

Crop Progress & Condition



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For week ending 9/06/09

Best Week of Summer

GENERAL CONDITIONS: For the week ending September 6, 2009, there were 6.8 days available for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated 1% very poor, 5% poor, 31% fair, 59% good, and 4% excellent. Last week began with partly cloudy skies throughout New England with below average temperatures in the mid-60s to low 70s. Temperatures warmed up during the week and were mostly average with some highs reaching into the low 80s on Friday and Saturday. Lows remained on the cool side in the 40s and 50s throughout the week. Areas in the extreme North experienced light frosts during the week but none were severe. Skies remained clear and rain-free during the week providing excellent harvesting conditions, however some growers were forced to irrigate due to the drier conditions.

FRUIT: The apple harvest was in full swing across New England. Orchardists were busy harvesting Marshall, McIntosh, Ginger Gold, Paula Red, and Honeycrisp varieties. The peach and pear harvest also continued. Pick your own operations thrived during the holiday weekend due to the beautiful summer-like conditions. Harvesting of berries continued through the week in most areas. The Maine wild blueberry crop was completely harvested at week's end, ahead of last year and on par with normal. Massachusetts cranberry growers were busy preparing equipment for harvest and irrigating bogs due to the drier conditions.

VEGETABLES: Growers continued to harvest a vast array of vegetables during the week. Vegetables such as cucumbers, tomatoes, zucchini, and sweet corn were still popular and plentiful at farmer's markets and at roadside stands. Pumpkin and winter squash harvest began in some areas, however most areas expect harvest to start in the next few weeks. Powdery mildew has been spotted in pumpkin and winter squash fields causing slight damage to vines. Growers were also busy during the week seeding cover crops on harvested fields and irrigating.

FIELD CROPS: Farmers were able to harvest field crops in earnest last week due to the lack of rain and warm, sunny conditions. First cut dry hay harvest was complete at week's end and significant progress was made on the other cuts. A few areas reported corn chopping was in full swing last week, however most anticipate a later harvest. Potatoes were harvested in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. Maine's potato harvest was just getting underway at week's end but most growers were still busy with vine desiccation and preparations. Broadleaf and shade tobacco harvests remain behind schedule and range in fair to poor condition.

SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
	-- Percent --		
Topsoil			
Very Short	1	0	1
Short	27	10	8
Adequate	65	74	72
Surplus	7	16	19
Subsoil			
Very Short	1	0	1
Short	16	6	7
Adequate	75	77	76
Surplus	8	17	16

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Percent Harvested			Fruit Size	Condition
	2009	2008	5-yr Avg		
Apples	15	20	20	Average	Good/Fair
Peaches	80	90	85	Average	Good/Fair
Pears	20	25	25	Average	Good/Fair
Blueberries					
Highbush	95	90	95	Average	Good
Wild	100	99	100	Average	Good
Cranberries, MA	-	-	-	Avg/Above	Good/Excellent

FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	--Percent Harvested--			Condition
	2009	2008	5-yr Avg	
Barley, ME	65	70	65	Good/Fair
Oats, ME	70	45	50	Good/Fair
Potatoes				
Maine	<5	5	<5	Good/Excellent
Mass	45	35	30	Good/Fair
Rhode Island	35	65	55	Fair
Silage Corn	<5	<5	5	Fair/Good
Sweet Corn	80	85	80	Good/Fair
Tobacco				
Broadleaf	85	95	90	Fair/Poor
Shade	90	95	95	Good/Fair
Dry Hay				
First Cut	100	99	99	Fair/Good
Second Cut	90	85	85	Good/Fair
Third Cut	50	35	40	Good/Fair

