

# Crop Weather



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United States Department of Agriculture

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For week ending 7/27/08

## Wettest Week of the Summer

**GENERAL CONDITIONS:** For the week ending July 27, 2008, there were 4.1 days available for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated 7% poor, 13% fair, 70% good and 10% excellent. Heavy rains, severe thunderstorms, and strong winds dominated the weather patterns this past week, severely limiting most field work. The week began rainy and ended with more rain. Total precipitation for the week ranged from 0.87 to 7.71 inches of rain. Heavy thunderstorms on Wednesday, Thursday, and Sunday brought hail and wind damage, though most reporters stated it was too early to tell the extent of the damage. During the Thursday storm, a tornado ripped through eleven New Hampshire communities in Merrimack, Rockingham, Belknap, Carroll, and Strafford counties. Winds ranged from 86 to 135 miles per hour and created a path of damage nearly 40 miles in length and 1/3 of a mile wide, leading the President to declare the areas in a national state of emergency. Despite the abundance of rain, some areas of New England were completely bypassed by the showers, forcing growers to irrigate orchards and vegetable fields. Daytime temperatures were mostly below average ranging in the mid-70s to mid-80s. Nighttime temperatures were in the mid-50s to upper-60s.

**FRUIT:** The strawberry harvest came to a close by the end of the week. The crop was rated in good condition throughout the growing and harvesting seasons. Peaches were ten percent harvested at week's end, on par with last year and ahead of normal. Orchardists were busy gearing up for the apple harvest by moving bins into the orchards, mowing orchard floors, and monitoring for pests. Pick-your-own blueberry and raspberry operations were busy throughout the week when the weather allowed. However, highbush blueberries were 25 percent picked by Sunday, slightly behind last year and normal. The rains were beneficial to the cranberry crop, helping to improve fruit size and set. In areas where the rain was not as plentiful, growers were forced to irrigate blueberries and peaches.

**VEGETABLES:** The sweet corn harvest was in full swing last week, with 15 percent picked at week's end. In drier areas, sweet corn and vegetable growers irrigated the crops to relieve drought stress. However, most fields were very wet, prompting farmers to spray disease preventatives and fungicides. Growers continued to harvest cucumbers, summer squash, beans, tomatoes, beets, broccoli, cabbage, greens, lettuce, radishes, and eggplant.

**FIELD CROPS:** Tobacco growers were busy harvesting shade tobacco and topping broadleaf. Many tobacco farmers in Massachusetts reported receiving crop damage due to the high winds, hail, and heavy rains. Harvesting of hay slowed considerably this past week as many fields were too wet. Crop specialists stated the second cut's quality may begin to suffer if growers are unable to harvest soon. Maine oats and barley were rated in good condition and were reported to be nearing maturity. Maine potato farmers were still on a five-day spray schedule to combat late blight. Rhode Island potato farmers greatly benefited from the rain and were no longer irrigating at week's end. Most specialists reported the rain was also beneficial to field corn, improving color and growth. The crop was just beginning to tassel in some areas and had completed tasseling in other areas.

### SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
<b>Percent</b>			
<b>Topsoil Moisture</b>			
Very Short	1	5	2
Short	2	16	24
Adequate	75	71	68
Surplus	22	8	6
<b>Subsoil Moisture</b>			
Very Short	1	2	2
Short	1	14	20
Adequate	84	83	73
Surplus	14	1	5

### FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Percent Harvested			Fruit Set	Fruit Size	Condition
	2008	2007	5 -yr Avg			
Apples	-	-	-	Average	Average	Good
Peaches	10	10	5	Average	Average	Good/Fair
Pears	-	-	-	Avg/Below	Average	Good/Fair
<b>Blueberries</b>						
Highbush	25	30	30	Average	Average	Good/Excellent
Wild, ME	-	-	-	Above/Avg	Avg/Above	Good
Cranberries, MA	-	-	-	Average	Average	Good
Strawberries	100	100	100	Average	Average	Good

### FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	2008	2007	5-yr Avg	Condition
<b>Percent Harvested</b>				
Barley, ME	-	-	-	Good
Oats, ME	-	-	-	Good
<b>Potatoes</b>				
Maine	-	-	-	Good
Mass	-	-	-	Good/Fair
Rhode Island	-	-	-	Good/Excellent
Silage Corn	-	-	-	Good
Sweet Corn	15	20	10	Good/Excellent
<b>Tobacco</b>				
Broadleaf	-	-	-	Good/Fair
Shade	20	20	15	Good/Excellent
<b>Dry Hay</b>				
First Cut	90	95	90	Good/Fair
Second Cut	40	40	35	Good/Fair
Third Cut	-	<5	-	Good/Excellent

**Weather Summary For New England Agricultural Statistics**

Prepared By AWIS, Inc.

