

Crop Progress & Condition



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For week ending 9/5/10

Earl Brought Some Drought Relief

GENERAL CONDITIONS: For the week ending September 5, 2010, there were 6.3 days available for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated 2% very poor, 26% poor, 44% fair, 25% good, and 3% excellent. The week began with above normal temperatures across the region with daytime highs ranging from the 80s to the mid-90s. Many areas reported record high or near record high temperatures during the week. Above normal temperatures continued until Hurricane Earl brushed coastal areas on Friday night bringing varying amounts of precipitation to parts of New England. Friday's precipitation totals ranged from zero to over an inch and a half. Week ending temperatures cooled to average or below average levels with daytime temperatures dipping into the mid-60s to low 80s on Sunday. Average nighttime temperatures during the week ranged from the mid-50s to high 60s.

FRUIT: Apple harvesting was in full swing across the region last week. Some producers reported low yields due to the May frosts, however, yields were reportedly better than expected and quality was good. Harvest of late peaches and fall raspberries was also active during the week. Cranberries continued to mature in Massachusetts with decent color and minimal fruit rot while growers prepared for the upcoming harvest.

VEGETABLES: The sweet corn harvest was coming to a close in many areas, except in late planted fields, while an array of other vegetables were being harvested last week, including beans, beets, broccoli, cabbage, cucumbers, greens, onions, pumpkins, radishes, squash, tomatoes, and zucchini. Some vegetable crop losses were reported due to the hot, dry conditions. However, an abundance of produce was reportedly available at many farm stands and markets across New England. Producers were also busy spraying late planted vegetables and monitoring for insect and diseases.

FIELD CROPS: Field corn continued to mature and dry down early due to the dry weather. Some farmers have begun chopping corn silage while many others are expected to begin harvesting in a week or two. The tobacco harvest has come to an end in Massachusetts with only minimal losses to blue mold. Farmers also continued to harvest early white potatoes in Maine with good yields reported. However, rain was reportedly needed in some areas to finish the later planted potatoes. Hay harvesting continued across New England last week. The dry conditions were beneficial for harvest activities but the lack of moisture has adversely affected hay yields in some locations.

SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
Topsoil			
Very Short	16	17	1
Short	46	29	8
Adequate	38	53	72
Surplus	0	1	19
Subsoil			
Very Short	17	26	1
Short	42	24	7
Adequate	41	49	76
Surplus	0	1	16

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Percent Harvested			Fruit Size	Condition
	2010	2009	5 -yr Avg		
Apples	25	15	20	Average	Good/Fair
Peaches	90	80	80		
Pears	35	20	20	Average	Good/Fair
Blueberries					
Highbush	99	95	95		
Wild	100	99	99		
Cranberries, MA	-	-	-	Average	Good

FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	2010	2009	5-yr Avg	Condition
-- Percent Harvested --				
Barley, ME	80	60	60	
Oats, ME	75	65	50	
Potatoes				
Maine	20	<5	<5	Good
Mass	30	40	30	Good/Fair
Rhode Island	20	35	50	Good
Silage Corn	10	<5	<5	Good
Sweet Corn	90	80	80	
Tobacco				
Broadleaf	95	90	85	
Shade	95	90	90	
Dry Hay				
First Cut	100	100	99	
Second Cut	95	90	85	
Third Cut	60	45	40	Fair/Good

