

# Crop Weather



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

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Volume 28, Number 15

(Issued weekly on the Internet, May – October)

August 11, 2008 – 4 pm

For week ending 8/10/08

## Rainy, Wet, Soggy Conditions Prevail!

**GENERAL CONDITIONS:** For the week ending August 10, 2008, there were 3.5 days available for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated 9% poor, 27% fair, 58% good and 6% excellent. Rain, rain, and more rain continued to plague the New England area over the past week. Southern states received a break from the rain on Monday and Saturday, while northern states experienced rain every day in most locations. Severe thunderstorms on Thursday and Friday produced dime-size hail, damaging fruit, vegetable, and tobacco crops. Total precipitation for the week ranged from 0.58 to 4.38 inches. Harvesting was severely limited as many fields were too wet to get equipment into the fields and many crops were showing signs of damage and disease pressure due to excessive moisture. Drier weather, sunshine, and warmer temperatures are desperately needed to spur crop growth and help ripen fruits and vegetables. Daytime temperatures were below average all week ranging in the mid- to low-80s. Nighttime temperatures were average and ranged in the upper-50s to low-60s.

**FRUIT:** The highbush blueberry harvest surpassed the half-way mark by the end of the week; wild blueberries were 20 percent picked at week's end. Both crops were on target with last year and normal. While the cooler temperatures and rain showers helped maintain crop quality, more sun is needed to ripen the fruit. The large amount of rain has also been beneficial to the Massachusetts cranberry crop, helping to maintain a nice berry size. Producers were busy treating weeds, fertilizing, and monitoring for pests. The peach harvest was slightly ahead of last year and normal with 40 percent picked by Sunday. Harvesting of early apple varieties began in Connecticut and New Hampshire. Orchard crops were reported in good to fair condition due to more hail damage during the week and excessive rain causing the fruit to crack. Orchardists were busy mowing orchard floors and fixing orchard roads in preparation for the apple harvest.

**VEGETABLES:** The heavy rains and hail damage took their toll on vegetable crops last week. Disease pressure is heavy and producers are worried some crops may begin rotting. Sweet corn was 40 percent picked at week's end, on par with last year and slightly ahead of normal. Vegetable growers were busy applying fungicides and pesticides during showers. Harvesting continued on broccoli, beans, beets, cabbage, cucumbers, greens, lettuces, peas, radishes, tomatoes, peppers, and summer squash. Despite the frequent rain showers, demand was strong at farmers' markets and roadside stands.

**FIELD CROPS:** Hail from the storms on Thursday and Friday damaged more broadleaf tobacco in Hartford County, Connecticut. Both broadleaf and shade tobacco harvests were on par with last year and normal at week's end and were reported in good to fair condition. The dry hay harvest has been at a stand-still for the past couple of weeks due to rain. In areas where the first cutting is still in progress, producers reported they may not be able to get a second or third cutting. Quality and quantity have also suffered due to prolonged moisture. Field corn was reported in good condition despite the rain. However, the condition was reported to be deteriorating due to saturated soils. Also, warmer temperatures are needed for the crop to fully mature. Maine potato farmers continued the five-day spray schedule as more late blight discoveries were made. Rhode Island farmers began top-killing potatoes in some locations.

### SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
<b>Percent</b>			
<b>Topsoil Moisture</b>			
Very Short	0	1	5
Short	1	2	23
Adequate	45	60	69
Surplus	54	37	3
<b>Subsoil Moisture</b>			
Very Short	0	1	4
Short	1	2	19
Adequate	55	70	73
Surplus	44	27	4

### FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Percent Harvested			Fruit Size	Condition
	2008	2007	5 -yr Avg		
Apples	-	<5	-	Average	Good/Fair
Peaches	40	35	30	Average	Good/Fair
Pears	-	-	-	Average	Good/Fair
Blueberries					
Highbush	60	65	60	Average	Good/Excellent
Wild, ME	20	20	20	Average	Good
Cranberries, MA	-	-	-	Average	Good

### FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	2008	2007	5-yr Avg	Condition
<b>Percent Harvested</b>				
Barley, ME	-	-	-	Good/Fair
Oats, ME	-	-	-	Good/Fair
Potatoes				
Maine	-	-	-	Good/Fair
Mass	-	-	5	Good/Fair
Rhode Island	-	20	5	Good/Excellent
Silage Corn	-	-	-	Good
Sweet Corn	40	40	35	Good/Fair
Tobacco				
Broadleaf	30	30	25	Good/Fair
Shade	45	45	40	Good/Fair
Dry Hay				
First Cut	90	99	95	Fair
Second Cut	45	65	55	Good/Fair
Third Cut	-	10	5	Good/Fair