For the Period: Monday August 31, 2009
 To: Sunday September 6, 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	46	80	63	+0	1776	-56	641	-68	0.02	-0.69	1	4.48	+1.52	12
Bangor_Intl_Arp	42	82	61	-2	1691	+18	610	+15	0.00	-0.78	0	2.65	-0.44	6
Bethel	41	80	62	+0	1518	-139	473	-101	0.00	-0.84	0	5.08	+1.51	7
Caribou_Municip	38	79	58	+1	1446	+101	502	+129	0.17	-0.68	2	1.53	-2.05	9
Dover-Foxcroft	39	80	59	-2	1415	-37	455	+12	0.01	-0.90	1	1.82	-1.63	10
Frenchville	36	76	57	-1	1311	+62	424	+105	0.69	-0.22	1	2.80	-0.92	9
Houlton	34	79	58	+0	1432	+27	504	+86	0.01	-0.90	1	1.57	-2.12	9
Livermore_Falls	38	82	60	+1	1557	+130	520	+99	0.00	-0.90	0	3.99	+0.27	10
Moosehead	34	82	58	-1	1182	-26	340	+35	0.02	-0.82	1	1.18	-2.18	11
Portland_ME	48	80	63	+0	1814	+126	683	+72	0.00	-0.70	0	5.08	+2.42	7
NEW HAMPSHIRE														
Benton	39	76	59	-2	1473	-52	472	+9	0.00	-0.82	0	3.82	+0.28	12
Berlin_AG	38	77	59	-2	1448	-88	437	-49	0.00	-0.86	0	3.88	+0.10	7
Concord	40	84	62	-1	1929	+88	751	+42	0.02	-0.68	1	4.17	+1.24	10
Diamond_Pond	31	77	53	-3	870	-165	148	-55	0.18	-0.87	1	2.40	-2.13	13
Keene_AG	42	85	63	-3	1956	-97	795	-69	0.00	-0.77	0	4.09	+0.70	9
North_Conway	43	80	61	-1	1568	-147	493	-122	0.00	-0.84	0	6.18	+2.62	8
Rochester	44	81	63	-2	1937	-29	766	-39	0.00	-0.77	0	4.65	+1.49	7
VERMONT														
Bennington_AP	40	79	60	-2	1878	+266	681	+153	0.00	-0.92	0	4.10	+0.24	10
Burlington_Intl	44	81	62	-2	2059	+92	857	+52	0.01	-0.84	1	1.38	-2.23	10
Island_Pond	33	78	58	+0	1392	+131	443	+128	0.19	-0.74	1	1.61	-2.58	9
Montpelier	40	79	60	+0	1725	+176	624	+133	0.00	-0.76	0	1.71	-1.70	11
Rochester	41	81	61	+0	1556	+30	519	+40	0.00	-0.97	0	3.96	-0.14	12
Rutland_AG	40	79	60	-5	1741	-290	608	-233	0.00	-0.91	0	5.86	+2.08	11
Springfield_VT	43	80	62	+1	1904	+230	721	+149	0.00	-0.87	0	3.50	-0.10	12
Sutton	39	78	58	+1	1290	+14	369	+41	0.02	-0.91	1	1.55	-2.58	9
MASSACHUSETTS														
Boston/Logan_In	55	76	66	-4	2351	+8	1068	-34	0.00	-0.76	0	3.24	+0.24	8
Fitchburg	45	83	65	+4	2322	+650	1040	+461	0.00	-0.70	0	2.57	-0.46	8
Greenfield	44	81	63	-4	1962	-233	769	-202	0.00	-0.83	0	5.32	+2.01	9
New_Bedford	45	81	63	-7	2117	-248	881	-241	0.01	-0.87	1	7.48	+3.68	11
Otis_AFB	46	77	62	-5	2180	+254	922	+128	0.12	-0.65	1	4.89	+1.79	9
Plymouth	47	77	63	-4	2122	+136	887	+48	0.00	-0.98	0	5.55	+1.78	9
Walpole	47	80	63	-2	2048	+36	836	-1	0.00	-0.91	0	3.44	-0.19	8
Chicopee/Westov	41	83	64	-6	2220	-292	955	-268	0.03	-0.81	1	3.26	+0.00	10
Worthington	41	79	61	-2	1662	+23	557	+11	0.00	-0.91	0	5.04	+1.36	9
RHODE ISLAND														
Providence	51	83	66	-3	2336	+101	1054	+30	0.00	-0.84	0	2.49	-0.87	7
Woonsocket	46	82	64	-2	2159	+179	908	+109	0.00	-0.91	0	2.74	-0.90	6
CONNECTICUT														
Bridgeport/Siko	54	81	67	-3	2418	+15	1143	-26	0.00	-0.70	0	1.24	-1.61	7
Hartford/Bradle	48	84	66	-2	2440	+28	1135	-14	0.00	-0.91	0	2.83	-0.61	9
Norfolk	45	78	62	+0	1767	+124	623	+74	0.02	-1.00	1	3.90	-0.26	11
Thomaston_Dam	47	82	65	+0	2169	+211	925	+147	0.00	-0.98	0	5.34	+1.42	9
Willimantic	46	84	65	+1	2368	+372	1073	+262	0.00	-0.91	0	2.19	-1.38	8

