

# Crop Progress & Condition



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For week ending 9/13/09

## Believe It or Not, Rain is Needed

**GENERAL CONDITIONS:** For the week ending September 13, 2009, there were 6.3 days available for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated 2% very poor, 8% poor, 27% fair, 58% good, and 5% excellent. Partly cloudy skies began the week across New England. High temperatures were below average to average in the mid-60s to low 70s while nighttime lows ranged from the low 40s in the North to the mid-50s in the South. Rain moved through the area during the weekend. Rain began late Thursday night in the southern states and continued through late Saturday night. While coastal areas experienced up to four inches of rain, other areas had only a sprinkle or two. Southern portions of Vermont and New Hampshire saw rain begin Friday night and continue into Sunday morning. The majority of Maine, as well as the northern areas of Vermont and New Hampshire, had little to no rainfall during the weekend. Many producers in these regions stated that fields are getting dry and rain would be welcomed. Skies cleared up on Sunday and temperatures warmed back up to the mid-70s to low 80s. Total rainfall for the week ranged from 0.01 inches in northern Maine to 4.0 inches in coastal regions.

**FRUIT:** The apple harvest continued throughout New England. Early, as well as some mid-season varieties such as McIntosh, Gala, and Honeycrisp, could be found at farmer's markets and stands. The pear harvest was still going strong in many areas while the peach harvest was slowly winding down. Highbush blueberry harvest neared completion at week's end while fall raspberries continued to be picked during the week. Rain over the weekend caused some Massachusetts cranberry beds to flood, but the crop remains in good to excellent condition. Berries are coloring up nicely due to the cool nights and some dry harvesting is anticipated to start this week.

**VEGETABLES:** Sweet corn was still plentiful in many areas, but the season is slowly coming to a close. Other summer vegetables such as cucumbers, zucchini, and tomatoes were still available during the week, however root crops, pumpkins, and winter squash were becoming more common. Powdery mildew continued to show up on pumpkins and squash, causing concern among growers. Vegetable growers were also busy during the week seeding cover crops on harvested fields and irrigating in drier areas.

**FIELD CROPS:** Harvest of all field crops continued during the week. Farmers were still catching up on second and third cut dry hay. Corn silage was being harvested ranging from 1 - 10% complete north to south. Many northern areas reported that corn growth is behind and harvest will not be in full swing for a couple of weeks. The majority of Maine's potato growers were busy applying vine desiccants, but a few farmers were harvesting. Broadleaf and shade tobacco harvests were complete in Massachusetts at week's end while Connecticut's crop harvests neared completion.

### SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
<b>Topsoil</b>			
Very Short	2	1	0
Short	29	27	4
Adequate	62	65	79
Surplus	7	7	17
<b>Subsoil</b>			
Very Short	2	1	0
Short	17	16	3
Adequate	73	75	84
Surplus	8	8	13

### FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Percent Harvested			Fruit Size	Condition
	2009	2008	5-yr Avg		
Apples	25	30	30	Average	Good/Fair
Peaches	90	95	90	Average	Good/Fair
Pears	35	35	35	Average	Good/Fair
Blueberries					
Highbush	99	99	99	Average	Good
Cranberries, MA	-	-	-	Avg/Above	Good/Excellent

### FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	2009	2008	5-yr Avg	Condition
--Percent Harvested--				
Barley, ME	90	85	80	Good/Fair
Oats, ME	90	70	65	Good/Fair
Potatoes				
Maine	10	10	5	Good/Excellent
Mass	50	45	35	Good/Fair
Rhode Island	40	80	70	Fair
Silage Corn	<5	10	15	Fair/Good
Sweet Corn	90	90	85	Good/Fair
Tobacco				
Broadleaf	95	99	95	Fair/Poor
Shade	95	99	99	Good/Fair
Dry Hay				
Second Cut	95	90	90	Good/Fair
Third Cut	60	50	50	Good