**Weather Summary For New England Agricultural Statistics**

Prepared By AWIS.com

For the Period: Monday August 4, 2008  
 To: Sunday August 10, 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
<b>MAINE</b>														
Augusta_State_A	55	77	64	-7	1508	+90	616	+71	2.15	+1.38	6	7.63	+4.68	17
Bangor_Intl_Arp	51	78	63	-6	1429	+141	566	+111	0.77	+0.02	5	4.22	+1.29	18
Bethel	52	76	63	-5	1259	-32	452	+4	2.82	+1.91	6	10.59	+7.23	18
Caribou_Municip	52	72	63	-3	1120	+56	382	+79	0.69	-0.23	4	6.99	+3.21	19
Dover-Foxcroft	49	74	60	-7	1182	+56	413	+68	2.75	+1.94	7	7.01	+3.86	20
Frenchville	52	72	61	-3	991	+4	304	+46	0.81	-0.10	3	6.41	+2.82	21
Houlton	49	74	63	-4	1102	-4	380	+46	1.56	+0.65	4	7.37	+3.82	22
Livermore_Falls	56	76	64	-2	1329	+215	507	+175	3.17	+2.26	6	9.76	+6.48	15
Moosehead	48	73	59	-5	952	+16	295	+57	2.65	+1.81	6	6.35	+2.80	19
Portland_ME	58	78	66	-4	1467	+183	596	+137	3.92	+3.29	5	9.53	+6.91	14
<b>NEW HAMPSHIRE</b>														
Benton	47	76	63	-4	1231	+27	405	+38	2.70	+1.79	5	11.52	+8.17	17
Berlin_AG	49	75	64	-3	1269	+57	432	+45	1.75	+0.77	5	8.39	+4.78	17
Concord	54	81	67	-3	1626	+184	716	+159	2.67	+1.90	5	9.18	+6.15	18
Diamond_Pond	47	70	58	-5	884	+70	216	+62	2.60	+1.43	7	11.58	+7.20	23
Keene_AP	54	79	67	-1	1560	+241	672	+213	2.85	+1.94	5	8.50	+5.04	18
North_Conway	54	76	63	-5	1343	-6	475	-14	3.14	+2.23	6	11.71	+8.22	20
Rochester	56	79	66	-4	1637	+105	725	+101	3.98	+3.14	4	12.65	+9.41	15
<b>VERMONT</b>														
Burlington_Intl	55	80	68	-2	1698	+144	743	+103	1.06	+0.15	4	9.24	+5.76	17
Island_Pond	49	74	63	-1	1159	+170	385	+136	2.93	+1.81	7	11.14	+6.99	23
Montpelier	51	77	65	-2	1388	+165	519	+125	2.19	+1.33	5	11.47	+8.40	21
Pownal	54	80	68	+2	1577	+316	666	+252	1.96	+0.98	6	8.83	+5.12	22
Rochester	51	80	66	-1	1279	+88	458	+83	4.16	+3.11	5	12.33	+8.54	17
Rutland_AG	50	80	67	-4	1396	-205	532	-130	1.84	+0.89	5	8.01	+4.35	14
Springfield_VT	52	79	66	-2	1544	+227	638	+185	1.91	+1.00	6	5.51	+2.12	19
Sutton	50	73	63	-1	1160	+153	378	+114	2.45	+1.35	6	11.54	+7.45	21
<b>MASSACHUSETTS</b>														
Boston/Logan_In	63	83	70	-4	1947	+136	986	+152	2.06	+1.36	5	7.40	+4.74	16
Fitchburg	56	82	69	+2	1870	+562	900	+442	1.27	+0.43	6	5.70	+2.38	17
Greenfield	55	81	68	-4	1625	-95	674	-81	1.50	+0.66	6	6.76	+3.40	19
New_Bedford	55	83	69	-6	1738	-68	855	+27	0.61	-0.32	4	5.46	+2.29	10
Otis_AFB	55	79	68	-4	1592	+135	754	+167	0.63	-0.14	3	4.40	+1.64	13
Plymouth	57	82	68	-3	1755	+235	871	+236	1.28	+0.42	5	6.15	+2.94	12
Walpole	57	81	69	-3	1820	+254	889	+240	2.86	+2.01	5	7.70	+4.49	16
Chicopee/Westov	53	84	69	-6	1793	-175	834	-108	5.13	+4.36	4	16.33	+13.21	18
Worthington	50	85	66	-1	1388	+114	525	+102	1.32	+0.34	4	7.60	+3.68	16
<b>RHODE ISLAND</b>														
Providence	58	84	71	-3	2077	+358	1071	+300	1.10	+0.31	3	6.26	+3.26	10
Woonsocket	57	82	69	-2	1811	+271	869	+251	1.35	+0.44	5	6.83	+3.26	15
<b>CONNECTICUT</b>														
Bridgeport/Siko	61	86	74	-1	2123	+283	1114	+245	2.09	+1.32	4	6.47	+3.19	13
Hartford/Bradle	58	84	72	-2	2062	+164	1045	+148	4.15	+3.38	4	11.04	+8.11	14
Norfolk	54	79	67	-1	1483	+203	614	+184	1.72	+0.73	5	6.90	+3.07	16
Thomaston_Dam	0	0	0	+0	1661	+138	773	+174	0.46	-0.34	4	5.06	+1.40	14
Willimantic	56	83	70	+0	1891	+340	902	+278	0.88	-0.03	4	5.23	+1.50	14