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, September 6, 2009

STATE	AIR TEMPERATURES				PRECIPITATION	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	32	83	60	-1	0.00	0.69
NH	31	85	60	-1	0.00	0.42
VT	33	83	60	-1	0.00	1.30
MA	40	84	63	-3	0.00	0.40
RI	46	83	65	-3	0.00	0.00
CT	42	86	65	-2	0.00	0.02

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 dry, mild week with morning lows in the 40's. Plenty of dry hay put up and vegetables harvested for the holiday weekend. Silage corn seems to be a ways off for silage harvest. Seeding rye on vegetable and tobacco fields. **Richard Meinert (Ext), Litchfield:** Some concern that short corn will ruin the corn maze season. What good is a maze that you can see over? Good weather for haying - except it is taking a long time for morning dew to dry off. **Patricia Smith (FSA), New London:** Corn chopping in full swing. Still a large amount of green corn in the county. Warm sunny days provided great weather for drying hay. **Nancy Welsh (FSA), New Haven:** Rain free week of weather helped producers get on with some field work. Farmers markets seem to be attracting buyers. Farm stands are dressing up with fall products. Mums are beautiful. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Awesome week with warm sunny days and cool nights. Blueberries are finishing - lost a lot of berries in the hot dry weather; just got soft and fell to the ground. Sweet corn blocks slow to mature; purchasing sweet corn to hold over till the rest is ready for the farm market. Field corn is maturing with full dent and chopping has begun. Some corn is drying down with brown from the tassel to the ears. Ear size is small, maturity may happen faster than was expected. Some pumpkin growers disappointed with lack of pollination and poor size. Terrific Labor Day weekend for the Woodstock Fair; big crowds, lots of activities.

MAINE – Doreen Conlogue (FSA), Aroostook: Another great week in Aroostook County! And I can't believe I am going to say this but...We need RAIN! It is quite dry and those who can are irrigating. Crops look good but our russet growers would appreciate some precipitation. **Steve London, Southern Aroostook:** Potatoes and small grains: Farmers are getting ready for harvest, with vine desiccation still being applied. **Sandy Truslow (FSA), Cumberland/York:** What beautiful weather! How we could have used a few days of this weather in June and July. Farmers are busy cutting hay. The good weather is helping the apple crop size up well. Peaches and nectarines are also reported to be large for this area. Pumpkins are in very short supply. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** Haying equipment has been running non-stop this week. Most producers will get a good volume, but some of the hay is first cut, just coming in now. The undergrowth is good but there will be a lot of lower quality hay harvested. Wow, what a beautiful late summer! **Valerie Porter (FSA), Hancock/Penobscot/Piscataquis:** Weather was great for harvesting more hay crops. Apples are being harvested but crop is down. Potatoes are being harvested slowly. Crops are available at farm stands. Cool nights and possibility of frost is in the air. Corn silage should be starting to be harvested shortly. Crop will be down and quality may be a serious issue due to late growing and wet grounds. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** We have just experienced one of the best weeks of the entire summer. Finally, big round bales were evident in many large hay fields. The winter squash and pumpkin crops yields are expected to be off by as much as 50%. Harvest of these two crops should start next week. The apple harvest started this weekend. Some of the early varieties were available for harvest at U-Pick operations. There may be fewer of the Cortland variety of apples available this year. It appears this variety was affected by a frost or other weather condition during the bloom. There is basically no crop on the lower branches of these trees. **Donna Coffin (Ext), Piscataquis:** Sweet corn harvest continues. Pumpkins have started to be harvested. Heard a report of light frost in the northern part of the county. **Kathy Hopkins (Ext), Somerset:** A sunny week helped for harvesting hay and ripening the vegetables that have survived disease problems. Sweet corn is available but not in expected supplies. Vegetables on sandy ground could use some water. **Janet King (FSA), Somerset:** Wonderful weather this past week. Corn is about three weeks behind which makes it too soon to start any harvesting. Highbush blueberries are just about done. The dry hay crop is still being harvesting. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Dry weather and

