

# Crop Progress & Condition



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For week ending 5/24/09

## Another Cool, Dry Week

**GENERAL CONDITIONS:** For the week ending May 24, 2009, there were 6.2 days available for field work across New England. Topsoil moisture was rated 9% short, 86% adequate, 5% surplus. Subsoil moisture was rated 4% short, 92% adequate, 4% surplus. Pasture condition was rated 8% fair, 76% good, 16% excellent. New England experienced variable weather conditions this past week. The first part of the week was very cool and sunny. Daytime temperatures were 12-19 degrees below average, ranging in the low to mid-50s. Nighttime temperatures were in the mid-30s to low 40s. Several areas were hit by heavy frost and damage was reported on early planted vegetables, peaches, and strawberries. Mid-week was marked by cloudy skies and above average temperatures in the mid-80s to low-90s. Temperatures cooled again for the weekend, but remained average to above average, ranging in the mid-60s to mid-70s. Nighttime temperatures ranged in the mid-40s to mid-50s. Northern states received very little rain over the week. However, southern states received thunderstorms both Saturday and Sunday. Hail damage was reported, but the extent of the damage will not be known for several weeks. Total precipitation ranged from 0 to 0.73 inches.

**FRUIT:** Fruit development ranged from bud stage to petal fall across New England. Tree fruit were in full bloom to petal fall. Strawberries were in early bloom to full bloom. Both highbush and wild blueberries were in early bloom to full bloom, while cranberries were just beginning to bud. The cooler temperatures and dry weather forced fruit growers to irrigate for frost control and to spur along crop development. Berry growers spent the week fertilizing and planting. Orchardists were busy applying protective fungicide sprays and completing pruning activities.

**VEGETABLES:** Vegetable growers took advantage of the dry weather this past week to get a jump on planting cucumbers, squash, cabbage, tomatoes, snap beans, and peppers. Sweet corn planting also gained momentum and was 55% complete at week's end, slightly ahead of last year and normal. Crop emergence was well ahead of last year at 30% complete by the end of the week. Producers continued to harvest asparagus, rhubarb, and early greens.

**FIELD CROPS:** Field corn planting hit the half-way mark this past week, still behind last year and normal due to some fields remaining too wet to plant. The crop was rated in good to excellent condition in New Hampshire and good to fair condition elsewhere. Shade tobacco transplanting received a major boost from the dry weather and was 90% complete in Connecticut and 10% complete in Massachusetts, well ahead of last year and normal. Broadleaf tobacco transplanting began by week's end. Both tobacco crops were rated in good to fair condition in Connecticut and good in Massachusetts. Maine oat and barley planting neared completion and both crops were rated in good condition. Potato planting neared completion as well. The first cutting of hay began in earnest this past week. Growers reported lower yields due to winter damage, but stated the quality still looks good.

### SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
<b>Topsoil</b>			
Very Short	0	0	3
Short	9	1	28
Adequate	86	81	67
Surplus	5	18	2
<b>Subsoil</b>			
Very Short	0	0	2
Short	4	1	24
Adequate	92	83	72
Surplus	4	16	2

### FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Stage of Development	Condition
Apples	Full Bloom/Petal Fall	Good
Peaches	Full Bloom/Petal Fall	Good
Pears	Full Bloom/Petal Fall	Good
Blueberries		
Highbush	Early Bloom/ Full Bloom	Good/Fair
Wild	Early Bloom/ Full Bloom	Good
Cranberries, MA	Bud Stage	Good
Strawberries	Early Bloom/ Full Bloom	Good

### FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	2009	2008	5-yr Avg	Condition
--Percent Planted--				
Barley, ME	90	65	65	
Oats, ME	90	70	65	
Potatoes				
Maine	90	50	50	
Mass	95	99	90	
Rhode Island	N/A	90	90	
Silage Corn	50	65	55	
Sweet Corn	55	50	45	
Tobacco				
Broadleaf	5	<5	10	Good/Fair
Shade	25	35	50	Good/Fair
--Percent Emerged--				
Barley, ME	35	5	20	Good
Oats, ME	20	<5	20	Good
Potatoes				
Maine	<5	0	0	Good
Mass	50	45	35	Good
Rhode Island	N/A	30	35	N/A
Silage Corn	10	15	15	Good/Fair
Sweet Corn	30	15	15	Good
-- Percent Harvested --				
Dry Hay				
First Cut	10	<5	<5	Good/Fair