For the Period: Monday September 7, 2009  
 To: Sunday September 13, 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	42	79	60	-2	1845	-64	652	-76	0.01	-0.69	1	3.69	+0.80	10
Bangor_Intl_Arp	37	79	59	-2	1753	+10	620	+10	0.01	-0.83	1	2.65	-0.51	6
Bethel	38	77	56	-4	1564	-158	475	-112	0.03	-0.74	1	4.83	+1.40	7
Caribou_Municip	35	77	58	+3	1501	+116	509	+131	0.00	-0.84	0	1.05	-2.46	7
Dover-Foxcroft	36	76	55	-3	1455	-49	455	+5	0.00	-0.91	0	1.34	-2.18	7
Frenchville	38	76	57	+3	1364	+77	433	+110	0.00	-0.90	0	2.26	-1.41	7
Houlton	33	76	56	+0	1475	+28	505	+81	0.00	-0.87	0	1.18	-2.45	7
Livermore_Falls	36	79	57	-1	1605	+129	525	+97	0.00	-0.84	0	2.55	-1.09	7
Moosehead	34	76	54	-2	1213	-36	340	+30	0.00	-0.88	0	1.03	-2.37	8
Portland_ME	43	79	60	-2	1885	+122	696	+69	0.10	-0.60	1	5.01	+2.28	7
<b>NEW HAMPSHIRE</b>														
Benton	41	74	57	-2	1521	-59	475	+3	0.13	-0.64	2	3.39	-0.01	11
Berlin_AG	40	76	56	-2	1495	-95	440	-54	0.00	-0.79	0	3.60	+0.02	6
Concord	38	79	59	-2	1996	+81	763	+37	0.36	-0.31	2	3.67	+0.84	9
Diamond_Pond	38	75	51	-4	883	-184	148	-57	0.00	-0.98	0	1.78	-2.54	8
Keene_AG	39	80	59	-5	2018	-121	806	-82	0.85	+0.14	2	4.76	+1.57	8
North_Conway	39	77	57	-3	1618	-160	499	-128	0.01	-0.80	1	5.03	+1.57	6
Rochester	41	78	58	-5	1995	-55	771	-57	0.45	-0.26	1	3.80	+0.77	7
<b>VERMONT</b>														
Bennington_AP	40	76	60	+2	1951	+275	691	+150	0.16	-0.75	1	3.79	+0.00	8
Burlington_Intl	47	81	62	+2	2145	+103	873	+50	0.00	-0.81	0	0.98	-2.50	8
Island_Pond	40	76	58	+2	1447	+141	443	+121	0.07	-0.76	2	1.13	-2.77	8
Montpelier	43	78	60	+3	1799	+193	635	+133	0.04	-0.66	2	1.57	-1.63	10
Rochester	42	79	59	+1	1623	+36	529	+37	0.10	-0.81	1	2.88	-1.08	9
Rutland_AG	42	77	59	-4	1808	-307	617	-248	0.12	-0.75	2	5.23	+1.56	10
Springfield_VT	43	78	59	+0	1971	+233	728	+143	0.52	-0.32	2	3.11	-0.42	11
Sutton	41	75	57	+2	1341	+22	371	+36	0.10	-0.73	2	1.45	-2.39	8
<b>MASSACHUSETTS</b>														
Boston/Logan_In	54	73	63	-4	2442	-17	1090	-57	2.31	+1.61	2	5.40	+2.40	7
Fitchburg	44	78	61	+2	2400	+663	1055	+464	0.59	-0.11	2	2.99	+0.06	7
Greenfield	43	76	59	-6	2028	-265	775	-227	0.50	-0.33	2	5.58	+2.28	9
New_Bedford	45	76	63	-5	2207	-280	904	-268	1.47	+0.65	2	8.11	+4.47	8
Otis_AFB	45	73	62	-3	2263	+240	942	+119	5.05	+4.28	2	9.55	+6.45	9
Plymouth	45	74	62	-3	2205	+124	904	+38	1.58	+0.60	2	6.18	+2.34	7
Walpole	46	76	61	-3	2123	+24	847	-14	1.62	+0.73	2	4.29	+0.67	6
Chicopee/Westov	41	77	61	-6	2299	-328	969	-299	0.32	-0.52	3	3.43	+0.10	9
Worthington	41	75	57	-4	1710	+2	560	-1	0.64	-0.21	2	5.33	+1.75	7
<b>RHODE ISLAND</b>														
Providence	50	77	64	-2	2436	+90	1084	+21	1.53	+0.69	3	3.32	-0.04	6
Woonsocket	45	76	61	-2	2240	+174	922	+100	1.38	+0.47	3	4.03	+0.39	8
<b>CONNECTICUT</b>														
Bridgeport/Siko	56	78	66	-2	2531	+4	1186	-35	0.77	+0.01	2	1.87	-0.99	6
Hartford/Bradle	48	79	63	-3	2536	+18	1161	-24	0.49	-0.42	3	3.16	-0.37	8
Norfolk	44	73	58	-2	1827	+117	628	+66	0.99	+0.01	2	4.22	+0.12	9
Thomaston_Dam	48	77	62	-2	2254	+208	942	+139	1.06	+0.09	3	5.77	+1.86	8
Willimantic	47	77	64	+1	2467	+380	1102	+265	0.25	-0.66	3	2.08	-1.49	7

