

# Crop Weather



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For week ending 8/24/08

## Summer is Finally Here but How Long Will it Last?

**GENERAL CONDITIONS:** For the week ending August 24, 2008, there were 6.3 days available for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated 1% very poor, 7% poor, 30% fair, 53% good and 9% excellent. The week began with partly cloudy skies across New England. High temperatures were average to above average in the upper-70s to mid-80s. Nighttime lows were average ranging from the mid-40s in the North to the mid-60s in the South. Thunderstorms moved through the northern states Monday night bringing 0.10 to 0.89 inches of rain to most areas. Partly cloudy skies dominated the weather pattern for the rest of the week. High temperatures were average ranging from the upper-60s to low-80s across New England. Overnight lows were below average to average ranging from the low-40s to low-60s. Rain-free weather and good drying winds allowed farmers to make hay this past week. Clear skies and warm temperatures also helped to progress the harvest of many other crops such as Maine oats and barley.

**FRUIT:** Apples were starting to turn color across New England with some early varieties seen at farm stands and pick your own operations. Peach harvest continued last week pushing this year's harvest way ahead of last year and normal. This year's crop was rated in good to fair condition with some splitting of fruit seen due to prior week's heavy rains. Pear harvest was just getting underway last week with fruit rated in good to fair condition. Maine's wild blueberries were rated in good condition due to ample moisture and cool temperatures with the harvest progressing on time. The highbush blueberry harvest is nearly complete across the region, slightly behind last year but on par with normal. Cool nights have provided some color to the Massachusetts cranberry crop and fruit rot was seen in small amounts.

**VEGETABLES:** Sweet corn harvest is in full swing across New England with it being the most common crop seen at road side stands and farmer's markets. Also harvested last week were tomatoes, cucumbers, broccoli, summer squash, beets, greens, beans, cabbage, peppers, and eggplant. The sun and warmth last week helped to ripen crops but some growers had to resort to irrigation to keep their crops in good condition. Growers continued to report seeing disease in their fields due to the prolonged wet weather and last week's cool nights and heavy morning dews.

**FIELD CROPS:** Warm, breezy, and rain-free conditions provided perfect weather for harvesting dry hay last week. Farmers in all six New England states were able to make progress on all cuts of hay but harvest remains behind last year and normal. Broadleaf and shade tobacco harvests were ahead of last year and normal and were reported in good to fair condition due to crops continuing to be lost as a result of past hail storms. The beautiful weather allowed Maine's oat and barley producers to begin their harvests with both crops rated in good to fair condition. Some potato blights in Maine began to clear up last week due to warm and dry conditions however growers still maintained their spray programs. Potato harvest began in Massachusetts and Rhode Island's potato harvest continued but remains behind last year and normal. Field corn in low lying areas remains wet but looks good overall, varying in height and maturity..

### SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
Percent			
<b>Topsoil Moisture</b>			
Very Short	0	0	5
Short	7	1	30
Adequate	84	59	63
Surplus	9	41	2
<b>Subsoil Moisture</b>			
Very Short	0	0	3
Short	4	1	25
Adequate	81	64	71
Surplus	15	36	1

### FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Percent Harvested			Fruit Size	Condition
	2008	2007	5 -yr Avg		
Apples	10	10	10	Average	Good/Fair
Peaches	75	50	50	Average	Good/Fair
Pears	10	<5	5	Average	Good/Fair
Blueberries					
Highbush	85	90	85	Avg/Above Avg	Good/Excellent
Wild, ME	70	75	80	Average	Good
Cranberries, MA	-	-	-	Average	Good

### FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	2008	2007	5-yr Avg	Condition
Percent Harvested				
Barley, ME	25	15	25	Good/Fair
Oats, ME	10	<5	15	Good/Fair
Potatoes				
Maine	-	-	-	Fair/Good
Mass	20	10	15	Good/Fair
Rhode Island	25	40	25	Good/Excellent
Silage Corn	-	-	-	Good
Sweet Corn	70	65	60	Good
Tobacco				
Broadleaf	70	50	65	Fair/Good
Shade	80	75	70	Good/Fair
Dry Hay				
First Cut	95	100	99	Fair
Second Cut	65	80	75	Good/Fair
Third Cut	15	25	20	Good/Excellent

