

Crop Weather



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For week ending 8/17/08

Abundant Sunshine is No Match for Daily Rain Showers

GENERAL CONDITIONS: For the week ending August 17, 2008, there were 4.2 days available for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated 1% very poor, 8% poor, 21% fair, 65% good and 5% excellent. Rain and cool temperatures started out the week, but by Sunday skies were partly cloudy and temperatures were average across New England. Monday and Tuesday produced rain and scattered thunderstorms and rainfall totals ranged from 0.02 inches in northern Vermont to 2.22 inches in eastern Connecticut. High temperatures during this time were below average ranging from the mid-60s to upper-70s with average lows in the mid-50s to low-60s. Skies became partly cloudy mid-week and temperatures were at average levels. Areas experienced rain and isolated thunderstorms Friday afternoon totaling anywhere from 0.10 to 0.22 inches with the most rain falling in the Southern states. Scattered rain and thunderstorms moved through the northern states on Saturday afternoon where most areas experienced a trace to nearly a half an inch of rain. Some areas, such as southern Maine and northwestern New Hampshire experienced severe weather with up to five inches of rainfall in a two hour time period. Damage to corn and apple crops from these storms was reported. Sunday proved to be the best day of the week in much of the region, however fields remained wet due to the excess rain. Skies were mostly sunny to partly cloudy and temperatures were average ranging from the mid-70s to low-80s. Sunshine during the week helped push crop development but continued rains and wet fields hampered field work.

FRUIT: The highbush blueberry harvest started to wind down in some states over the week while the wild blueberry harvest in Maine continued strong state-wide. The peach harvest was ahead of last year and normal with 55 percent picked by Sunday. Harvesting of early apple varieties began in all states and the crop looks great. One area of Maine however experienced a damaging storm Saturday which destroyed over 40 acres of apples in Androscoggin County. Sun and warmer temperatures during the week helped to mature and ripen fruits. Orchardists kept busy mowing orchard floors whenever weather allowed.

VEGETABLES: Sweet corn and other vegetables continued to be harvested last week in the mud in many areas. Growers were finding a lot of rot and mold due to continued damp and wet weather causing growers to increase the frequency of their fungicide sprays. Farmers markets and farm stands were overflowing with summer vegetables such as broccoli, tomatoes and cucumbers.

FIELD CROPS: Broadleaf tobacco continued to be harvested last week through persistent showers. Broadleaf tobacco harvest was ahead of last year and normal and shade harvest was ahead of last year and on par with normal at week's end and both were reported in good to fair condition. The dry hay harvest was still at a standstill. Despite abundant sunshine, rain was present most days across the region. On drier fields, some second cut hay was harvested and alfalfa and grass third cut hay was reported as being ready to cut. Decreased Quality and quantity was still the concern of many farmers due to prolonged moisture. Field corn was reported in good condition despite the rain however corn is behind overall and there are concerns about stalk and root rot in wet fields. Farmers just need some heat and sun. Maine potato farmers report some top kill on early varieties with a small percentage of late blight in the area. This is being controlled with a five-day spray schedule. Rhode Island farmers began to harvest some early potatoes but were still applying fungicides to keep the potato crop healthy.

SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
Percent			
Topsoil Moisture			
Very Short	0	0	4
Short	1	1	30
Adequate	59	45	64
Surplus	41	54	2
Subsoil Moisture			
Very Short	0	0	3
Short	1	1	18
Adequate	64	55	78
Surplus	36	44	1

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Percent Harvested			Fruit Size	Condition
	2008	2007	5 -yr Avg		
Apples	<5	10	5	Average	Good/Fair
Peaches	55	40	40	Average	Good/Fair
Pears	5	-	<5	Average	Good/Fair
Blueberries					
Highbush	70	80	75	Avg/Above Avg	Good/Excellent
Wild, ME	50	55	55	Avg/Above Avg	Good
Cranberries, MA	-	-	-	Average	Good

FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Percent Harvested			Condition
	2008	2007	5-yr Avg	
Percent Harvested				
Barley, ME	-	<5	5	Good/Fair
Oats, ME	-	-	<5	Good/Fair
Potatoes				
Maine	-	-	-	Fair/Good
Mass	<5	5	10	Good/Fair
Rhode Island	10	20	10	Good/Excell
Silage Corn	-	-	-	Good/Fair
Sweet Corn	50	60	50	Good/Fair
Tobacco				
Broadleaf	50	45	45	Fair/Good
Shade	60	60	55	Good/Fair
Dry Hay				
First Cut	90	99	95	Fair
Second Cut	60	75	65	Good/Fair
Third Cut	5	20	15	Good/Fair