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 13, 2009

STATE	AIR TEMPERATURES				PRECIPITATION	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	30	80	57	-2	0.00	0.30
NH	35	80	57	-2	0.00	0.85
VT	37	81	59	+0	0.00	0.86
MA	40	79	61	-3	0.13	5.05
RI	45	77	64	-2	0.00	2.65
CT	42	81	63	-2	0.25	1.11

**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:** Continued harvest of many summer vegetables and fall fruit. Tobacco harvest winding down. Corn silage harvest starting. Pumpkin crop appears light. **Richard Meinert (Ext), Litchfield:** Corn silage harvest has begun. Yields are as bad as expected - a 40 - 50% loss from the few early farms finished with harvest. Pumpkin growers are expecting to have only about a third of their normal pumpkins. Fall season decorations will be scarce this year. **Nancy Welsh (FSA), New Haven:** Nice weather during the week but the weekend brought rain throughout the two-county region. Producers are reporting the end of harvest on some vegetables that had their growing season shortened by disease and wet weather. Fall crops are showing up at farm markets and look very nice, especially mums. Orchard fruits are plentiful and tasty. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Corn chopping going well in central and southern part of the county, scattered showers slicked the ground up a bit for chopping in heavy soils, production ranges from good (about 30 tons) to not so hot (about ten tons/acre), depends on soil types and when the corn went in, waiting for corn to mature in some areas. Pick your own apple picking has started, early varieties ending and mid season varieties starting.

**MAINE – Doreen Conlogue (FSA), Aroostook:** Another great week for field work! Parts of the County received a shower yesterday but not enough. Crops continue to look good; rain would be appreciated by all! **Pam Hickey (Ext), Central Aroostook:** Farmers in the area are applying vine desiccants to their fields. A few farmers are harvesting; more will start to harvest by the middle or end of coming week. Canola harvesting continued; broccoli harvest continued and small grains should be done harvesting by the coming week. **Steve London, Southern Aroostook:** Potatoes and small grains: Some farmers have started to harvest with good quality so far. **Sandy Truslow (FSA), Cumberland/York:** Another week of nice weather. Apples overall are doing very well, with the exception of Cortland. Fire blight has been reported. Pumpkin growers are hoping for a late frost, so the pumpkins will keep growing. Overall crop is very small. Farmers are irrigating now. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** Corn is trying to mature; the stalks are thinner than usual, leaves are a lighter green and the ears shorter than normal. Third cut hay is coming in. The volume of hay harvested has rebounded; some very good quality and some very poor quality (late first cut). Some manure is now being spread on the now dryer fields. We actually could use some rain! **Valerie Porter (FSA), Hancock/Penobscot/Piscataquis:** Harvest is heavily under way on third crop cuttings of hay, corn silage starting to be chopped; apples are being picked and look okay. Farm stands are doing good as well. Pumpkins are starting to be picked and look very good. Potatoes are looking pretty good even though blight has been in the area. Cool nights and warm sunny days are helping with harvest. **Maria Granger (FSA), Kennebec:** The good weather continued last week allowing producers to carry on their field activities. Cold nights have moved into the region and it is feeling more and more like fall everyday. Some producers have said that they need rain. Producers have been out cutting hay and the apple harvest has started. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Lots of hay has been harvested during this period of beautiful fall weather. We experienced another great week making all field activities much easier for local farmers. Fall crops are just starting to be harvested but farmers are anticipating lower than average yields. Most unharvested crops were unable to recover from the extremely wet, cold weather we experienced in June and July. This great weather is too little too late for those with silage corn yet to be harvested, pumpkins, squash, sweet corn, etc. The apple harvest is in its second week and it is too early to tell if yields will be affected from June and July weather. Another week of sunny weather is forecasted with a chance of rain possibly Friday. **Kathy Hopkins (Ext), Somerset:** Another beautiful week. Crops continue to ripen. Apples are being harvested. **Janet King (FSA), Somerset:** Many farmers are finishing up haying and

