

Crop Progress & Condition



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For week ending 8/23/09

First Heat Wave of the Summer

GENERAL CONDITIONS: For the week ending August 23, 2009, there were 6.2 days available for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated 7% poor, 32% fair, 53% good, and 8% excellent. Last week began sunny and hot, with above average daytime temperatures ranging in the mid-80s to mid-90s. Mid-week daytime temperatures remained above average, ranging in the upper 70s to low 90s. Precipitation was scarce during the week, with only coastal Massachusetts reporting significant rain on Thursday and Friday. A cold front moved into the area on Friday, bringing thunderstorms and slightly cooler temperatures throughout most of the region. Weekend high temperatures ranged in the upper 70s to mid-80s. Nighttime temperatures were well above average throughout the entire week, ranging in the upper 50s to mid-70s. Due to Hurricane Bill's proximity to New England on Sunday, precipitation was widespread throughout New England. Total precipitation for the week ranged between 0.00 and 1.36 inches.

FRUIT: The apple harvest was 10% complete at week's end, on par with last year and normal, and were rated in good condition throughout New England. Picking of peaches was 55% complete at week's end, well behind last year, but on par with normal. The pear harvest continued at a slow pace and remained at 5% harvested by the end of the week. Orchardists were busy monitoring for pests, summer pruning trees, mowing orchard floors and fixing orchard roads. Highbush blueberries continued being harvested at a fast pace and were 85% complete at the end of the week. The wild blueberry harvest remained active and was 80% complete at week's end. Cranberries faced worms and damaging heat, but were reported to be of very good quality.

VEGETABLES: The warm, sunny weather this past week kept farmers' markets very busy. The lack of significant rainfall greatly helped the sweet corn harvest continue. The quality of sweet corn was generally good, despite some reports of damage caused by European corn borers and ear worms. Most other vegetables were in good condition and widely available in the market. Tomato producers continued spraying in order to minimize losses due to widespread late blight. Farmers were busy harvesting various vegetable crops, irrigating, monitoring pest pressures, and spraying pesticides and fungicides for insect and disease control when needed.

FIELD CROPS: Late blight continued to plague potato farmers throughout most of New England. Farmers took advantage of the favorable weather and were very busy out in the fields. As a result, the cutting of hay is ahead of last year and normal. However, hay conditions were still variable across the region. Field corn had a boost in growth and finished silking and tasseling in some areas. Despite the improved conditions provided by the warmer, drier weather, corn quality still ranged from very poor to excellent throughout New England. Harvesting of oats and barley began this past week and were 20% and 15% complete, respectively. Both crops were rated in good condition. The tobacco harvest continued, well behind last year and normal as some of the crop has been reported to be a total loss due to previous weather.

SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
Topsoil			
Very Short	0	0	0
Short	20	13	7
Adequate	66	69	84
Surplus	14	18	9
Subsoil			
Very Short	0	0	3
Short	14	9	25
Adequate	71	73	71
Surplus	15	18	1

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Percent Harvested			Fruit Set	Fruit Size	Condition
	2009	2008	5-yr Avg			
Apples	10	10	10	Average	Average	Good
Peaches	55	70	55	Average	Average	Good
Pears	5	10	5	Average	Average	Good
Blueberries						
Highbush	85	80	85	Average	Average	Good
Wild	80	70	75	Above/Avg	Average	Good
Cranberries, MA	-	-	-	Avg/Above	Average	Good/Excellent

FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Percent Harvested			Condition
	2009	2008	5-yr Avg	
--Percent Harvested--				
Barley, ME	15	20	20	Good
Oats, ME	20	10	10	Good
Potatoes				
Maine	-	-	-	Good/Excellent
Mass	25	20	15	Good/Fair
Rhode Island	15	25	25	Fair
Silage Corn	-	-	-	Fair
Sweet Corn	60	65	60	Good/Fair
Tobacco				
Broadleaf	50	70	60	Fair/Poor
Shade	60	75	75	Good/Fair
Dry Hay				
First Cut	99	95	95	Fair/Good
Second Cut	75	65	70	Fair/Good
Third Cut	15	10	20	Good/Fair