hay making is top priority. Dirt roads are dusty for the first time this year. Some corn has recovered, but much is in sorry shape. Apple harvest has begun.

MASSACHUSETTS - Aimee Thayer (FSA), Berkshire: A beautiful week in the Berkshires with temps in the 70s and 80s down in the low 40s at night. Hay was made, field corn played catch-up. Farmers markets, stands and orchards are booming with beets, collards, cauliflower, broccoli, beans, eggplant, mums, apples, peaches, and fall berries being sold. Foliage is turning and all are hoping for a long fall season. **Lori Carver (FSA), Franklin:** Beautiful weather this past week - farmers were busy getting the second and third crops of the Hay into the barns. Peach harvest comes to an end and apple harvest gears up. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** It was the first week since May that there was no rain, only sunshine. Producers are harvesting apples, hay, peaches, potatoes, winter squash, cucumbers, pumpkins, cabbage, onions and many more fall crops. Crop yields are down due to very poor wet weather conditions. The crops which are harvestable are great. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: Last week was a pretty quiet week. Cranberry growers were busy taking time to get equipment ready for harvest. Heavy rain due to Tropical Storm Danny put some bogs under water last Saturday into Sunday (8/29 - 8/30). Cool and cloudy conditions last week helped to keep damage at a minimum. No rain fell since Danny, so growers had to irrigate their bogs.

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll: Cool, dry, sunny, great weather to wrap up a not so great summer. Finally some weather to put hay in the barn, even if that hay is over mature. Sweet corn, squash and cucumbers popular and plentiful at the farm stand and Farmer's Markets. Early apples are being picked. Early color showing on maple in the low areas; forecasting the change in the seasons just around the corner. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Bright sunny weather for the entire week - the best stretch of weather we've had in a couple months. Some field corn close to mature - many farms are getting equipment ready to begin chopping by the end of the week. Great drying conditions and lots of hay harvested. Some veggie crops starting to wind down, though there's still plenty of variety available at farmers' markets and farmstands. Apple harvest starting to pick up. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Drier but cooler weather throughout the week. Lots of hay-making activity in various states of progress; looks to be somewhat better quality second and third cuts. Grasses have regrown well in wet, cool weather. Corn still in need of time to reach silage stage. Sweet corn, pumpkins, and squash more available. Late blight continues to be present; seeing problems in a few more high-tunnel tomatoes. Late season diseases - powdery mildew around now. Reports of bear damage in corn. Best weather for Lancaster Fair that we have had for some time. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** For the week ending September 6th, we had no rain. Field conditions have continued to improve. A small percentage of fields still need to dry out to allow for access. Producers who were not able to get onto some of their fields due to wet conditions this summer are finally able to access them. Hay quality on these late cut fields is not the best. Producers are also reporting powdery mildew on pumpkins and squash and other problems due to the wet conditions this summer. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Dry week; many growers are irrigating crops. Vegetables: Harvesting an array of vegetables: beans, beets, broccoli, cabbage, cucumbers, greens, potatoes, radishes, summer squash, sweet corn, tomatoes, zucchini, and other vegetables. Some farmers are starting to cleaning up harvested fields and planting cover crops. Diseases have killed some pumpkins and winter squash vines. Fruit: Orchardists harvesting Marshall McIntosh, Ginger Gold, and Honeycrisp apples, peaches, plums/prunes and fall raspberries. Irrigating, weeding and fertilizing strawberry beds. Field Crops: Farmers hay cutting continued during the week with the second and