harvesting sweet corn. In the next couple of weeks, farmers are gearing up to harvest their corn. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Well... now we need some rain! Who would have thought it several weeks ago? Pastures are starting to dry up. Apple harvest is beautiful. Lots of haymaking weather for finishing first, second and third cuttings.

**MASSACHUSETTS - Aimee Thayer (FSA), Berkshire:** Warm sunny weather, only a sprinkle of rain. Some parts of fields are still too wet to take haying equipment into but what could be harvested was. Maturation on fall veggies is behind but summer veggies still showing up at farm stands. Farmers gearing up for corn harvest, no chopping yet. **Lori Carver (FSA), Franklin:** Beautiful week, followed by a couple of rainy days. Hate to say it but the rain was needed. Apple harvest is in full swing as well as other fall crops like pumpkins and winter squash. Time will tell how these crops were affected by the wet summer. Beautiful blooming Mum plants are bringing people into the local farm stands. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: Another good dose of rainfall from Friday and Saturday - two to four inches which came down fast and furious. Some cranberry beds may have flooded briefly as they did two weeks ago. Berries are coloring up nicely with many cool nights, but it has not been cold enough for frost. Some dry harvesting for fresh fruit will start this week, as well as early sequencing for Ocean Spray. The crop looks better and better, with minimal quality issues so far. There will be plenty of water available for harvest this fall.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE - Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll:** Most of the week was dry and cool. Pastures and hayfields would grow better if there was a bit more moisture. Apples, Mums and pumpkins are joining squash, cukes and tomatoes at the farm stand. More early fall color in the low areas. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Another week of mostly bright sunny weather, with some rain Friday and Saturday. Some farms chopping earliest-planted field corn; more to be starting this coming week. More dry hay and baleage harvested. Fall crops - root crops, winter squash - making more of an appearance in farm stands. Apple harvest in full stride. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Colder weather; crop season drawing to a close. Farmers checking field corn in preparation to corn silage harvest. Pumpkins, winter squash, sweet corn readily available. Apples starting to color up; about ready for early variety picking. Late blight calls continue; will until season ends. Swamp maples turning red; hills beginning to show signs of color. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** This has been a much needed break in the wet, rainy weather that we have had most of the summer. Farmers have reported that they have finally gotten onto fields that were too wet to go onto all summer. Reports of poor forage quality on these late cut fields are normal. Field corn is looking better, but many have indicated that they will let the stands with less than ideal ear development go as long as possible before harvesting. Good quality dry hay is reported to be in short supply. A number of producers that have good quality dry hay have indicated their intent to hold onto it for the time being. There are reports of problems with powdery mildew on winter squash and some pumpkins. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Fruit: Apple harvest is in full swing with most growers concentrating on picking McIntosh, Gala and Honeycrisp apples. Fruit size is good. Fall raspberries and pear harvest continued with peach and plum harvest winding down. Vegetables: Harvesting a wide array of summer and fall vegetable crops. Farmers are starting to clean up harvested fields and planting cover crops. Pumpkin crop and winter squash yields vary from field to field. Field Crops: Farmers getting ready to start chopping corn silage. Hay cutting continued between rain showers with the second and third cuttings being made. **Amy Ouellette (Ext), Merrimack:** The apple harvest is well underway. Late peaches are available for PYO or at farm stands and markets. Still harvesting tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, sweet corn and more. Fall mums, pumpkins and corn stalks are decorating farm stands. Farmers are pulling out some vegetable crops and seeding cover

crops. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** Apple picking going very well. Peaches, pears and plums being harvested and whole array of vegetables. Week-days were good for haying. Farms getting ready for chopping corn. Irrigating vegetables fields, newly planted small fruits and tree fruits. Rain was welcome on Saturday as many fields were drying up. Farm stands, farmers market and PYO seeing a steady flow of customers.