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

For the Period: Monday August 17, 2009
To: Sunday August 23, 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	---	---
MAINE														
Augusta_State_A	61	90	76	+10	1575	-56	572	-67	0.31	-0.46	3	3.66	+0.61	16
Bangor_Intl_Arp	56	92	76	+10	1505	+17	550	+14	0.21	-0.56	2	1.26	-1.71	9
Bethel	55	90	73	+9	1353	-129	426	-95	3.05	+2.14	2	6.42	+2.85	9
Caribou_Municip	55	88	73	+12	1315	+98	468	+122	0.76	-0.15	3	2.58	-1.16	10
Dover-Foxcroft	53	89	73	+10	1274	-26	422	+18	0.48	-0.36	3	3.61	+0.37	14
Frenchville	51	86	72	+11	1198	+67	401	+104	1.52	+0.57	5	4.24	+0.52	13
Houlton	52	89	74	+12	1302	+32	467	+81	0.55	-0.39	3	5.23	+1.54	13
Livermore_Falls	54	93	74	+11	1396	+114	471	+85	1.19	+0.21	3	5.06	+1.46	12
Moosehead	50	90	71	+10	1065	-18	318	+39	0.44	-0.40	3	3.09	-0.34	14
Portland_ME	63	91	77	+11	1603	+112	608	+60	0.07	-0.56	2	1.11	-1.41	7
NEW HAMPSHIRE														
Benton	56	89	73	+10	1331	-42	435	+12	2.16	+1.25	4	6.83	+3.25	12
Berlin_AG	51	89	71	+8	1312	-71	404	-42	1.91	+0.93	2	4.35	+0.49	8
Concord	59	93	77	+11	1732	+84	681	+36	0.65	-0.11	3	3.00	-0.07	11
Diamond_Pond	47	80	64	+5	803	-132	141	-43	1.13	-0.04	3	5.56	+0.96	16
Keene_AG	62	90	77	+9	1731	-105	702	-80	1.89	+1.01	5	5.05	+1.51	15
North_Conway	57	90	73	+8	1395	-146	442	-121	2.70	+1.79	2	6.97	+3.36	11
Rochester	61	92	78	+11	1729	-24	692	-33	0.48	-0.30	2	3.43	+0.15	6
VERMONT														
Bennington_AP	58	89	75	+12	1700	+257	633	+153	2.25	+1.27	3	5.90	+2.07	11
Burlington_Intl	57	90	77	+10	1864	+95	794	+59	0.19	-0.72	2	2.30	-1.33	10
Island_Pond	51	88	71	+11	1258	+124	412	+124	0.32	-0.79	1	4.17	-0.22	11
Montpelier	56	89	74	+11	1559	+165	574	+124	0.38	-0.52	3	3.35	-0.07	11
Rochester	56	89	73	+10	1394	+30	475	+41	1.32	+0.27	4	6.32	+2.23	12
Rutland_AG	59	88	73	+6	1578	-242	569	-193	3.44	+2.46	4	8.30	+4.50	12
Springfield_VT	59	92	76	+12	1718	+216	665	+143	1.03	+0.12	4	5.19	+1.63	16
Sutton	52	88	71	+10	1167	+15	342	+39	0.35	-0.72	1	4.00	-0.30	10
MASSACHUSETTS														
Boston/Logan_In	71	95	81	+10	2097	+24	954	-22	0.58	-0.19	2	1.68	-1.17	7
Fitchburg	66	94	82	+17	2080	+581	934	+404	0.65	-0.12	2	2.35	-0.86	10
Greenfield	63	91	77	+8	1760	-198	700	-173	1.97	+1.13	3	4.85	+1.49	11
New_Bedford	66	91	79	+7	1880	-201	784	-199	2.54	+1.56	2	4.12	+0.46	11
Otis_AFB	66	88	78	+10	1957	+265	834	+133	0.86	+0.09	3	2.45	-0.54	9
Plymouth	67	92	80	+12	1889	+135	792	+44	1.17	+0.26	1	3.26	-0.19	10
Walpole	66	91	79	+11	1821	+28	748	-7	0.93	+0.02	2	2.69	-0.76	8
Chicopee/Westov	64	93	79	+8	1996	-242	863	-230	1.09	+0.28	2	3.46	+0.34	13
Worthington	59	90	74	+10	1489	+27	511	+19	2.33	+1.42	3	6.01	+2.19	14
RHODE ISLAND														
Providence	69	94	81	+11	2066	+92	924	+18	0.07	-0.77	1	1.65	-1.57	10
Woonsocket	67	92	79	+11	1918	+155	806	+87	0.66	-0.25	2	2.46	-1.18	7
CONNECTICUT														
Bridgeport/Siko	72	91	81	+9	2140	+24	1005	-20	0.48	-0.22	1	1.87	-1.18	10
Hartford/Bradle	68	94	81	+11	2188	+33	1023	-12	1.15	+0.31	2	4.26	+1.09	12
Norfolk	62	86	74	+10	1583	+116	566	+67	1.93	+0.88	3	5.07	+1.02	11
Thomaston_Dam	67	91	78	+11	1933	+191	828	+131	3.14	+2.16	2	6.50	+2.67	13
Willimantic	67	92	80	+13	2119	+344	963	+236	0.41	-0.43	1	2.20	-1.37	11