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, August 10, 2008

STATE	AIR TEMPERATURES				PRECIPITATION	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	45	81	62	-5	0.57	5.14
NH	40	82	64	-3	1.55	5.10
VT	43	81	65	-2	1.06	4.16
MA	50	85	68	-2	0.24	5.13
RI	57	84	70	-2	0.55	1.35
CT	50	87	71	-1	0.10	4.65

**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:** We have had showers or downpours every day. There were very heavy rains and hail on Thursday. Some vegetable farmers have reported crop damage. **Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland:** More wet weather this week. Severe storms produced hail on both Thursday and Friday afternoon in Hartford County. Fields are very wet and vegetable crops are showing some disease as a result of the wet conditions. Shade tobacco continues to be harvested and broadleaf is being cut, however the hail storms did take out broadleaf in southern parts of the county. **Marsha Jette (FSA), New London:** Field corn reports are excellent, producers in this area will begin chopping within the next 10 days. Hay has been problematic due to rainstorms between cuttings. Vegetables are good and on schedule. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Bright sunny days and scattered showers intertwined all week. Tough to get hay in. Slowed down PYO momentum on blueberries. **Nancy Welsh (FSA), New Haven:** Severe thunderstorms struck again this week bringing a lot of rainfall. Excessive precipitation is causing disease problems in a variety of vegetable crops. Producers are getting concerned about production losses. Sweet corn is still great and plentiful. Silage corn looks very good. Some producers are still struggling to finish up their 1st cutting of hay. They don't think there will be a 2nd cutting never mind a 3rd cutting. **Jude Boucher (Ext), Tolland:** Rain almost every day now. One grower in Ellington recorded 17 inches in the last two weeks. Hail was widespread last Thursday, with extensive damage on some farms. I'll see how widespread it was as I make my rounds this week. Some crops are lodging in the saturated soils. Sunscald is common on the peppers as the plants fall over. **Richard Meinert (Ext), CT Cooperative:** Applying fungicide to pumpkins. Haymaking continues to be plagued by afternoon showers. One field can be perfect and another less than two miles away can get washed three times!

**MAINE - Pam Hickey (Ext), Aroostook:** Again, lots of showers, hard to get into fields to scout. Farmers in Central Aroostook still on a five-day schedule. Crops still looking excellent. Although a few more small late blight finds in the area. Broccoli continuing to be harvested. Hay fields continue to be harvested when weather permits. **Steve London, Aroostook:** There is some late blight in the county and growers are spraying accordingly. **Sandy Truslow (FSA), Cumberland/York:** The only thing growing well right now is mold and fungus! Growers right now do not know the full extent of the crop damage. Some fields are under water. Hay cannot be cut due to constant rain and soggy soils. Pumpkins and squash may rot in the fields. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Sunshine is needed in the mid-coast area, with approximately two inches of rainfall last week. Most days were gray and dreary slowing down field activities. The blueberry harvest is over 50% complete and we are hearing reports of good to above average yields in most areas. With all the moisture, the quality of the blueberry crop has deteriorated over the past several days. On larger fields, there have been problems with equipment getting stuck in fields. Farmers are reporting that there will be some third crop harvested on fields chopped for grass, which is unusual in these two counties. Mother Nature is not cooperating for those who normally harvest dry hay. The first cut of dry hay, where completed, was light due to all the dry weather. Poor quality is expected where the crop has not been harvested. We did see a little bit of sunshine over the weekend, but we were also plagued with showers in many areas. Despite all the damp weather, currently most crops look good. Heat is needed for the silage corn to mature. We are hoping we will get some of that this week, although the first couple of days are not looking good. **Marcia Hall (FSA), Oxford:** In need of sunshine! Crops are sitting in standing water. Equipment has been at a standstill in hay fields waiting on hot sunny weather. Farmers have reported blight, mold and mildew problems with all the wet weather that has been received. Spray that has been applied to plants has been washed away in some areas, which has caused additional problems. **Donna**