**VERMONT – Jeff Carter, (Ext), Addison:** Continued nice weather, corn crop maturing, some stalk dry-down, firing lower leaves. Hay harvest continuing, good grass regrowth. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Another dry warm week. More haying, a bit more corn chopping, and quite a bit of spreading manure. Light showers on Friday provided all the moisture that we had. It is getting dry. **Paul Stanley (CCA), Franklin:** Who would have dreamed, we would be asking for some rain with just one week of no rain here in Franklin County? Good thing the dry weather has come when it did so the effects have less impact on crop growth. Corn is

maturing well and still will be a couple of weeks before harvest really gets going. Some will start that are low on corn from the prior year. We hope that producers will let it "cook" before feed out. Sweet corn is really coming to a close and the season has been good to okay with the wet weather and ear worm problems. The apple season will be kicking into high gear soon with the orchard festivals and you pick operations under way. Another great week for hay harvest with much third cut off. Now will be waiting for corn to mature. **Heather Darby, (Ext), Grand Isle:** It has been great weather and perfect for making dry hay. Many farmers are putting up first, second, third, and fourth cuts of hay. Folks are starting to chop corn silage. **John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille:** Another great week for fieldwork. Seemed liked haying was going on wherever one looked. Some manure being spread on freshly harvested fields. Farm stands were busy pedaling sweet corn that finally matured after a trying summer. Corn silage harvest is starting somewhat later than average for early plantings.

August 2009 CROP WEATHER SUMMARY: The beginning of the first week of August saw moderate precipitation across New England, while the rest of the week enjoyed drier conditions. Daylight average temperatures ranged from the mid-70s to low 80s. Temperatures during the following week were variable for all states. Rain returned on August 10 and 11; areas in Vermont and northern New Hampshire received over an inch of precipitation. No significant rain was reported until the end of the third week, with the exception of coastal Massachusetts. Due to a warm front passing through the region on August 15, both daytime and nighttime temperatures were well above average that week. Some areas reported maximum temperatures in the mid-90s and heat indexes beyond 100 degrees. Precipitation was widespread throughout New England from August 21 to 23 as a result of a cold front and Hurricane Bill's rain bands. The previously mentioned cold front ended the heat wave. August ended with the effects of Tropical Storm Danny. Daytime temperatures were below average during that period, ranging from the mid-50s to mid-70s. Heavy rain was reported, particularly in coastal areas. Some areas in Massachusetts reported over three inches of rainfall with localized flooding. Average temperatures for the month of August ranged in the mid-70s to low 80s for daylight hours and low 50s to mid-60s for nighttime hours. Total precipitation was below average, ranging from 1.01 to 4.13 inches. Despite the drier weather, late blight was widespread, particularly in tomatoes and potatoes. The picking of pears began the second week of August and was 15% complete by month's end. Apples, peaches and pears were reported in good to fair condition. The blueberry harvest picked up pace thanks to the better weather conditions and was 90% complete at the end of August, on schedule with last year and normal. Conditions were favorable for the development of cranberries, with Tropical Storm Danny keeping water supplies replenished. Pests continued to be a problem for vegetable growers. Harvest of sweet corn was 70% complete at month's end, behind last year and normal. Due to the sunnier conditions, harvest of field crops picked up pace. The field corn harvest commenced in some drier areas at the end of the month. Broadleaf growers in Connecticut and Massachusetts experienced severe losses from a July hailstorm and widespread disease and viruses; many growers were forced to harrow under their entire crop. Harvest of shade and broadleaf tobacco was active throughout August and was 75% complete by month's end on acreage not harrowed under. The cutting of hay was given a boost by the dry weather. The harvest percentages for first, second, and third cuts were 99%, 75%, and 15%, respectively, all ahead of last year and normal.

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