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

For the Period: Tuesday May 19, 2009  
To: Monday May 25, 2009

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	34	90	59	+2	229	+101	38	+29	0.04	-0.80	2	2.39	-1.10	13
Bangor_Intl_Arp	32	89	57	+2	185	+91	20	+16	0.04	-0.75	1	2.60	-0.65	11
Bethel	30	92	57	+1	161	+57	19	+12	0.02	-0.82	1	2.31	-1.00	11
Caribou_Municip	31	89	53	+1	111	+42	16	+15	0.10	-0.60	1	3.17	+0.43	11
Dover-Foxcroft	29	91	54	+1	129	+58	16	+16	0.00	-0.82	0	2.73	-0.53	11
Frenchville	33	87	52	-1	78	+29	11	+11	0.28	-0.45	2	2.39	-0.41	13
Houlton	30	89	55	+2	123	+53	20	+18	0.10	-0.67	1	3.04	+0.06	11
Livermore_Falls	29	92	56	+2	164	+93	20	+20	0.03	-0.81	1	2.50	-0.90	11
Moosehead	25	90	53	+3	83	+46	15	+15	0.00	-0.77	0	1.85	-1.21	10
Portland_ME	36	91	60	+6	225	+138	46	+46	0.02	-0.75	1	2.76	-0.59	12
<b>NEW HAMPSHIRE</b>														
Benton	28	85	57	+1	169	+44	27	+12	0.13	-0.67	1	3.00	+0.00	10
Berlin_AG	29	87	56	+2	167	+62	22	+11	0.06	-0.78	1	2.73	-0.43	11
Concord	30	91	60	+4	280	+135	68	+53	0.01	-0.69	1	2.53	-0.27	11
Diamond_Pond	27	83	52	+2	75	+32	7	+7	0.00	-0.93	0	4.73	+1.30	11
Keene_AG	30	91	59	-1	259	+58	65	+34	0.05	-0.82	1	2.37	-0.99	12
North_Conway	31	91	57	+0	195	+72	31	+19	0.08	-0.82	2	2.67	-0.98	11
Rochester	34	91	61	+4	266	+97	60	+38	0.00	-0.84	0	2.94	-0.67	9
<b>VERMONT</b>														
Bennington_AP	28	86	59	+4	277	+148	59	+42	0.01	-1.04	1	2.24	-1.90	9
Burlington_Intl	33	88	61	+3	285	+103	62	+33	0.11	-0.59	1	4.13	+1.35	10
Island_Pond	28	85	54	+2	125	+50	17	+14	0.00	-0.88	0	4.32	+1.13	11
Montpelier	28	86	58	+3	222	+101	43	+29	0.06	-0.71	1	3.55	+0.72	11
Rochester	29	86	56	+2	170	+62	30	+19	0.13	-0.85	1	4.54	+0.63	10
Rutland_AG	29	86	58	-2	230	+15	42	+1	0.03	-0.79	2	2.39	-0.67	10
Springfield_VT	29	87	59	+3	271	+135	55	+39	0.02	-0.89	1	2.04	-1.60	10
Sutton	29	86	54	+2	118	+46	20	+17	0.06	-0.79	1	3.89	+0.75	12
<b>MASSACHUSETTS</b>														
Boston/Logan_In	46	92	65	+5	403	+180	118	+100	0.51	-0.19	2	2.23	-0.77	11
Fitchburg	39	91	65	+9	402	+287	119	+112	0.10	-0.73	1	3.05	-0.11	10
Greenfield	32	90	61	+1	284	+58	69	+38	0.03	-0.88	1	3.06	-0.44	13
New_Bedford	39	81	61	+2	290	+65	56	+37	0.25	-0.56	3	3.83	+0.47	17
Otis_AFB	39	79	62	+6	320	+201	63	+59	0.04	-0.80	2	2.82	-0.61	16
Plymouth	38	86	62	+5	316	+182	73	+67	0.14	-0.73	3	2.77	-0.91	17
Walpole	36	86	61	+4	287	+115	69	+54	1.94	+1.17	2	3.56	+0.35	11
Chicopee/Westov	30	90	62	-1	364	+62	98	+47	0.00	-0.93	0	2.97	-0.69	12
Worthington	30	86	60	+4	220	+96	50	+38	0.02	-1.03	1	3.47	-0.73	12
<b>RHODE ISLAND</b>														
Providence	42	85	64	+5	342	+147	79	+65	0.19	-0.65	3	3.00	-0.46	15
Woonsocket	38	88	63	+5	343	+175	92	+82	0.22	-0.69	4	2.06	-1.66	16
<b>CONNECTICUT</b>														
Bridgeport/Siko	42	81	63	+3	314	+77	63	+27	0.00	-0.87	0	2.54	-1.06	11
Hartford/Bradle	34	89	64	+3	408	+133	120	+72	0.09	-0.85	1	2.77	-0.96	12
Norfolk	31	84	60	+5	257	+137	69	+59	0.17	-0.88	1	4.14	+0.00	11
Thomaston_Dam	34	85	62	+4	311	+124	80	+57	0.42	-0.56	3	4.13	+0.06	14
Willimantic	37	87	62	+4	379	+193	100	+78	0.39	-0.52	3	2.41	-1.43	13