**Coffin (Ext), Piscataquis:** Another rainy week. Vegetable stand operators are at the peak of their harvest. **Kathy Hopkins (Ext), Somerset:** Corn is tasseling and fields are saturated with standing water in many places and more rain and flash floods forecast for this week. It is very hard to harvest much of anything and ripening is at a standstill without some sun. On the bright side, no wells have gone dry. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** The weather has been awful for any field work. Too much rain and unpredictable. Harvest of second crop hay/haylage has been impossible. Lots of plant disease samples coming into the office. **Dr. David Yarborough (Ext), Washington:** Wild blueberries: Wild blueberry crop continues to be harvested state-wide. Recent rain, showers and cool temperatures are good for crop quality but have been hampering the harvest efforts. Also the lack of sun is delaying ripening of the fruit.

**MASSACHUSETTS - Aimee Thayer (FSA), Berkshire:** Two to three inches of rain county wide. No hay cut. Producers are discouraged by poor quality this year and we've heard concerns about low quantity. However, field and sweet corn looks good although fields with wet spots show some distress. Peaches and other stone fruits are beautiful. Saturated fields have made treatments for disease difficult or impossible for some crops. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** Raining all week long. Almost all fields have some standing water on them or have some very wet spots. Vegetable crops are not drying out and disease is setting in. Hail has appeared in the CT River Valley over 10 times this season and has greatly reduced the tobacco crop and affected many vegetable crops also. Harvesting potatoes, cucumbers, summer squash, beets, lettuce, blueberries, raspberries and many more crops. **Janice Barnes, Franklin:** Rain most days, hail, size of peas occurring on Friday in some areas. Sunny and nice on Saturday. **Tom Monahan (NRCS), Hampden/Worcester:** Heavy rains and hail this week took a big toll. Fields are just a mess with wash outs and flooded fields. Hail took its toll again with apples and stone fruit getting hit in some areas. Fields are so wet that harvesting and spraying are very difficult due to the lack of ability to get into some fields. Some blueberries are splitting do to the wet weather and some early apples are seeing some cracking do to the rain. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: Another good dose of rain last week, helping to keep the sizing berries happy. There is a very good crop out there, but there's lots that can happen still before the crop is harvested. Growers are treating weeds with Round-up, fertilizing, cleaning out ditches and assessing fruitworm injury. The latter has been present, but not at outlandish levels. Minimal fruit rot to date.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE - Amy Ouellette (Ext), Belknap:** Excessive rains have caused difficult field conditions. Many low-lying fields are sopping wet or have standing water. Hail occurred twice this week in various locations throughout the county. Fungal diseases of vegetables are rampant. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Still too much rain, still too wet to harvest much of anything, and still lots of disease pressure in vegetable crops. Other than that, peaches and a few early varieties of apples are ready for harvest. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Wet and cool weather pattern continues adversely affect farming operations. Tributaries and rivers running high and fast, worst I've seen for this time of year. Water over the banks at various locations flooding corn meadow lands. Many fields which never had first cut hay/haylage taken past usability. Field corn generally tasseled out, sweet corn close to picking. Summer veggies otherwise available and pumpkins filling out. Seeing increasing plant diseases in the field or brought to the office for identification/remedies. Small windows to spray to protect new growth. Corn earworms have reached our area. A difficult week to do any field work, some trying to spread manure, other outside work when possible but weather discourages. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** Rainy, wet, soggy conditions prevail! This past week dumped from five inches to as much as nine inches of rain in torrential downpours. Some areas