Weather Summary for New England Agricultural Statistics

For the Period: Monday August 30, 2010
 To: Sunday September 5, 2010

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 INCHES	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL INCHES		DFN	DAYS
					TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN				INCHES	DFN		
MAINE															
Augusta_State_A	52	94	79	+16	2291	+471	1046	+340	2.06	+1.35	1	3.42	+0.45	8	
Bangor_Intl_Arp	55	97	78	+16	2235	+573	1020	+428	3.46	+2.69	3	4.74	+1.66	11	
Bethel	54	91	74	+13	1967	+321	798	+227	0.95	+0.10	1	3.77	+0.19	10	
Caribou_Municip	54	93	75	+18	1873	+535	776	+404	1.53	+0.67	3	2.66	-0.93	7	
Dover-Foxcroft	50	93	74	+15	1809	+366	713	+272	3.45	+2.54	2	5.03	+1.59	10	
Frenchville	51	91	73	+16	1661	+418	639	+321	3.09	+2.18	2	4.40	+0.68	9	
Houlton	51	93	75	+17	1774	+376	716	+299	1.43	+0.52	2	2.46	-1.23	9	
Livermore_Falls	46	93	73	+14	1943	+524	804	+384	3.22	+2.31	1	5.37	+1.64	10	
Moosehead	51	90	72	+14	1515	+314	513	+209	2.28	+1.44	3	3.98	+0.62	11	
Portland_ME	56	94	77	+14	2260	+584	1029	+421	1.13	+0.43	1	4.02	+1.37	7	
NEW HAMPSHIRE															
BenTon	52	87	71	+12	1779	+263	692	+231	0.32	-0.51	1	4.99	+1.43	11	
Berlin_AG	54	88	72	+12	1801	+274	688	+204	0.78	-0.09	1	3.17	-0.63	11	
Concord	55	96	76	+13	2467	+638	1218	+512	0.10	-0.60	1	2.41	-0.53	8	
Diamond_Pond	50	87	69	+14	968	-62	224	+22	0.76	-0.30	3	3.52	-1.03	13	
Keene_AG	50	97	75	+11	2281	+242	1053	+193	0.00	-0.77	0	1.00	-2.41	7	
North_Conway	55	92	74	+13	2054	+349	859	+246	0.54	-0.30	1	3.00	-0.57	9	
Rochester	53	97	78	+14	2557	+604	1296	+495	0.15	-0.62	1	3.48	+0.31	7	
VERMONT															
Bennington_AP	50	91	73	+12	2249	+647	1029	+503	0.01	-0.92	1	1.27	-2.60	10	
Burlington_Intl	57	92	77	+14	2469	+514	1221	+419	0.01	-0.85	1	2.40	-1.22	8	
Island_Pond	50	87	71	+13	1710	+456	647	+333	0.11	-0.83	2	2.78	-1.44	13	
Montpelier	53	89	72	+13	2006	+466	857	+368	0.00	-0.78	0	1.89	-1.54	10	
Rochester	53	90	72	+11	1903	+387	775	+298	0.00	-0.98	0	3.76	-0.36	9	
Rutland_AG	52	90	73	+9	2143	+125	947	+110	0.00	-0.91	0	3.92	+0.13	8	
Springfield_VT	53	94	75	+14	2345	+681	1107	+537	0.00	-0.88	0	1.12	-2.49	9	
Sutton	50	88	72	+15	1693	+424	628	+301	0.06	-0.88	2	2.07	-2.09	13	
MASSACHUSETTS															
Boston/Logan_In	59	96	81	+13	2963	+638	1601	+506	0.36	-0.40	1	5.12	+2.13	7	
Fitchburg	55	97	79	+17	2889	+1227	1542	+965	0.07	-0.63	1	2.66	-0.39	10	
Greenfield	50	93	74	+8	2386	+206	1144	+178	0.00	-0.82	0	1.56	-1.75	8	
New_Bedford	57	95	78	+9	2707	+361	1398	+284	1.12	+0.23	1	3.72	-0.09	8	
Otis_AFB	59	91	76	+10	2376	+465	1125	+336	1.86	+1.09	1	5.38	+2.28	8	
Plymouth	59	96	79	+14	2869	+898	1548	+714	1.63	+0.65	1	5.48	+1.73	8	
Walpole	55	95	76	+12	2755	+757	1441	+608	1.00	+0.09	1	5.30	+1.68	9	
Chicopee/Westov	50	95	76	+7	2735	+241	1425	+209	0.00	-0.84	0	3.51	+0.26	6	
Worthington	44	90	72	+11	2095	+467	890	+347	0.06	-0.85	2	3.13	-0.56	9	
RHODE ISLAND															
Providence	56	95	78	+11	2974	+756	1588	+571	0.99	+0.15	1	3.42	+0.07	7	
Woonsocket	54	94	77	+13	2743	+777	1413	+618	0.71	-0.20	1	4.35	+0.71	8	
CONNECTICUT															
Bridgeport/Siko	59	94	79	+10	3003	+619	1647	+487	0.00	-0.70	0	2.43	-0.43	6	
Hartford/Bradle	55	97	79	+12	3042	+646	1651	+508	0.00	-0.91	0	1.88	-1.54	6	
Norfolk	50	89	72	+11	2239	+607	1001	+454	0.00	-1.03	0	2.95	-1.21	9	
Thomaston_Dam	53	93	76	+11	2668	+724	1362	+588	0.00	-0.98	0	5.36	+1.45	10	
Willimantic	54	94	75	+11	2729	+747	1403	+597	0.11	-0.80	1	2.97	-0.60	10	

State Weather Summary

For the Week Ending Sunday, September 5, 2010

Summary based on NWS data.