For the Period: Monday July 21, 2008  
 To: Sunday July 27, 2008

STATION	AIR TEMPERATURE				CUM SINCE MAR 1 GROWING DEGREE DAYS				1-WEEK PRECIP			4-WEEK CUM PRECIP		
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	BASE-50F TOT	BASE-60F DFN	TOT	DFN	TOTAL INCHES	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL INCHES	DFN	DAYS
<b>MAINE</b>														
Augusta_State_A	62	83	71	+1	1266	+123	513	+102	3.57	+2.83	5	4.70	+1.81	13
Bangor_Intl_Arp	61	82	71	+3	1192	+163	469	+132	2.19	+1.48	5	3.03	+0.01	10
Bethel	56	83	68	-1	1034	-8	363	+23	4.87	+4.05	6	7.42	+4.20	14
Caribou_Municip	57	81	70	+4	902	+50	304	+76	2.47	+1.50	4	3.92	+0.33	14
Dover-Foxcroft	58	82	69	+3	978	+85	344	+90	2.10	+1.33	4	3.99	+0.74	10
Frenchville	56	80	68	+4	794	+7	247	+53	0.41	-0.50	6	3.12	-0.29	16
Houlton	52	82	69	+3	884	+1	302	+51	2.05	+1.16	6	4.32	+0.94	18
Livermore_Falls	57	86	70	+4	1092	+203	408	+161	3.84	+3.07	4	5.39	+2.27	10
Moosehead	54	82	67	+3	760	+26	230	+57	1.92	+1.01	4	3.63	-0.02	12
Portland_ME	60	82	70	+0	1207	+188	476	+142	2.81	+2.15	5	4.35	+1.53	9
<b>NEW HAMPSHIRE</b>														
Benton	56	82	66	+0	1018	+36	332	+52	4.74	+3.94	5	7.18	+4.03	10
Berlin_AG	54	81	67	+0	1048	+67	351	+56	3.51	+2.66	5	6.16	+2.77	12
Concord	55	86	70	+1	1354	+183	584	+157	4.38	+3.61	6	6.07	+3.17	15
Diamond_Pond	53	76	64	+3	722	+77	177	+66	2.72	+1.67	6	7.04	+2.87	15
Keene_AP	57	84	70	+2	1298	+227	550	+198	4.86	+4.02	6	5.97	+2.78	13
North_Conway	56	83	67	-3	1119	+24	390	+14	4.80	+3.96	6	8.08	+4.70	14
Rochester	58	87	70	-2	1364	+117	592	+113	4.50	+3.69	4	6.92	+3.78	14
<b>VERMONT</b>														
Burlington_Intl	59	84	70	-2	1416	+144	601	+101	3.55	+2.71	5	7.25	+3.97	13
Island_Pond	54	79	67	+3	945	+149	311	+121	3.72	+2.73	6	8.36	+4.51	15
Montpelier	56	82	67	+0	1148	+155	419	+115	4.68	+3.97	6	6.38	+3.58	11
Pownal	56	83	70	+3	1310	+286	539	+220	4.57	+3.66	6	7.10	+3.41	18
Rochester	56	83	67	-1	1041	+80	360	+74	5.85	+4.94	6	7.45	+4.01	13
Rutland_AG	52	82	67	-5	1148	-172	424	-98	3.44	+2.53	5	4.76	+1.28	9
Springfield_VT	56	83	69	+1	1287	+215	521	+173	2.49	+1.65	6	4.82	+1.56	18
Sutton	54	79	67	+2	948	+141	306	+104	3.67	+2.69	5	7.03	+3.20	14
<b>MASSACHUSETTS</b>														
Boston/Logan_In	66	85	74	-1	1637	+155	816	+173	4.44	+3.81	6	5.85	+3.31	13
Fitchburg	60	90	73	+5	1570	+510	740	+389	3.68	+2.85	6	5.81	+2.46	12
Greenfield	47	87	69	-4	1363	-54	552	-40	2.85	+2.01	6	5.40	+2.01	16
New_Bedford	59	87	76	+2	1436	-31	693	+67	3.02	+2.29	3	3.32	+0.56	7
Otis_AFB	63	82	73	+3	1298	+134	600	+168	2.47	+1.81	4	3.79	+1.20	13
Plymouth	59	91	75	+4	1455	+232	711	+236	3.39	+2.62	3	3.70	+0.62	9
Walpole	61	90	74	+3	1520	+245	729	+230	3.46	+2.69	5	5.22	+2.11	11
Chicopee/Westov	57	92	74	-2	1503	-124	684	-56	8.57	+7.80	5	10.11	+6.82	14
Worthington	53	85	68	+1	1143	+112	420	+98	3.82	+2.84	5	6.73	+2.86	14
<b>RHODE ISLAND</b>														
Providence	63	94	77	+4	1752	+352	886	+295	4.19	+3.45	4	4.51	+1.66	8
Woonsocket	59	92	74	+4	1508	+255	706	+235	4.54	+3.65	5	5.60	+2.03	12
<b>CONNECTICUT</b>														
Bridgeport/Siko	62	90	76	+2	1771	+273	902	+237	2.42	+1.58	4	3.60	+0.18	10
Hartford/Bradle	60	93	76	+2	1733	+164	856	+149	4.42	+3.72	5	7.44	+4.57	13
Norfolk	55	87	70	+3	1248	+213	509	+182	3.34	+2.39	5	4.73	+0.94	13
Thomaston_Dam	59	89	74	+4	1502	+256	684	+221	2.76	+1.78	5	4.84	+1.10	13
Willimantic	60	92	75	+6	1589	+322	740	+261	2.54	+1.61	5	3.50	-0.25	9