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

For the Period: Monday August 18, 2008  
To: Sunday August 24, 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	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL	DFN	DAYS
	---	---	---	---	TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN	INCHES	---	---	INCHES	---	---
<b>MAINE</b>														
Augusta_State_A	51	83	68	+2	1748	+85	717	+65	0.30	-0.46	2	4.76	+1.72	18
Bangor_Intl_Arp	47	83	66	+1	1656	+138	656	+109	0.47	-0.30	2	2.58	-0.41	17
Bethel	49	83	65	+0	1460	-50	515	-16	0.51	-0.40	2	5.69	+2.10	15
Caribou_Municip	45	86	64	+3	1323	+84	455	+103	0.25	-0.66	2	4.69	+0.97	15
Dover-Foxcroft	47	85	64	+1	1382	+56	479	+67	0.13	-0.71	4	4.69	+1.43	20
Frenchville	47	84	64	+3	1186	+35	371	+70	0.15	-0.78	3	7.38	+3.66	17
Houlton	39	84	64	+2	1294	+0	442	+50	0.27	-0.65	2	5.34	+1.65	16
Livermore_Falls	45	84	64	+2	1536	+230	580	+187	0.48	-0.49	2	6.72	+3.07	16
Moosehead	43	87	61	+0	1118	+13	333	+48	0.45	-0.39	2	4.04	+0.63	18
Portland_ME	49	82	68	+2	1706	+183	695	+135	0.06	-0.59	1	6.85	+4.31	12
<b>NEW HAMPSHIRE</b>														
Benton	38	83	62	-2	1400	+2	448	+17	0.78	-0.13	2	6.82	+3.22	14
Berlin_AG	48	83	63	-1	1445	+36	474	+20	0.42	-0.56	2	4.72	+0.83	15
Concord	44	85	67	+1	1858	+179	810	+153	0.05	-0.69	2	5.27	+2.22	15
Diamond_Pond	41	80	60	+1	1018	+65	235	+47	0.70	-0.45	1	7.25	+2.63	18
Keene_AP	43	82	65	+1	1779	+243	757	+216	0.36	-0.54	2	5.02	+1.40	15
North_Conway	45	83	64	-2	1540	-29	538	-35	0.30	-0.61	2	7.00	+3.37	18
Rochester	45	86	68	+1	1894	+107	842	+103	0.13	-0.64	2	8.56	+5.30	11
<b>VERMONT</b>														
Burlington_Intl	47	84	68	+2	1936	+135	844	+96	0.86	-0.05	1	3.91	+0.26	12
Island_Pond	42	82	62	+0	1332	+176	432	+138	1.29	+0.20	1	7.32	+2.92	18
Montpelier	44	84	64	+0	1581	+161	581	+123	0.94	+0.06	4	7.24	+3.79	20
Pownal	44	83	65	+1	1790	+319	743	+255	0.47	-0.51	2	5.63	+1.78	21
Rochester	43	85	63	+0	1461	+71	509	+67	1.29	+0.24	2	7.07	+2.94	15
Rutland_AG	43	84	63	-5	1578	-276	584	-192	0.47	-0.49	1	4.92	+1.12	10
Springfield_VT	44	83	65	+2	1755	+225	713	+181	0.63	-0.28	4	5.19	+1.61	19
Sutton	42	81	61	-1	1318	+145	409	+101	0.66	-0.39	2	6.91	+2.59	17
<b>MASSACHUSETTS</b>														
Boston/Logan_In	56	87	71	+0	2238	+123	1137	+140	0.01	-0.76	1	4.62	+1.73	14
Fitchburg	47	85	68	+4	2131	+604	1021	+481	0.34	-0.43	2	4.82	+1.62	17
Greenfield	46	85	66	-4	1843	-152	753	-137	0.11	-0.73	2	3.95	+0.59	14
New_Bedford	47	83	66	-7	1986	-139	963	-43	0.16	-0.82	1	7.73	+4.01	12
Otis_AFB	50	82	67	-2	1849	+121	871	+154	0.33	-0.44	1	3.60	+0.59	13
Plymouth	49	85	67	-2	2010	+220	986	+222	0.06	-0.86	1	4.01	+0.51	14
Walpole	50	85	69	+1	2077	+250	1006	+236	0.06	-0.85	1	6.91	+3.42	15
Chicopee/Westov	43	87	67	-6	2042	-238	944	-171	0.08	-0.75	2	9.17	+6.03	15
Worthington	42	82	63	-2	1576	+86	580	+78	0.14	-0.77	2	4.43	+0.63	11
<b>RHODE ISLAND</b>														
Providence	53	86	69	-2	2359	+345	1213	+287	0.00	-0.84	0	2.46	-0.78	10
Woonsocket	48	84	68	+1	2069	+272	987	+254	0.21	-0.70	2	4.68	+1.04	15
<b>CONNECTICUT</b>														
Bridgeport/Siko	55	88	72	-1	2432	+272	1283	+234	0.00	-0.70	0	3.99	+0.98	10
Hartford/Bradle	49	87	70	-2	2345	+150	1188	+133	0.01	-0.83	1	7.95	+4.74	11
Norfolk	45	81	65	+0	1716	+221	701	+192	0.09	-0.96	1	7.57	+3.50	14
Thomaston_Dam	48	84	67	+0	2055	+279	957	+246	0.01	-0.97	1	4.24	+0.41	12
Willimantic	47	85	68	+0	2151	+342	1022	+281	0.01	-0.85	1	3.46	-0.11	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 24, 2008