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 Monday, May 25, 2009

STATE	AIR TEMPERATURES				PRECIPITATION	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	24	92	55	+1	0.00	0.28
NH	19	94	58	+2	0.00	0.13
VT	26	90	57	+1	0.00	0.16
MA	29	92	61	+4	0.00	1.94
RI	38	88	62	+4	0.06	0.22
CT	30	89	62	+3	0.00	0.61

**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:**

Heavy frost Monday evening, otherwise, the weather has been excellent. Early planted field corn looks good. **Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland:** A very nice dry week for planting crops including sweet corn, field corn, cucumbers, squash, cabbage, tomatoes, snap beans and broadleaf tobacco. Some dry hay was made while others were chopping grass silage. Thunderstorms on Sunday did produce some hail in one area resulting in damage to tomatoes, summer squash and peaches. **Richard Meinert (Ext), Litchfield:** A hard freeze on Tuesday. High 80's on Thursday and thunderstorms with large hail for the weekend - must be New England! Freeze damaged crops in some areas. A lot of haylage and some baled hay made later in the week. Too early to know what the weekend hail did to crops. Field corn is just emerging so it should have come through ok. Orchards and vegetables might be a different story. **Marsha Jette (FSA), New London:** A great week for field work, planting corn, harvesting hay and chopping grass. Sales of flowers and vegetable plants have been very good. Hoping for good weather to finish planting. **Nancy Welsh (FSA), New Haven:** This was a beautiful warm week with some scattered showers at week's end. One night with a frost warning scare no reports of damage. Most producers took precautionary measures to prevent damage to tender vegetation if possible. Corn planting continued along with vegetable planting. Some alfalfa hay was mowed mid-week and looks good. Warm afternoons helped with drying conditions. **Jude Boucher (Ext), Tolland:** Most of the week consisted of great weather for planting and chores. Wild storms over the holiday weekend dropped a couple inches of rain in a hurry, with scattered hail.

**MAINE – Doreen Conlogue (FSA), Aroostook:** Last week was great for planting! Thanks to the dry weather, growers are finishing up grains, potatoes and corn silage in all areas of the county. Soybeans will go in as soon as it warms up a bit. Things are pretty dry in most areas, we could use the rain predicted for this week. **Pam Hickey (Ext), Central Aroostook:** Farmers are still planting crops. Some are already done planting but some farmers have a few more fields yet to plant. Hopefully by this week, all will be planted for this area. **Sandy Truslow (FSA), Cumberland/York:** Farmers were busy planting last week. The heavy clay soils are still wet and have not yet been able to be planted. Some silage hay has started to be cut. Early planted, covered sweet corn is up six inches or more. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** Another great week for planting. Grass is lush. Apple blossoms were thick with a lot of insect activity. There has been frost in many places that may have affected some transplants. Rain and cool temperatures are on the way. **Valerie Porter (FSA), Hancock/Penobscot/Piscataquis:** Last week was a great week for farmers to get in the fields, cool nights and sunny days. Apple trees are losing petals due to windy days but look good. Strawberry and blueberry plants are looking good as well. Most farmers have started planting. Upcoming forecast has rain that will help. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** It was a good week for preparing fields for planting. More sweet corn and other crops were planted while some crops, i.e. peas are up five to six inches. There were no reports of frost damage to the blueberry crop which was a concern on Monday of last week. The weather has been good for bees to pollinate. Frost did hit some of the strawberry crop in Lincoln County, which set the crop back a bit. Normal management practices have not been hindered by poor weather, although a wet week is forecasted. Pastures are green and livestock are out grazing. **Donna Coffin (Ext), Piscataquis:** Great week to get field work