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 precipitation of 0.01 inch or more.

Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit.

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State Weather Summary

For the Week Ending Sunday, August 23, 2009

STATE	AIR TEMPERATURES				PRECIPITATION	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	50	93	74	+10	0.07	3.05
NH	46	96	74	+10	0.34	2.70
VT	50	92	73	+9	0.17	3.44
MA	59	95	78	+10	0.60	2.80
RI	67	94	79	+10	0.07	0.66
CT	62	94	79	+10	0.30	3.14

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: A very hot, mostly dry week with our first heat wave of the summer. Crops generally responded to the heat and in some cases rebounded from the wet conditions which we had most of the week. Shade tobacco on 5th pick, dry hay made, sweet corn and other vegetables being harvested. In some cases, irrigation was set up on turf grass and some veggie crops. Rye being combined for seed. **Richard Meinert (Ext), Litchfield:** Growers are waiting to see how the field corn harvest will play out. Ears are filling; some reports of small ears or three ears to a stalk as plants try anything to overcome the challenges wrought by the weather this summer. **Patricia Smith (FSA), New London:** Blight has hit tomatoes. Very hot, humid weather. Still trying to finish cutting hay. Vegetables are slow this season. **Nancy Welsh (FSA), New Haven:** This was another hazy, hot and humid week. Thunderstorms during the weekend brought high winds and 3 to 4 inches of rain in parts of the county. Branches and tree limbs littered some roadways. Farmers markets continue to see good crowds. Customers seem to enjoy the fresh produce. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Excellent summer weather, a lot of hay got in. Blueberries are abundant at pick your own, although it's been too hot to pick, Cortland apples have split with scarring on some of the fruit, most varieties of apples looking better. Peaches are good. Sweet corn has good size and flavor. Tilling in squash, cucumbers and tomatoes that are done. Some producers are spraying tomatoes every ten days to keep the late blight out at a cost of over \$300/acre each time. Field corn has responded to heat and sun, many fields improved dramatically. Now the ears need to fill in and get to a decent size. Some corn fields have no potential to catch up, but overall things have improved.

MAINE - Pam Hickey (Ext), Central Aroostook: Farmers had a week of beautiful sunny weather to continue to cut and bale hay. Grain is being harvested in the area. **Steve London, Southern Aroostook:** Potatoes and small grains: Potato farmers have started to desiccate some fields getting ready for harvest, and continue to spray for some aphids, Colorado potato bugs and for blight. **Sandy Truslow (FSA), Cumberland/York:** Hot, humid weather this week with 1-3" of rain received on Sunday night. Apple producers are reporting disease problems due to all the rain this summer. It's official now; this is the wettest summer on record in Portland. Sweet corn is plentiful right now, but likely to be in short supply in September. There are vegetables for sale in the stands, but not as plentiful as usual. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** Better weather but still downpours occasionally. Highbush blueberry crop looks good. **Valerie Porter (FSA), Hancock/Penobscot/Piscataquis:** Another good week of heat and sun. Crops are being harvested rapidly. Quality of most crops is off this year. Corn has tasseled but some fields look better than expected. Apples look pretty good but are also a little late. Blueberry harvest is almost complete. Vegetable stands are in high swing with multiple crops available. Sweet corn is a little later than in past years. **Maria Granger (FSA), Kennebec:** Several hot days helped the corn tremendously last week. Producers were out in the field trying to catch up with harvesting, spraying and mowing. Late blight is reported on potatoes and blossom end rot in the squash. Powdery mildew is here as well. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** We escaped damage from Hurricane Bill. We did receive some precipitation Saturday and Sunday evenings in some areas of the these two counties, but it could have been much, much worse. The blueberry harvest is nearly complete in this area and overall the crop is above average. Other crops remain three to four weeks behind in maturing, but we did experience some warm summer weather this past week which really has helped in the growth of the corn crop. Lots of dry hay has been harvested, although many fields were partially harvested due to wet conditions in low lying areas. Plenty of fresh vegetables are now available at local markets, but these deliveries have been behind schedule due to the lack of fresh produce. Another good week of weather is forecasted, although near the end of the week we could