STATE	AIR TEMPERATURES				PRECIPITATION	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	39	87	64	+0	0.00	0.60
NH	30	86	64	+0	0.01	1.29
VT	40	86	63	-1	0.40	2.06
MA	41	87	67	-1	0.00	0.55
RI	48	86	69	-1	0.00	0.21
CT	45	88	68	-2	0.00	0.09

**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:** Finally, a week of good weather. It was clear, with low humidity - perfect weather for making hay. Field corn looks good. **Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland:** A great week of weather for with cooler dry air and abundant sun shine. Some crops still need more heat to mature like tomatoes and peppers. Apples starting to turn color and early varieties showing up at farm stands. A good week for making dry hay. **Marsha Jette (FSA), New London:** Sweet corn reported to be very good to excellent. Tomatoes lighter than usual due to July rains causing a lot of rot. No real big tomatoes being harvested. There is a Downy mildew alert in the state. Producers spraying to try and save cucumber and pickle vines. Great weather for making hay. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** A good week for haying; peaches, blueberries. Paula Red apples are each medium in size due to earlier dry weather, each have good flavor. Vegetables are ripening well with good size on most, tomato crop good with tasty firm fruit for market, field corn varied in height and maturity. Concern about high rye cost and local acres lost due to heavy rain at time of combining. **Jude Boucher (Ext), Tolland:** Downy mildew arrived after Monday's rain and has been found on cucumbers and winter squash. **Richard Meinert (Ext), CT Cooperative:** Finally some decent weather. Cool nights with heavy dew continue to increase mildew, molds and other fungus on crops and ornamentals. A number of calls about burr cucumber, it is in flower this week and people want to know what it is. Most thought it was grape vine until the flowers came out!