third cuttings being made. Starting to get ready for chopping corn silage. **Amy Ouellette (Ext), Merrimack:** The McIntosh apple harvest began this week. Redhaven peaches are ripe - very juicy and delicious. The blueberry season will end soon. Sweet corn is being picked throughout the capital region. Tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, late planted greens, and many more vegetables are available at farm stands and farmers markets. Those lucky people who got a first cutting done, have probably done a second by now. Fall mums are now for sale. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** PYO apple operations busy this week. Perfect pleasant sunny and warm weather for PYO. Harvesting apples, peaches, pears, late blueberries varieties, an array of vegetables. Irrigating as some fields are dry. Good weather for haying. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** Dry with mild temperatures and pleasant for field work. Hay producers continued to make hay and haylage. Fruit growers were mowing orchard floors and weeding around the fruit trees. It was a great week for pick your own operations. Growers were harvesting peaches, blueberries, early apple varieties and starting to harvest fall raspberries. Vegetable growers were harvesting an array of vegetable crops and sweet corn. Growers were also cutting down corn stalks from harvested fields and tilling the fields in preparation for planting cover crops. Farmers markets and farm stands were full of different kinds of vegetables and fruits. Greenhouses and garden centers were selling fall mums and other fall decorations. Poinsettias are growing well at most greenhouse operations.

VERMONT – Jeff Carter, (Ext), Addison: Cool nights, wet mornings with dew. Hay and haylage harvest continues, manure spreading on cut hay fields. Corn plants starting to mature, dry leaves, yellow firing. Many fields short nitrogen. Yields are visibly low in most fields. Soybean pods filling, plants really gained a lot of growth these past few weeks. Pasture regrowth still good, lots of leaf spot and rust diseases. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Still more haying. Finishing up second cut, working on third cut; third cut seems light. Old hayfields being cut for mulch. Some farms have begun opening up cornfields. These look good. Fields that are not so good are being left alone to try and mature. Fields are getting dry, no rain this past week. Light frost one night in cold hollows.

Heavy fog in the valleys in the mornings now. **Paul Stanley (CCA), Franklin:** A very welcome week of no rain has allowed some catch up on hay harvest. Some first, second and third cuts. We are even seeing some wet areas being harvested first cut for some bedding hay. Corn is still in good shape and maturing well. Cool weather is making this process true to time. Heard of some corn in the denting stage, so we are beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel. Pastures are seeing the shorter days as a sign that fall is approaching and growth will slow. The fall weather will now play a big roll here as to the last growth spurts with rain and temps the deciding factor. Apples are now at harvest stage and fall weather will be the player here also, getting the you-pickers out to the orchards. Gardens are winding down with the last of the corn being frozen or canned and prepping for the pumpkin season along with the last of the vine crops. **Heather Darby, (Ext), Grand Isle:** Great week for field work. Lots of 2nd, 3rd, and even 4th cut being mowed and some dry hay bales. High quality and decent yields being reported. Much of the corn is dented and short season corn could be ready for harvest in a week or so. **John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille:** Ideal late summer conditions have created the perfect "storm" for getting crops harvested. It's hard to make up for a wet summer but producers have been working overtime to catch up. Square balers have been working hard to harvest second and third cut grass. Corn silage harvest will likely start with some of the early birds later this week. Pastures have been weakening fast with the lack of moisture. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** The past week was probably the best cropping week all season. Bright, sunny days with almost no rain. I saw a lot of dry hay going in the barns. There have been very few chances to make dry hay this season. Some of the larger corn growers have begun chopping corn. The ears seem well developed but the overall quantity is lower than normal. Pastures remain in fair condition but you can notice some dry spots in the pastures now. **Julie Jacque, (FSA), Windham:** Dry, sunny weather this past week made for good haying. Tomato crops finished poorly due to late blight, and blight continues to affect the county. Sweet corn finishing with mixed results due to earlier cool, wet weather. Farmers gearing up for silage corn harvesting in the next few weeks.

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