done. Plowing, tilling, fertilizing, spreading manure, and planting. **Kathy Hopkins (Ext), Somerset:** A good week for field work. Apples had a good week for pollination. Some haylage cut and more planting being done. Frost in low cold areas could be a problem. **Janet King (FSA), Somerset:** Some low lying apple orchards could be affected by frost. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Some frost damage on emerged sweet corn from last week. Lost of corn for silage went in the ground this past week. Some haylage harvested in the central southern part of the state. Strawberries are blooming. **Dr. David Yarborough (Ext), Washington:** Wild blueberries; Mummy berry cups were still producing spores over the weekend but are starting to die off. Even if there is a frost no rainfall is predicted, so there will be no infection periods, so no need for fungicide applications. Fertilizer being spread on crop fields and some plants are beginning to emerge on the pruned fields.

**MASSACHUSETTS - Aimee Thayer (FSA), Berkshire:**

Asparagus, orchard fruit and strawberries were hit by frost this week with losses reported from overnight temps in the 20s. Breezy, sunny days in the 60's, 70's and low 80's made for more hay and rye straw harvesting. There was good progress on silage corn planting. Farmers are reporting problems with crows and corn seed is expensive! Farmers' markets, nurseries and greenhouses did brisk business with Memorial Day sales. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** The week began cool with a frost and many small fruit growers were irrigating for frost control. By the end of the week temperatures were in the low 90's and some growers were irrigating due to dry conditions. Vegetable farmers planted an array of crops such as tomatoes, squashes, beans, peas, peppers and sweet corn. They harvested rhubarb and asparagus. Dairy farmers planted field corn, harvested hay and put young stock on pasture. All crops look good so far. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: Vines continue to green up and push new upright growth. Things dried out as there was little measurable precipitation and only one partial frost night. This may be a 'big' year for insects - lots of black-headed fireworm, cranberry weevil, and especially high levels of winter moth. The latter insect took us by surprise, as flights last November and December were more spread out over time than usual. The larvae have been detected in high numbers on cranberry beds, and have done tremendous damage to trees and blueberry fields. Growers are applying Callisto through the chemigation system, as well as fungicides for upright dieback. Renovated acres are now being planted with vine cuttings or rooted plugs.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE - Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll:**

Garden centers and nurseries reported doing big business so far this season, one reported twice last year's sales to date. While vegetable transplants are popular, folks are still interested in hanging baskets and other ornamentals. Hay fields are headed out, we need a few warm days to get hay dry enough to put in the barn, first cut haylage should be in the barn by now. Pastures were getting ahead of the grazing animals and need to be clipped. Several frosty mornings last week, lows around 25 in a few locations, unsure of impact on tree and small fruit. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Apart from brief showers on Saturday, dry sunny weather all week. It's a little dry out there, and more rain wouldn't hurt. Heavy frost/freeze midweek and a light frost last night. Corn planting is just about done, and more fields are emerging. Some farmers took advantage of weather and started on first cutting for haylage, and even some dry hay. Vegetable operations continued planting and started to harvest