**MAINE - Steve London, Aroostook:** The weather has been helping to dry up some of the blight and farmers are still on top of their spray program. There still have been aphids being found in some areas. **Sandy Truslow (FSA), Cumberland/York:** Good weather finally arrived. Wet soils and foggy mornings are still hampering hay production. It is a very poor year for hay. **Maria Granger (FSA), Kennebec:** Good weather finally made it into our area and it brought some good drying winds with it. Many farmers where able to make hay this past week. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Finally many hay fields were cut and harvested this past week. We had ideal weather for almost all field activities and although some fields remain wet, with another week of nice weather this problem should be resolved. Good weather is forecasted for most of this upcoming week. The blueberry harvest is nearly complete and the apple harvest has just started. The pumpkin and winter squash crops look good with harvest anticipated to start the second week in September. With the wet weather behind us for now, all appears to be going well in the mid-coast area. **Donna Coffin (Ext), Piscataquis:** Sunny weather allowed hay farmers to get most of the rest of their hay crop into the barn. Road side stands are featuring sweet corn and tomatoes. **Kathy Hopkins (Ext), Somerset:** The sun is a welcome relief from the rain. Crops are drying out and ripening. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Finally some dry weather to get more hay harvested. Still have to work around some wet spots in fields. **Dr. David Yarborough (Ext), Washington:** Wild blueberries: The wild blueberry crop harvest will continue beyond Labor Day, the crop is larger than the earlier estimate because ample moisture and cool temperatures have kept the quality good and the berries on the plant.

**MASSACHUSETTS - Aimee Thayer (FSA), Berkshire:** It was a sunny week with one rainy day. Warm days, cool nights down into the 40's. Good growth on evergreens this year. Cucumbers, tomatoes, summer squash, greens, beans, peaches, plums, first apples and pears, sweet corn, broccoli, and melons are all being harvested. Dry hay was made this week with corn chopping in progress. Foliage starting to turn in the hills. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** The week was dry and sunny, but crops were still lost due to the past weather and hail storms. Many vegetable fields were lost to Phytophthora crown and fruit rot and

tobacco was lost to hail storms. Growers are harvesting tomatoes, cabbage, greens, potatoes, sweet corn, apples, peaches, blueberries and beets. **Janice Barnes, Franklin:** We had a good week for harvesting with little rain. **Tom Monahan (NRCS), Hampden/Worcester:** Good weather finally, harvest continues for fruit and veggies. Blueberries are about wrapped up. Heavy rain this month has made fruit size nice but have split some peaches. Apples are good and market is strong, a lot of hail damage which is going to make packing difficult. Sweet corn is good but growers have had issues with bird damage and heavy rain. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: The USDA crop estimate, based on growers' questionnaire responses, is 1.9 million barrels. Based on what I've seen, I think there's a 2 million barrel crop out there, if things break our way. The last crop this large was back in the 90's. Cool nights provided some additional color, although no frost warnings have taken place yet. Hail damaged the crop in parts of Plymouth on the August 16th. A dry week for the most part. Rain will be needed soon to keep the berries sizing. So far, fruit rot is scattered in small amounts.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE - Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll:** An entire week of beautiful weather. If you didn't make hay this week, you didn't need any! Sunshine is exactly what most of the crops needed, better late than never, but just barely. Hay and pasture land looks great and growing well. Early apples coming in, cool evening temperatures have other summer veggies winding down. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Finally - the first week of summer! A little rain early on, then plenty of sun & warm temps for the rest of the week. Ears on field corn continue to fill and mature. Harvesting dry hay at a furious pace with the best drying conditions for a long time. Still seeing lots of disease in a number of vegetable crops. Late peaches are ready and PYO for early apples doing well. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** A break in the weather makes for a busy week of field activities. Haying activities take priority as second cut dry hay began. Clean up mowing of 1st cut still standing. Looks like good 2nd cut harvest coming in. Field corn looking more hopeful as soils dry out. Although some, patches of low corn that will probably be lost. Field corn about milk stage. Pastures becoming more usable but some at low quality, past optimal growth stage. Haylage also being chopped. Sweet corn more common at markets, apples starting to color up. Mums becoming available along with early pumpkins for decoration market. Blueberries and raspberries at P-O-Y still available. Cooler nights, spots of leaf color in the hills and swamps. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** Last week brought us a few days without rain toward the later half of the week. Soils remain saturated on many field and pastures. Many of the well drained fields along the Connecticut River have dried out enough to hay. Many upland fields are still too wet to get on without rutting them up. Field corn is growing well, but we need some heat and sun to help the ears develop properly. The pumpkin crop may be having some problems due to wet weather, pollination issues and too many male flowers this year. Numerous farmers have mentioned that they have considerably less than half a crop of hay in this summer. Those who purchase some or all of their feed are having problems finding hay to buy. One slaughtering facility reported that slaughter numbers are up considerably due to the lack of available feed. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Fruit: Orchardists harvesting peaches, first pears, plums, and finished Jersey Mac and now picking Paula Red and Ginger Gold apples. Highbush blueberry harvest winding down, and fall raspberry harvest continued. Orchardists busy monitoring for pests, summer pruning trees, mowing orchard floors, fixing up orchard roads and move bins into the orchard. Cultivating and weeding newly renovated strawberry beds. Vegetables: Farmers kept busy irrigating at weekend, harvesting array of vegetable crops, monitoring pest pressures, spraying pesticides for insect and disease control where needed. Field Crops: Finally a week farmers could baled HAY by finishing-up first cutting with some second and