Weather Summary For New England Agricultural Statistics
Prepared By AWIS.com

For the Period: Monday August 11, 2008
To: Sunday August 17, 2008

STATION	AIR TEMPERATURE				CUM SINCE MAR 1 GROWING DEGREE DAYS				1-WEEK PRECIP			4-WEEK CUM PRECIP		
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN	TOTAL INCHES	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL INCHES	DFN	DAYS
MAINE														
Augusta_State_A	56	79	67	-2	1624	+78	662	+59	0.88	+0.11	7	8.03	+5.01	21
Bangor_Intl_Arp	53	79	66	-2	1541	+132	608	+103	0.48	-0.29	4	4.30	+1.37	20
Bethel	51	77	63	-4	1354	-52	477	-16	0.43	-0.48	4	10.05	+6.55	19
Caribou_Municip	53	76	65	+2	1225	+67	417	+86	0.25	-0.66	3	6.91	+3.13	17
Dover-Foxcroft	51	79	64	-2	1280	+48	441	+59	0.49	-0.35	5	6.84	+3.65	22
Frenchville	53	75	64	+2	1090	+15	333	+51	2.22	+1.25	5	7.64	+3.94	20
Houlton	51	77	64	-2	1198	-9	406	+39	0.20	-0.75	4	7.12	+3.46	20
Livermore_Falls	49	80	65	+1	1435	+219	543	+177	0.91	-0.03	5	10.08	+6.63	18
Moosehead	48	76	62	-2	1038	+13	311	+47	0.12	-0.72	5	5.51	+2.03	20
Portland_ME	53	78	66	-3	1579	+171	638	+124	1.19	+0.56	3	9.60	+7.05	16
NEW HAMPSHIRE														
Benton	49	76	61	-4	1313	+7	417	+15	0.78	-0.13	3	10.78	+7.29	17
Berlin_AG	48	76	62	-4	1352	+37	445	+21	0.68	-0.31	4	7.81	+4.05	18
Concord	50	81	66	-3	1739	+173	759	+148	1.16	+0.39	4	9.60	+6.52	19
Diamond_Pond	47	72	59	-2	948	+60	217	+43	0.57	-0.62	4	9.27	+4.75	23
Keene_AP	54	79	65	-2	1670	+237	712	+208	1.29	+0.38	4	9.52	+5.96	19
North_Conway	50	78	64	-4	1440	-25	502	-33	0.83	-0.08	5	11.50	+7.94	22
Rocheſter	54	83	68	-2	1765	+101	783	+97	1.39	+0.56	2	12.93	+9.63	13
VERMONT														
Burlington_Intl	54	78	66	-3	1812	+129	787	+88	0.16	-0.78	3	6.60	+3.02	16
Island_Pond	48	76	63	+0	1248	+171	404	+131	0.59	-0.53	4	9.75	+5.45	23
Montpelier	48	77	64	-2	1485	+159	546	+117	1.11	+0.20	5	10.98	+7.70	22
Pownal	53	78	65	-1	1683	+312	702	+247	1.83	+0.85	7	9.73	+5.95	25
Rochester	48	77	62	-3	1366	+71	475	+64	0.61	-0.44	5	11.63	+7.64	19
Rutland_AG	49	76	63	-7	1487	-245	553	-170	0.87	-0.11	2	7.89	+4.14	14
Springfield_VT	50	79	64	-2	1647	+219	671	+175	2.16	+1.25	6	7.05	+3.54	21
Sutton	48	75	61	-2	1239	+144	387	+99	0.48	-0.64	3	9.92	+5.67	20
MASSACHUSETTS														
Boston/Logan_In	61	81	70	-3	2087	+120	1056	+136	1.85	+1.13	5	9.05	+6.30	19
Fitchburg	56	80	68	+3	1999	+576	959	+456	2.48	+1.70	5	8.16	+4.90	21
Greenfield	49	79	66	-5	1737	-125	716	-111	0.37	-0.47	3	6.81	+3.45	19
New_Bedford	55	82	69	-5	1871	-98	918	-3	5.13	+4.15	4	10.59	+7.12	14
Otis_AFB	57	79	69	-2	1726	+129	818	+162	1.75	+0.98	5	5.74	+2.84	16
Plymouth	55	79	68	-2	1887	+227	933	+229	1.36	+0.45	5	7.34	+3.99	16
Walpole	56	80	68	-3	1946	+244	945	+231	3.06	+2.15	5	10.31	+6.96	19
Chicopee/Westov	52	81	68	-6	1921	-208	892	-142	1.62	+0.85	4	17.66	+14.58	18
Worthington	51	77	63	-3	1483	+96	550	+84	1.63	+0.70	2	8.11	+4.24	14
RHODE ISLAND														
Providence	60	83	70	-2	2222	+351	1146	+293	0.39	-0.45	4	6.65	+3.51	14
Woonsocket	55	80	68	-1	1941	+267	929	+249	2.44	+1.53	5	9.01	+5.39	18
CONNECTICUT														
Bridgeport/Siko	62	82	72	-2	2276	+272	1197	+234	0.52	-0.21	3	6.41	+3.26	14
Hartford/Bradle	59	83	70	-2	2206	+155	1119	+138	1.84	+1.00	3	12.36	+9.29	15
Norfolk	54	79	65	-2	1610	+217	661	+188	4.35	+3.30	4	10.82	+6.85	18
Thomaston_Dam	56	80	68	-2	1930	+276	902	+243	1.83	+0.85	3	6.99	+3.16	16
Willimantic	55	80	69	+0	2026	+341	967	+280	1.25	+0.36	5	5.99	+2.35	18