some early planted greens. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Cooler, drier weather last week. Quite a range for temperatures, hard freeze in the mid-20's to 80-low 90's. Much field work got done; prepping, manure spreading and field corn planting. Grasslands growing well and animals being pastured. Kentucky bluegrass beginning to head out. Spring vegetables, greens, and peas up in some locations. Onions planted and high-tunnel tomatoes in. Possibly some damage to early king blossoms, especially on apples. Windy for spraying. Still seeing quite cold mornings up here! Corn fields in lower, wetter areas worked up for planting. Comments on heavy blossoms on apples, lilacs and other spring flowering shrubs, one of our more colorful springs despite severe cold, into -40 this winter. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** For the week ending May 23, the weather provided good field working conditions. Corn was planted all around the county. Many producers have made substantial progress or even completed their first cutting of grass haylage. The extensive winterkill that occurred early in the winter of 2009 on much of the alfalfa around the county has set the crop back substantially. Those mixed forage fields not affected by winter kill are coming along nicely. Last week we received less than a tenth of an inch of rain. It helped cut the dust during field preparation in the river bottom without slowing things down. The one comment that I have heard numerous times is that suppliers of alfalfa and grass seed were caught by surprise with the amount of winter kill and had to scramble to find enough to meet demand. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Concern about frost one night during the week. Some growers irrigated strawberries and ran wind machines during night/morning for frost control. Vegetables: Continued planting vegetables along with successive plantings of sweet corn and transplanting tomato plants in fields. Laying plastic mulch and drip irrigation tape. Harvesting asparagus. First striped cucumber beetle was seen. Fruit: Apples were at petal fall in later blooming areas of the county. Blueberries were at full bloom. Strawberries were starting to bloom. Orchardists were applying protective fungicide sprays on fruit trees and blueberries. Finishing up pruning peach trees. Seeing plum curculio damage in orchards. Field Crops: Farmers were plowing, discing, fertilizing, planting corn, and applying herbicides. Pastures and hayfields starting to look good, orchardgrass is head out. Early planted corn has emerged and new seedlings are up and growing. First cutting of hay started. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** Overall fairly good, sunny weather for the week. Fields could use some rain. Localized mild frost covered some areas Monday (Memorial week-end) night. Growers were busy preparing vegetable fields, fertilizing, planting and irrigating. Tomato transplanting continued in high tunnels. Planted small fruits and tree fruits. Some field

corn was planted; seeded hayfields and pastures. Spreading manure and top-dressed hay fields. Harvested asparagus, leafy greens, and radishes. Monitored for insects and pests. Garden centers and greenhouse operations were fairly busy this Memorial week-end. Growers getting ready for the opening of farmers markets for the coming week-ends. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** Last week was very pleasant for field work except for Thursday and Friday which were very warm. Grass in pastures and hay fields continued to do well. Some hay producers made the first cut. Fruit growers were mowing orchard floor and as well as irrigating their crops. Some growers were applying fruit thinners on their apple crop. Vegetable growers continued to plant succession crops and also weeded and cultivated earlier crops. Greenhouses, garden centers and nurseries had a very strong week of business as people were out buying plants during the week and the Memorial Day weekend.

**VERMONT – Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Cool week, some rain, and frost on Monday night. Lots of corn went into the ground, a decent start on first cut of hay/haylage. Yields on the hay do not look great, but the quality would be there. Cows out on pasture. People commenting about the profuse blooms on trees this spring. **Paul Stanley (CCA), Franklin:** First cut haylage was well under way in Franklin County last week. Not a lot of yield, however, quality should be excellent. Have not heard of any reports on forage analysis and will report when info is in. Most of the corn is now planted and early planted corn is starting to emerge. Cold mornings here, however, not enough to bother corn that is out of the ground, no growing points out yet anyways. Pastures are doing great. Good moisture and now some sun to perk things up. With Memorial Day passing, most gardens will be planted. Apple trees have begun pedal fall and will soon think about making some apples. Strawberry season will soon be here and hopefully the weather will hold for good growth and harvest. **John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille:** Ideal week for fieldwork allowed for a surge in planting with corn being the leader for acreage with seed in the ground. Those with their corn planted went to work on first cut haylage. Veggie producers were also on schedule with the favorable planting conditions. Light frost in some areas early in the week delayed transplants of tender plants. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** First cut hay began last week. Looks like the crop is a little light but it is still pretty early. A lot of corn got planted as well. Conditions are a little on the dry side so landowners were able to get around their fields easily. Pastures are a little slow to start as it has been a little below normal temperatures. Memorial Day night brought frost to most of the area here.

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