third cutting being made along with chopping forage continued during the week. Corn looks good to excellent and farmers starting to get equipment ready to start chopping in a couple of weeks. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** Harvesting apples, fall raspberries, blueberries, sweet corn, tomatoes, an array of vegetables, and cut flowers. Most of apple orchards are now open. P-Y-O operations for apples, blueberries, fall raspberries and cut flowers had a busy week. Farmers markets, farm stands and CSA's are busy too. Weeding, irrigating and monitoring pests. Some growers are getting ready to plant fall vegetables for winter market. Haying and haylage being made. Pastures are growing. Weather: we had a couple of cold nights reaching mid 40°. Growers continues assessing hail damage on apples and other crops due to hail storm that occurred on Sunday, August 17. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** Great weather for field work. After many weeks of rainy weather this past week was a welcome break with dry sunny weather. Hay producers took advantage of this and were busy cutting and bailing hay. Fruit growers had a good opportunity to mow orchard floors. Fruit growers continued to harvest peaches and blueberries. Vegetable growers continued to harvest different kinds of vegetable crops. This was a great week for sweet corn. Growers also continued to deal with fungal diseases due to weeks of wet moist weather. Greenhouse growers continue to monitor the seasonal progress of poinsettias. Garden mums have started to flower and garden centers were offering mums to customers.

**RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport:** Sweet corn and potatoes being harvested along with tomatoes, peppers, beans, squash, eggplant and all summer vegetables. A dry week made second cut hay a good week of field work. Field corn looks great

and so do winter squashes. Mums are filling up roadside stands and farmers markets.

**VERMONT - Jeffrey Carter (Ext), Addison:** Hay harvest started again after long delay. Fields still wet soil, damage from wheel traffic during hay harvest. Corn crop responding to drier warm weather, some recovery of poor crop, and ears filling out. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Best haying week of the summer. I would say more hay and haylage was harvested this week than any other week. A bit of rain early in week, then warm and dry. Everybody was waiting for this week. **Paul Stanley (CCA), Franklin:** Awesome week here in Franklin County. Second cut is pretty well done up and some third cut has been harvested. Getting much of the second cut hay dried down and into bales which is a welcome sight to those putting up some dry hay. Field Corn is really coming around everyday. Corn that is in the wet areas still gaining ground as the topsoil begins to dry out. This corn may not be as tall, however, we will see an ear on this corn providing some feed value to the cattle. Sweet Corn is about over with on the earlier varieties and the later maturing varieties are beginning to show up at the veggie stands. Still a couple weeks out to the full launch of the apple season. Hopefully, this good weather will flow into the fall to get the apple pickers into the pick your own orchards. **John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille:** Nicest week of the summer shifted all fieldwork into high gear! Lots of grass was harvested with a large amount actually able to be made into dry bales. All other crops were drying out and struggling with the effects of the wet summer. Some manure was being spread on freshly harvested grass fields. **Julie Jacque (FSA), Windham:** Good break from rain this week to get hay made.

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