experience colder temperatures. **Donna Coffin (Ext), Piscataquis:** Sweet corn harvest is in full swing. **Kathy Hopkins (Ext), Somerset:** Another week of summer weather helped crop growth. More hay was harvested. Corn is growing and most crops are available at farmers markets and farm stands. More tomato and potato crops both commercial and homeowner went down with late blight. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Hot dry weather has allowed for hay harvest. Corn loved the hot weather, but silage tonnage will be well below normal this year. Corn plants are tasseled and silked but may only be 4-5 ft tall. Rains from Bill have soaked the eastern half of the county. **Dr. David Yarborough (Ext), Washington:** Wild blueberries: Fruit quality is very good; the recent showers have provided some badly needed moisture. Harvest is expected to continue up to Labor Day and an average crop is expected.

MASSACHUSETTS - Aimee Thayer (FSA), Berkshire: More severe weather this week. A microburst took off a barn roof. One inch hail hit parts of the county further decimating some crops. Flash and field flooding were problems again with T-storms. Producers continue to harvest summer veggies and farmers markets are busy. The hot weather this week helped the field corn. **Lori Carver (FSA), Franklin:** Continued hot and humid. Rains over the weekend continued to cause problems with crops. Sweet corn harvest in full swing. Blueberries, peaches and potatoes are being harvested. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** The week was hot and humid and ended with a two to three inch rain storm in some areas on Saturday night. Growers are harvesting their second cutting of hay, peaches, early apples, blueberries, winter squash, potatoes and many other summer crops. The tobacco crop in Hampshire and Franklin Counties was a total loss due to this year's very poor growing conditions. A few growers are harvesting tobacco in Hampden County. Due to this year's growing conditions crop yields are down, but prices are holding steady. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: The crop estimate for Massachusetts came in at 1.9 million barrels, very close to what I think are out there. All cultivars have good crops, especially Howes and Stevens. Fruit size is coming along nicely. There are several instances of fruit rot, and fruit worm injury in a few places. By and large, the quality is good so far. Growers are irrigating on a regular schedule. Hurricane Bill minimally affected the area, with light winds and less than an inch of precipitation. We could use a good soaking. Berries have been under stress from the warm and humid weather.

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll: Hazy, hot and humid - true summer weather. Early apples ready,ighbush blueberries continue. Poor quality first cut hay finally made it into the barn. Those who got an early first are working on some nice second and even third cut. All kinds of vegetables at farm stands and farmer's markets. Economy hasn't hurt the sales at the local farmer's market. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Hot all week, and downright tropical by the end of the week with scattered showers and thunderstorms. Some producers starting to comment that a little bit of rain would be nice. Last of the field corn is tasseled, and the earlier-planted fields are maturing nicely. Farms continuing to catch up on haying early in the week. Most veggie crops doing well, sweet corn now widely available. PYO peaches available and PYO of early apple varieties started this weekend. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Good haying weather continued well into the week with nearly all fields worth mowing being cut and baled. Some heavy storms later in the week; weather generally hot and humid. Field corn showing good growth, essentially all - even late planted at tassel or beyond. Nice selection of summer veggies at farm stands, although sweet corn behind this year. Berries look good. Pumpkins and winter squash setting fruit well. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** For the week ending August 22, we had 5 days of decent weather to start out the week. Days were cooler and foggy to start, but once the fog burned off, the weather was good. The end of the week brought nearly an inch of rain. Late blight is widespread in the county.