had severe erosion problems and localized flooding, which damaged roads, clogged streams with trees and debris, and damaged farm conservation structures. Most farm land remains too wet to get onto due to sodden soils. In the town of Piermont, one farm reported nearly five inches of rain in an hour. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** More hail storms occurred during the week with some of the storms being severe, damaging vegetable and fruit crops. Lack of sunlight is affecting several crops. Several crops are showing signs of too much water stress. Vegetables: Very good demand for produce at most local farmers' markets and farm stands. Growers are harvesting an array of vegetables between rain 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, so farmers kept busy spraying pesticides for insects and diseases. Growers are reporting damage on sweet corn cause by birds. Fruit: Orchardists harvesting peaches and Vista Belle and Jersey Mac apples (which have not been damaged by hail). Blueberry and raspberry harvests continued. Orchardists busy monitoring for pests, mowing orchard floors, move bins into orchards and fixing up orchard roads. Apple growers busy summer pruning trees. Cultivating and weeding newly renovated strawberry beds. Field Crops: Hay making and cutting haylage continued, but is difficult because of continuing rain showers during the week. The remaining first cutting is only good for mulch hay. Silage corn is rapid growing with much of it tasseling and silking. **Dorothy Perkins (Ext), Merrimack:** The excessive rain and lack of sunny drying days is starting to take its toll. Fungal diseases are starting to take over many vegetable crops. The rain has also inhibited hay production and people are reporting hay shortages. Livestock owners who did not worm their livestock in the spring should watch out for increased worm loads as the parasites are able to stay up in the grass all day long instead of just in the morning and evenings, making reinfection rates higher. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** It's been a mushroom weather like growing season with heavy rain all Wednesday. Harvesting peaches, plums, apricots, a whole array of vegetables, blueberries and some raspberries. Weeding, monitoring pests, and spraying accordingly. It has been tough haying. Many vegetables are showing diseases. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** Rain showers most days in the week. Grass in pastures and hayfields are doing well. However due wet weather throughout the week, it has been almost impossible for growers and producers to do haying. Vegetable growers were harvesting an array of vegetables. Because of continued moist weather there is high incidence of early blight on tomatoes and other fungal diseases on tomatoes and crops. Growers were applying fungicides as needed. Harvesting of summer raspberries is now over. Fruit growers continued to harvest blueberries, peaches and plums. Growers also started to harvest early varieties of apples. Greenhouse and nursery growers continued to monitor the seasonal progress of fall mums and poinsettia. The mums are starting to show color earlier than normal due cool weather that has triggered early flower bud initiation.

**RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport:** Field corn tasseling well, harvesting sweet corn, tomatoes, peppers, squashes, beans and some second cut hay. Top kill on some potatoes. Pumpkins running well along with winter squash. Mid-week rains were heavy certainly helping some crops but making it hard to spray. Sunflowers doing well helping to fill up roadside stands and farmers markets.

**VERMONT - Jeffrey Carter (Ext), Addison:** Continuous rain. Saturated soils in fields. Corn crop poor with saturated soils and stunted plants in most fields. Hay harvest stopped with so much rain. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Another wet week. Some farmers were able to take advantage of Monday and Tuesday to put in some round bales. Flooding in unusual places mid-week as beaver dams opened and culverts closed. Oddest thing was that the expected heavy rain on Sunday did not arrive. Most everything is completely water-logged. **Paul Stanley (CCA), Franklin:** Yet another wet week here in Franklin County. No chance for any field work or harvesting of hay. Second cut is beginning to go down hill on quality. We will have to take what we can get at this point. Field corn is not looking too bad. Started the second scout this week for Northern Corn Root Worm and conditions have been good for this pest. Seeing some fields with above threshold levels, especially on continuous corn fields. Sweet corn is in full swing and looks like a good yield this year. Prices are already beginning to come down some with the abundant supply. We have had two days of unpredicted sun this weekend and let's hope for some more days like this for the week ahead. **John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille:** Yet another wet week mostly kept farmers out of their fields. Corn crop has been slowly deteriorating particularly where soil drainage is poor. Grass is still growing but harvest conditions have been terrible. Veggie producers are concerned about problems with root crops. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** It was another wet week. Some more widespread flooding has occurred. Farmers are getting far behind on harvesting second crop hay. I learned from one custom crop operator that he has only harvested 25% of the acres he normally does for second crop. Along with the rain, is that there are many fields so wet that they can't get the equipment on them. Growth of corn has also been stunted by the wet weather and lack of sun. The corn is starting to tassel so there is concern that the quantity of the harvest will be low. Grass in the pastures is still growing fast but the mud from the rains is causing some farmers to leave the cows in the barn instead of grazing. **Julie Jacque (FSA), Windham:** Did report starting some third cut, while others have struggled to make square bales from first cut. CT River level has risen significantly; vegetable farmers have struggled with disease that has set in on cucurbits and threats of hail damage continue. So far minimal hail damage has occurred. Early apple varieties have started being picked-Paula Reds and early Macs. Reports are that the wholesale markets have refused blueberry crops from growers because they are "too wet". Farm stand sales continue to be strong. Corn crop is currently hanging in there.

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