reservoirs and raising the water level in the ditches. Growers are cleaning ditches, getting ready to apply pre-emergent herbicides, completing or starting renovation projects. Many of these renovations will be planted with new Rutgers hybrids that were rooted as cuttings in greenhouses. Planting in some beds will happen soon.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE - Amy Ouellette (Ext), Belknap:** Drizzle through the week greened up hay land and pastures nicely. Farmers are preparing fields for seeding and transplanting. Fruit growers have been working on finishing up the pruning. **Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll:** After a very snowy winter, spring has finally arrived. There are still a few dirty snow piles along the side of the road and in the shade of a few buildings, but for the most part the snow is gone. Lawns, pastures and hayfields are greening and growing nicely. Lawns have had a good deal of Grey Snow mold and the moles had a field day under all of that snow. Apple trees suffered extensive damage from deer browsing and bark scraping. Rivers and streams are high and there is some flooding in the low areas, typically wet in spring. Looks like we're off to a good start. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Prolonged snow cover well into April, but a warm spell at the end of the month helped things catch up. Frequent showers over the past week provided some welcome moisture, and grass should take off soon. Field prep for corn planting just starting, a few acres already planted. Field prep also going on for vegetable operations, with early crops already planted. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Flood waters receding, although a rainy week, still some ponding in lower meadows. Manure hauling to fields and spreading; some lighter soils, higher ground, worked up for corn planting. Hay and pastures greening up fast, some livestock beginning to graze. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** For the week ending May 3rd, we had about three inches of rain. The top soil was in need of some rain on the better drained soils and still was surplus on the poorer drained upland soils. Pasture conditions on the upland soils were generally poor. Soils are still to wet to graze or operate. In the River Valley conditions are generally two to three weeks further along. The better drained river bottom soils are accessible and farmers are spreading manure and doing some ground preparation. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Field Crops: Liming and fertilizing hayfields; spreading manure, plowing, discing fertilizing and getting ready to plant corn. Fixing pasture fences. Also, getting ready to make new pasture and hayfield seedings. Vegetables: Transplanting tomatoes into high tunnels. Early season vegetables (peas, lettuce, greens) are being planted and with sweet corn. Liming, fertilizing, plowing, discing and getting ready to plant fields. Fruits: Apples are at pre-pink stage. Peach are at pink stage to blooming. Cherries are in full bloom. Frost/freeze on Thursday damaged some cherry and peach blossoms. Blueberry is at bud swell stage. Pruning last blueberry bushes and raspberry patches. Orchardists are chopping brush in orchards or push pruning, fertilizing, and applying protective fungicide sprays. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** Preparing vegetable (tilling, discing, fertilizing, etc...) fields for planting. Some fields are wet. Planting peas, lettuce and greens. Also spreading manure, liming, fertilizing, and seeding forage crops. Orchards sprayed with pre-bloom

fungicides. Finishing pruning fruit trees and blueberries. Some farmers markets in the Seacoast areas opened last week selling bedding plants, vegetable transplants and many other agriculture products. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** After a period of dry weather, it was nice to get rain showers at the beginning of the week. The grass in pastures and hayfields is now looking good and growing well. Some fruit growers are finishing pruning peaches. Growers were also applying protective sprays for scab before the rains.

**RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport:** All fruits are starting to bud out and most trees look pretty good. Some movement on strawberries. Lots of field work this week and getting ready to plant. Lots of potatoes being planted and the ground is working pretty well. Roadside stands are filling up and look great.

**VERMONT -** Very early season with soil dried out nicely. New plantings of hay seeded last week, then nice rain over the past few days. Soil is good for tillage and most corn fields tilled at least once. Manure spreading continues with solid manure stacks being spread and manure pits getting emptied. Pasture and grass fields greening in nicely, some growth starting, dandelions blooming already. Unusually warm and dry. No corn planted yet, but that will start this week. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Spreading manure, harrowing it into ground. Fixing fences. **Paul Stanley, Franklin:** We are off to a good start in Franklin County for the 08 growing season. Temperatures in the 70 and 80's!!!! The last two weeks of April really got everyone going out of the gate. Some welcome rain and seasonal temperatures have brought us back to reality for May Day. Some corn has been planted in the county, however, very minimal. Fences are in good shape from the winter. Lots of snow, however it came in small amounts and melted a couple times through the winter so snow loads were not to abusive to buildings and fences. Getting started on grazing, however, very minimal at this point. Very little winter kill has been reported by producers and what has been spotted from the roads and doing soil samples is very minimal. **John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille:** Fieldwork is ahead of schedule due to a drier than average April. Last week's cold, wet weather slowed things down but this week will see the start of some spring grass seedings and corn planting. So far it looks this the 2008 crop season is off to a good start. **Julie Jacque (FSA), Windham:** Last week provided a jump with a nice stretch of warm weather to spread manure and harrow for field work this week with rains, cool temperatures and frosts, activity slowed down. Have seen new plantings of blueberries and hay seedings. Farmers very concerned about fertilizer and fuel costs and what it will mean for their bottom line.

To receive this report every Monday evening, send an e-mail message to [listserv@newsbox.usda.gov](mailto:listserv@newsbox.usda.gov) and in the body, type **subscribe usda-new-eng-crop-weather**

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