**State Weather Summary**

For the Week Ending Sunday, July 27, 2008

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	50	86	69	+2	0.41	5.26
NH	44	89	68	+0	2.72	6.50
VT	51	85	67	+0	2.49	6.57
MA	47	93	73	+2	2.20	8.57
RI	59	94	75	+4	2.16	4.54
CT	55	94	75	+3	1.51	4.60

**REPORTERS COMMENTS, By County:** *Reporters are from Extension Service (Ext), Farm Service Agency(FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS), or other knowledgeable individuals.*

**CONNECTICUT - Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland:** Heavy rains on Wednesday and Thursday and again on Sunday netted four and a half inches or more. Much lightning and wind on Sunday as front was approaching. Many soggy fields and a couple of houses struck by lightning. Crops got much needed rain however in some cases too much of a good thing. Some hay made on Saturday. Harvesting cukes, summer squash, beans, sweet corn, and greenhouse tomatoes. Picking shade tobacco and topping broadleaf tobacco. Blueberries and peaches are in good supply. **Marsha Jette (FSA), New London:** Welcomed rain for the crops. Came in time to save crops in lower part of the county. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Irrigating blueberries, peaches, and sweet corn. Lost sweet corn production due to drought in areas. Blueberries are abundant and PYO popular on nice days. Field corn from one foot to over six feet tall, tasseling at various heights. Two to four inches of rain fell too quickly on Wednesday and Thursday, the moisture was needed. Farmers markets have more with tomatoes, early peaches, apricots, squash, cucumbers, onions, and potatoes being harvested. Hay production varies from poor to excellent with baling and chopping of second cutting. **Nancy Welsh (FSA), New Haven:** Heavy rains fell across both New Haven and Middlesex Counties this week bringing most field work to a halt. Flooding was reported on one farm in the southern end of New Haven County. **Richard Meinert (Ext), CT Cooperative:** Some growers were reporting sweet corn is having a problem with unfilled ears, not just tips but all over. A lot higher percentage of ears than normal. High winds, hail and heavy thunderstorms over the weekend. Too early to know what affect this most recent round of heavy weather had on crops.

**MAINE - Steve London, Aroostook:** There is some late blight in the county and farmers are spraying accordingly. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** The corn crop is looking great; lots of moisture and good temperatures. Hay harvest has been slowed once again by daily showers. There will be some real nice hay and some real poor hay harvested this year. There was flash flooding on Friday. Some large hay bales may have been saturated. **Marcia Hall (FSA), Oxford:** Severe storms passed through Oxford County last week. Sweet corn is looking good along with grain corn. Potato crop looking good with some damage reported due to severe weather. Hay is being harvested in between storms where possible. **Donna Coffin (Ext), Piscataquis:** Rainy weather has made haying a challenge, but it has helped improve the corn crop. **Kathy Hopkins (Ext), Somerset:** Scattered strong thunderstorms have dropped needed rain in some areas, have totally bypassed other areas and are contributing to mold in beans and raspberries in areas getting a daily shower. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** So we asked for rain and we got enough! More than five inches last week. Things really slowed down on hay/silage harvest with the wet weather. Small grains are almost ready to harvest if we get the weather.