Haying progressed on the river bottom soils with better drainage. Haying is ongoing on other soils as field conditions allow. Field corn has improved with the heat and sunshine. Field grown tomato crops have been affected by late blight in many locations. **Heather Bryant (Ext), Grafton:** Late blight is still spreading in this area, and seems particularly prevalent on the western side of the county. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Fruit: Orchardists harvesting peaches, first pears, plums, and finished JerseyMac and now picking Paulared 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: Hay making and cutting haylage continued with some of the second cut being made. Growth has been good to excellent. Farmers make new seeding for pasture and hayfields. Corn looks average to good and farmers starting to get equipment ready to start chopping in a couple of weeks. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** The week of hot and dry weather was interrupted by showers and thunderstorms the last day of the week. Hay producers making hay and haylage most of the week. Vegetable growers were irrigating, weeding and harvesting an array of vegetable crops. Farm stands and farmers markets were busy with all kinds of vegetables and cut flowers. Fruit growers were harvesting blueberries, peaches and early varieties of apples. Fall raspberries are also looking good on most farms. Greenhouses and garden centers were starting to sell early varieties of mums. The poinsettia crop is looking good and most growers were busy pinching their crop.

VERMONT – Jeff Carter, (Ext), Addison: Blight finished my tomatoes and potatoes this week. Grass disease fungus and rust very evident on second and third cut grasses with lots of brown and dead tissue. Corn growth good with all tassels, some ears filling out. Still variable yields in fields with overall high crop loss from earlier wet soils. Soybeans growth good, pod set way behind with only 6-10 pods set and no seed fill. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Hay, hay, hay. First part of the week was excellent haying weather and all haying equipment was in use. Some farms working on first, second, and third cut all at the same time. Wetter fields had dried up enough

to allow that first cut to come off. Some were able to get most of a third cut in during the week. We hit 90 for the first time this summer. Hot and muggy later in the week. We dodged the expected heavy downpours. Sweet corn coming in now. Some pockets of potatoes and tomatoes without late blight infection. Farmers who successfully bid in the CWT dairy buyout are now shipping their cows. **Paul Stanley (CCA), Franklin:** Hot and muggy this week in Franklin County. This weather is what everyone was waiting for and now cannot wait until it is gone. Thus the old adage, be careful what you wish for. The corn certainly does not care. This weather is boosting corn tremendously. We will not see a bumper crop, however, we have moved out of the poor crop predictions that were being predicted. The fall weather will still play a role and we are gaining on lost ground every day. European corn borer and ear worm are going to be a problem this year. The stars and the moon have aligned on this one, with the hot humid weather here in time for these critters to do there thing. Sweet Corn is the first to show this problem, with people finding these worms in the ears, not very appetizing. Pastures are doing super for this time of year. Still much growth, where typically the pastures are drying up by now. The hay crop is very hit and miss. Still a little first going in where wet ground prevailed early in the season. Then second and third cut being harvested, as fields were cut at varied times this spring. Some farmers are now looking to a fourth cut on some of the acres. The bottom line here is that we have ample hay harvest yields countywide. Have not heard of much blight on tomatoes and potatoes in the county. It seems that this is more south of us as a relative in Addison County said all her tomatoes and potatoes were wiped out by the blight. **John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille:** Another decent week for fieldwork. Late blight is still wreaking havoc with tomato and potato growers. Some manure being spread on newly harvested fields of grass. Corn crop is progressing nicely and the sweet corn crop harvest is finally coming on strong. Small grain harvest is almost wrapped up with generally poor crops. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** the corn is looking much better after a stretch of hot and humid weather. The crop looks much more even across the fields. The corn has tasseled and is now setting ears. Breaks in the rain have allowed farmers to bring in their second crop of hay and in some cases their third crop. Quality will be lower on the second crop due to over maturity but the third crop looks really good. Pastures are continuing to grow well with the moisture in the soil but have slowed some in the hot weather.

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