State Weather Summary
For the Week Ending Sunday, August 17, 2008

Summary based on NWS data.
DFN=Departure from Normal(Using1961-90 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	47	81	64	-2	0.12	2.37
NH	40	83	64	-3	0.30	3.07
VT	44	79	63	-3	0.16	2.19
MA	49	82	67	-3	0.37	5.13
RI	55	83	69	-1	0.39	2.44
CT	52	83	69	-2	0.38	4.35

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: The week started out with more rain and the continuation of crop damage reports from the prior week's hail damage in parts of Hartford County. Sweet corn and a wide variety of vegetable crops continued to be harvested. Broad leaf tobacco continued to be harvested however the persistent showers did limit cutting on most days. Over the weekend the skies turned sunny and warm however wet fields prevented producers access to all fields. On drier fields hay was mowed with hopes of making some dry second cutting. Army worms were found in Tolland County chewing on sudan grass. **Marsha Jette (FSA), New London:** Daily showers have been a steady thing these days making cutting of hay tricky. Holmberg Orchard say pick your own peaches is going good. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Birds continue to eat sweet corn, early blueberries are done, peaches 50 percent harvested, Jersey Mac's and Paula Reds started, vegetables doing well, three sunny days in a row needed to get third cutting done, scattered showers may mean chopping grass to get it done before chopping starts for people who feed haylage. **Jude Boucher (Ext), Tolland:** Late afternoon showers most days, wet farms.

MAINE - Jane Harden (FSA), Androscoggin: A severe hail storm produced 5 inches of rain within two hours time on Saturday shredding corn fields in Minot and destroying over 40 acres of apples in Androscoggin County. So far potatoes look good. **Pam Hickey (Ext), Aroostook:** Fungicide and Insecticide applications. Broccoli and hay are being harvested as weather permits. Crop is looking excellent, some top kill on early varieties of potatoes. Small percent of late blight in the area, being controlled. **Steve London, Aroostook:** Potato farmers are on a five day spray program to keep late blight in check. There are some aphids still showing up as well. **Jill Littlefield (FSA), Cumberland/York:** What we still need is SUN!!!! Things are rotting in the fields. Hay is still hard to make. Pumpkins are looking terrible in some parts of the county and great in others. Corn is weedy with spray programs out of sink because of the rain. Heat and Sunshine are the request of everyone this week. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Approximately 80 percent of the blueberry crop has been harvested and reports are we could have a bumper crop this year. This is great news for many, but with all the dampness during harvest the fresh pack growers did not have it quite as good. The berries were so saturated with moisture that they split open causing one fresh pack operation to close early. Vegetable growers are also finding a lot of rot and mold in crops due to all the damp, wet weather. First and second crop hay still stands in many fields, but sunshine is forecasted through Friday which is a welcomed relief. Farmers may make hay, but probably of poor quality. Apple growers are just starting to harvest early varieties of the crop. **Marcia Hall (FSA), Oxford:** Potato crop has been reported to have blight. Water is a big issue here in Oxford County with all crops. Sweet corn is being harvested where possible. Oxford County has received several down pours of rain which have been sporadic. Harvesting of hay is still at a standstill for most as showers are in the forecast daily. **Kathy Hopkins (Ext), Somerset:** Some sunshine has helped crops but daily thundershowers are hampering field work and increasing mold and fungal problems. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Rain and wet weather continue to halt field work. Vegetable harvest is in the mud! Standing water in many fields. Heavy rain is spotty with some locations getting a shower while others getting more than an inch in short amount of time. **Dr. David Yarborough (Ext), Washington:** Wild blueberries: Wild blueberry crop continues to be harvested state-wide. The sun and warmer temperatures are maturing the crop and developing better flavor. The harvest is delayed because of the earlier wet conditions but should progress well with warmer and drier weather.