**MASSACHUSETTS - Aimee Thayer (FSA), Berkshire:** Rain this week up to 5+ inches across the county starting midweek. No field work was done after that. Markets and farm stands doing well. Strawberry fields were cut back. Blueberries, raspberries, summer veggies including sweet corn are being harvested. Farmers will apply fungicide in the soggy fields. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** This week brought thunderstorms with high winds, hail and heavy rains. All fields are saturated with water. Tobacco harvest has started and many farms have received damage due to the high winds, hail and heavy rains. Vegetable harvest is in full swing and growers are harvesting sweet corn, beets, radishes, squash, peppers, peas, broccoli, cucumbers, and cabbage. Due to the heavy rains all growers are applying a preventative spray to hold off diseases. **Janice Barnes, Franklin:** We had heavy thunderstorms this week, but slight damage to crops. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: Nice rainfall on Thursday and Sunday should help with sizing of the set fruit in beds industry-wide. There is an excellent crop in place. Very few

blossoms remain. Pollination weather was good, honey bees did their job and there were/are more bumblebees than I can recall in recent memory. Vines have minimal stress at this point. Insect pressure has been below average. Everything is in place for a great crop year.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE - Amy Ouellette (Ext), Belknap:** On Thursday a tornado blew through nine NH towns including Barnstead and Alton. An "interstate wide" swath of trees were knocked down, resulting in extensive property damage. Heavy rains followed over the weekend. **Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll:** Severe thunderstorms, heavy rain and a tornado cut across Carroll County this week. No injuries reported. Homes and trees damaged in the southern part of the county. Cool, wet weather promoting pasture and hay land grass growth. Cool weather slowing sweet corn ripening, corn should be ready by the end of this week. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Lots of thunderstorms and a few days of heavy rain 6+ inches for the week in some locations. Rivers, ponds and brooks are almost full to spring levels. Field corn is all tasseled and silked and continues to look great. Hay crops are suffering for lack of decent harvesting weather. PYO blueberries continues and looks to be a great crop. Sweet corn now widely available at farm stands long with a wide variety of other produce. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Rather wild weather this week makes for difficulty in most farm operations. Substantial rains causing high water levels along river land, some corn and other fields flooded. Still a good bit of hay to come in, now past prime time, quality will be adversely affected. Pasturing difficult in wet meadows. Corn is tasseling. Spraying activities are difficult with frequent rains and high winds. Insect fungus problems to be expected. Blueberry and raspberry picking as weather permits. Mid-summer veggies becoming available. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** Rain, rain and more rain. For the week ending July 26th, things were very wet! A total of 6.25 inches of rain fell at our Woodsville location. More rain fell in some other locations. Soils were saturated with access problems on some crop fields. There was only one day with no rain. Rivers and streams are full, with some flooding concerns on the low lying fields. Corn looks very good in general. Dry hay producers are frustrated. Some producers have not been able to get onto a few of their fields. Those chopping haylage are a little better off. For those that got all of their first cut off timely, second and even third cut is looking good. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Several heavy downpour rain showers occurred with bad winds causing erosion problems and wind damaged to crops. Fruit: Peach, blueberry and raspberry harvests continued. Orchardists are to get ready to harvest first apples by starting to move bins into orchards. Strawberry cultivating and weeding newly renovated beds. Orchardists busy monitoring for pests, spraying if needed, and mowing orchard floors. Vegetables: Farmers kept busy harvesting, cultivating, hoeing weeds, monitoring pest pressures, spraying pesticides for insects and diseases. Very good demand for produce at most local farmers' markets and farm stands. Growers harvesting an array of vegetables including: beans, beets, broccoli, cabbage, cucumbers, greens, lettuce, potatoes, radishes, snap beans, summer squash and sweet corn. Corn earworms were caught in traps and high numbers of squash vine borers still being caught during the week. Field Crops: Farmers making baled hay after rains stopped at the end of the week. Second crop of hay is looking good. Silage corn is rapid growing, with some field having large area where corn plants are blown down. **Dorothy Perkins (Ext), Merrimack:** The rains bothered the raspberries causing a lot of Botrytis blight. I've gotten a lot of reports of heavy fruit set in blueberries, wild and cultivated. The heavy rains didn't bother them too much. Cucurbits are starting to struggle with fungal diseases due to the weather. Hay production has been touch and go but over all harvest this year has been good. Livestock is enjoying good grass growth due to adequate rainfall in pastures. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** The highlight of the week in Rockingham County was the tornado that hit on Thursday (7/24) the

town of Deerfield, uprooting trees, damaging homes, etc... Damages were reported in plant nurseries, vegetables and fruit fields were plants were uprooted by gusty winds and heavy rain or damaged by falling trees. Harvesting blueberries, raspberries, potatoes, tomatoes, sweet corn, herbs, a whole array of vegetables and cut flowers. Farmers markets, farm stands and PYO operations are busy. Many diseases noticed in veggie, nursery stock and fruits with all the daily severe afternoon thundershowers. Monitoring pests, weeding, cultivating, and side-dressing with fertilizers. Pasture looks ok. Making hay and haylage. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** Thunderstorms almost every day of the week. Grass in pastures and hayfields growing well. However no haying was done in the week due to thunderstorms that persisted throughout the week. Field corn is growing very well due to the warm and wet weather. Vegetable growers were busy harvesting an array of different crops including early varieties of sweet corn. Farmers markets and farm stands were offering to customers a variety of different crops. Fruit growers were busy harvesting blueberries and raspberries. Growers also started to harvest early varieties of peaches. Pick your own operations were very busy with customers any time there was a break in the weather.

**RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport:** Well, we hoped for rain and certainly received it. Maybe a little for much and a lot to fast, but it did help. Harvesting beans, squash, cukes, eggplant, greens and some sweet corn. Rain really helped the field and sweet corn and some of the pasture grasses. No longer irrigating potatoes and hopefully they put on some size.

**VERMONT - Jeffrey Carter (Ext), Addison:** Heavy rain and winds. Saturated soils again. Hay harvest on hold. Re-growth of hay is good with rain. Corn crop tassled, but still very poor crop. Uneven stands, many areas of stunted corn from standing water in fields. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Needed a snorkel this week. Over six inches of rain. Wettest July on record in St Johnsbury. Crop work at a standstill. Some minor field flooding and a few roads washed out. "Last time this road washed out was in 1973, just after we bought the farm." **Paul Stanley (CCA), Franklin:** Very wet week

here in Franklin County. No weather for hay or haylage harvest. Noticed some baling of second cut that had been down for several days headed for mulch hay at best. Field corn is beginning to tassel and some silting. Still very uneven and the next two to three weeks will be critical to the corn crop. With some good weather things will begin to even out some. Second cut is headed to maturing and with the wet weather it is putting a crimp on the harvest schedule. The late cut first cut maybe a better situation than the early cut with the second cut not maturing in the wet weather phase of July. Farmers markets really starting to kick in with string beans etc. coming to harvest time and the late berries looking great. Sweet corn will be soon setting the final tone in the vegetable arena. **John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille:** The last seven days was the wettest week of the summer with around six inches of rain. Needless to say not much in the way of fieldwork was accomplished. Despite wet feet much of the corn on well drained soils is tasseling. Veggie producers are struggling with many crops including tomatoes grown in the field that have blossom end rot. Haying has been at a standstill and will remain so for awhile. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** Almost daily showers have slowed any form of harvesting. Very little dry hay has been made so far this season. Pastures continue to do well with all of the moisture. We did see some minor flooding this week on some fields bordering the rivers. The corn crop ranges from poor to excellent depending on how well drained the soils are. **Sherwin Williams, Rutland:** Asparagus beds have all been fertilized and are ready for rest until next spring. Mulching down early harvested fields. Rain for the week, 3.060 inches. Rain a plenty, now some hot, sunny days would be very helpful to mature corn and garden crops. Market full of all early vegetable crops from corn to kohlrabi. Early sweet corn is small and needs sun for flavor. Digging early potatoes. All types of early greens in the market, good early sales. Have a good week! **Julie Jacque (FSA), Windham:** Severe thunderstorms, wind and heavy rain fell this week. Reports of carrots and garlic with rot. Some vegetable crops being harrowed and re-planted to short maturity crops. Corn fairing well considering winds that blew through with the storms. Haying not possible this week with showers just about every day. Apple orchards report no hail so far; blueberry and raspberry harvest reported as good.

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