MASSACHUSETTS - Aimee Thayer (FSA), Berkshire: Showers and thunderstorms sometime every day except Saturday. Two cases of losses from lightning, a steer was struck and killed and

\$20K worth of hay burned up along with the barn from another strike. Two to three inches of rain this week meant little field work was done. Field corn looks great except for wet spots in fields. Solanaceous crops are ripening slowly. Good berry season except for some moldy raspberries due to wet conditions. Peaches are excellent. Folks are "buying local" and farmer's markets and stands are doing well in spite of the rain. **Janice Barnes, Franklin:** Finally had a fairly good week for harvesting crops. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: Ample rainfall has kept the cranberry vines healthy and happy. We'll find out what the USDA estimates of the crop are in the different areas tomorrow. Widespread hail has occurred but so far, there haven't been any reports of damage. The berries are blushing color, but nothing significant to date.

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Amy Ouellette (Ext), Belknap: Several hail storms hit fruit crops around central NH this week. Water-logged soils have slowed down vegetables and increased frequency of fungicide sprays. Overall, August has been a challenging month. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Only one rainy day and a couple brief showers for the rest of the week, but finally a decent amount of sun. Corn looks good, but ear development is slow - most fields is milk or blister stage. Alfalfa/grass ready for third cutting, but fields are too wet to harvest. Some farms giving up on harvesting dry hay for this year. Disease pressure is still high in vegetable crops. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Some what drier week but, wet fields and thunderstorms continue to hamper field work. Field corn generally blisters stage or a little better; could use some sun/heat, Nitrogen deficiencies in some. All summer veggies available at farm stands, first of sweet corn now from local producers. Blueberries are abundant. Still trying to deal with plant diseases, concerns for stalk, root rots in sodden cornfields. Even seeing some fungal problems in Hi-tunnel tomatoes this year, hard to control humidity levels. Lots of Japanese beetles this year. Beginning to look better weather wise at weeks end, hoping this trend continues. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** For the week ending August 16th, we received from as much as 0.75 inches in some areas to nearly five inches of rain in other areas. One storm system went through the Lyme area on Saturday and dropped nearly four inches of rain in a short period of time. One inch hail was also reported in this event. The ground remains saturated in many areas. The well drained river bottom soils seem to fairing better than the less well drained soils. Many hay fields on the upland areas remain inoperable, or are only operable on the knolls and areas that have better drainage. Some corn fields were under water again, with sedimentary deposits of up to 18 inches in some cases. We need 2 to 3 weeks with plenty of warm weather and sun shine. Hay production is significantly behind, yields have suffered, and quality loss is a major concern. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Fruit: High bush blueberry harvest continues, and fall raspberry harvest continuing. Orchardists harvesting peaches, plums, and Jersey Mac apples. Orchardists busy monitoring for pests, summer pruning trees, mowing orchard floors, fixing up orchard roads and move bins into orchards. Cultivating and weeding newly strawberry renovated beds. Vegetables: Farmers kept busy harvesting array of vegetable crops, monitoring pest pressures, spraying pesticides for insect and disease control where needed. Seeing several out-breaks of diseases on array of vegetables. Also, birds are continuing to damage sweet corn. Field Crops: Hay making and cutting haylage continued to be difficult because of thunder storms occurring during the week with the second cut and some third cutting being made. Growth has been good to excellent. The remaining first cutting is only good for mulch hay. Farmers make new seeding for pasture and hayfields. Corn growth looks good to excellent. **Dorothy Perkins (Ext), Merrimack:** The weather has finally started to turn and that is a welcome change to everyone growing anything. Anyone who didn't get fungicides on in the small windows of opportunity suffered losses. The weather has also caused a shortage of hay. Blueberries fared well and the peach crop just

coming in will have some sun to push them along. The corn pollinated in spite of the rain and still looks pretty good. Certainly some Nitrogen was lost to the system. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** A few days of good weather. Vegetable growers were busy harvesting different vegetable crops. Because of continued rains growers have to deal with a lot weed pressure. There is also a lot of pressure with fungal diseases in different vegetable crops and horn worms on tomatoes. Growers were applying fungicides and insecticides as needed. Fruit growers were busy harvesting peaches and early varieties of apples. Blueberry harvesting is now winding down. Whenever the weather allowed they would mow the orchard floors. Growers with day neutral strawberries continued to harvest strawberries. Garden centers and greenhouses started to sell early varieties of mums and continued to take care of poinsettia crop.

RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport: Harvesting sweet corn, tomatoes, cucumbers, all summer vegetables and some early potatoes. Field corn looks great. Showers on and off during the week made second cut hay a challenge. Still applying fungicides to potatoes to keep them going. Working on chopping equipment. Farmers markets and roadside stands are overflowing with product.

VERMONT - Jeffrey Carter (Ext), Addison: Very wet soils still. No field work. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Beginning to harvest some third cut hay on drier fields. We had a couple of dry days. Field corn that started well is looking good.

Paul Stanley (CCA), Franklin: Seems great to have some sunshine here in Franklin County. Some baling of dry hay second cut going on. Ground is still very wet; however, if the spots are picked in dryer ground areas hay will dry. Looks like a good week coming according to the long range forecast. Sweet corn is on a roll and the fight is on to get it before the raccoons do. Field Corn has come a very long ways in the last two weeks. Ear development is beginning and some corn is into R2 stage, blister, and some earlier varieties are moving to R3, milk. If this weather can continue, conditions will be great to finish off ear development. Apples are looking great and we should see some picking going on in the next two to three weeks. Back yard apples are already good for apple sauce. **John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille:** Drier conditions started to take hold last week. Fieldwork was somewhat limited due to ground moisture and the ongoing threat of showers. Crop conditions have not changed much in a week but this week brings the promise of a turnaround. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** This week was a little better weather wise. Farmers have started to harvest hay again but the fields are extremely wet. Pastures are still growing well but many farmers have been keeping there animals in the barn or barnyard due to the mud. The corn is tasseling. Over all the corn is behind due to the wet cloudy weather and could affect yields. Second crop hay has gone by but due to the weather a lot of acres have not been harvested. The third crop hay is looking good.

July 2008 CROP WEATHER SUMMARY: The first few days in July saw scattered showers and thunderstorms across New England. The following week was breezy, warm, and mostly sunny providing good fieldwork and growing conditions. Daytime temperatures ranged from the mid-70s to the low-90s with above average nighttime temperatures in the mid-50s to mid-60s. The third week of July brought very wet and stormy conditions to the northern states while southern states received very little rain. Daytime temperatures across New England were average to above average and ranged from the upper-70s to low-90s with nighttime temperatures in the upper-50s to low-70s. Heavy rains, severe thunderstorms, and strong winds dominated the weather patterns during the fourth week of July, severely limiting most field work. On July 24, a tornado with wind speeds ranging from 86 to 135 miles per hour ripped through New Hampshire and left a path of destruction nearly 40 miles long and 1/3 of a mile wide. July ended with partly cloudy skies and scattered rain showers. Total rainfall for July ranged from 3.02 to 11.67 inches throughout New England, well above average in most areas. Strawberry harvest was complete by the end of July. Highbush blueberry harvest began mid-July and was 35 percent harvested at month's end, on schedule with last year and normal. The highbush blueberry crop was rated in good to excellent condition in response to abundant moisture. Maine wild blueberry harvest was just getting underway at the end of July with fruit size and set average to above average. Peach harvest began mid-month; frost damage earlier in the season kept condition in the good to fair range. At month's end, Massachusetts cranberries were reported in good condition. Potato late blight was identified mid-July at two locations in Aroostook County, Maine. Frequent showers and wet conditions created an ideal setting for the spread of the disease, and by month's end growers in northern and central areas of the county were also combating the disease. Potato condition in Massachusetts was also rated good to fair at month's end in response to excessive moisture. Rhode Island potatoes remain in good to excellent condition. Maine barley and oats were both rated in good condition at the end of July. Sweet corn harvest began the second week of July and was 25 percent harvested by month's end, on par with last year and ahead of normal. Crop was rated in good to excellent condition. Field corn was all emerged by the second week of July and rated in good condition throughout the month. Shade tobacco harvest was underway mid-July and was 30 percent harvested by month's end, ahead of last year and normal. Crop was rated in good to excellent condition. Broadleaf tobacco harvest was just getting underway at the end of the month and was rated in good to fair condition due to damage from hail and high winds. The first cut of grass for dry hay was 90 percent complete at the end of July, behind last year and normal due to the lack of good drying weather. The second cut was 45 percent harvested, behind last year but on par with normal. The first two hay crops were rated in good to fair condition for most of the month.

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