DFN = Departure from Normal (Using 1971-2000 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	AIR TEMPERATURES				PRECIPITATION	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	46	97	75	+15	0.47	3.46
NH	32	97	74	+13	0.00	2.71
VT	40	96	72	+12	0.00	0.42
MA	44	97	76	+11	0.00	4.47
RI	54	95	77	+11	0.71	1.19
CT	50	97	77	+11	0.00	1.57

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: The only affects from hurricane Earl were the high winds on Saturday following the non-event. Summer vegetables and now fall crops being harvested and showing up on farm stands. Corn silage continues to be harvested while some are continuing to put up dry hay. Still very dry and rain is still needed. Seeding cover drops. **Richard Meinert (Ext), Litchfield:** Someone always has to be first - one farm started harvesting corn silage this week. The rest seem to be ready to start after Labor Day Weekend. Driving around the area it appears that Japanese Knotweed was barely affected by the frost damage early in the year. The hot, dry weather seems to agree with the knotweed - some of which is approaching 10 feet tall. **Nancy Welsh (FSA), New Haven:** This was another unusually hot week of weather. So far this season we have recorded 34 days with temperatures above 90 degrees. Our normal is about 19 days. These high temperatures have taken a toll on all our vegetable crops. Loss adjusters are finding heavy losses on many crops such as tomatoes, peppers, cukes and summer squash. High temperatures combined with a lack of precipitation spell an early end to the growing season. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Earl veered out to sea and only dropped 1/2 inch of rain. Still very dry, apples are good, finishing early Cortlands and Honeycrisp. Sweet corn is almost done; blocks planted for October picking have matured early with the 90 degree days and will be done soon. Sweet corn has also had major moth pressures. Picking grapes about two weeks early, they are sweet and do well in this hot, dry weather. Not much hay to harvest but baling continues. Chopping corn continues, some corn is ready to combine; very unusual for early September. The 150th Woodstock Fair had a bit of rain Friday, but great weather the rest of the weekend. The dairy cow birthing pen was popular.

MAINE – Casey Cote (St John Valley Soil & Water Conservation Dist), Northern Aroostook: Farmers are continuing to harvest grains and early white potatoes. The region received over 2 inches of much needed rain over the weekend. **Larry James (FSA), Central Aroostook:** Rain in the amount of 1.5 to 2.5 inches brought relief to many russet growers, although some vines had died back to the point of no return. Shepody harvest has been a bit light on yields. Early round whites have been excellent so far. Most grain has been cut. A few oats and canola left. Pastures and hayfields are greening back up. **Pam Hickey (Ext), Central Aroostook:** Shower activity over the weekend varied by location. Farmers still vine killing fields. Hay harvest continued. Broccoli harvest continued. Grains continued to be harvested. **Steve London, Southern Aroostook:** Potatoes and small grains: Some aphids are still showing up in potato fields, farmers are scouting carefully. Some farmers have started vine desiccation. **Sandy Truslow (FSA), Cumberland/York:** Hurricane Earl helped the drought in some areas with over 1" of rain, others were not so lucky, less than 1/2". Vegetable production is winding down. The sweet corn is almost all picked. Late planted vegetables are being sprayed for powdery mildew. Pumpkins are early. Many farmers cut silage corn before Hurricane Earl arrived. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** Surface moisture and crop conditions have improved with the recent rainfall. Groundwater is still low and needs to be replenished. **Valerie Porter (FSA), Hancock/Penobscot/Piscataquis:** Most farmers are waiting for more rain. Soils are still very poor. Heavy rain on Friday night and Saturday morning gave very little relief. Ground still needs moisture. We received anywhere between 2-3 inches, but still need more for late harvest crops. Third cutting of hay most likely won't happen due to lack of moisture. Late harvested crops are starting to be harvested. Apples and potatoes are being harvested and are better than expected due to frost in May. Potatoes need more rain to size up. Pumpkins are being harvested as well due to early ripening. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Reports of precipitation from H. Earl varied significantly in Knox and Lincoln Counties. Some places in Knox County received over 4 inches of rain while areas in Lincoln County received 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 inches of rain. We also

experienced unusually high temperatures for most of last week. We continued to see farmers harvesting dry hay last week. The harvest of winter squash and pumpkins is now in full swing. Silage corn harvest is anticipated to start in a week or so. The harvest of numerous varieties of apples is underway with the yield now anticipated to be off by 25 to 30 percent. This is much better than reports from earlier this season. All continues to go well here in Mid-Coast Maine and we are very thankful that the brunt of H. Earl missed us! **Donna Coffin (Ext), Piscataquis/Penobscot:** Some corn farmers have found corn is very mature and needs to be harvested to get good moisture level for silage. Some vegetable growers were running very low on water for irrigation. Weekend rains were a great help in replenishing ponds and soil moisture. **Kathy Hopkins (Ext), Somerset:** About 2 inches of rain from Earl has helped with the drought conditions. More rain will continue to help with vegetables as they continue maturing. **Elaine S Moceus (FSA), Somerset:** For the past three months, the actual rain fall has been less than the average, causing drought conditions in areas of this county. Several producers have called saying their livestock water supply is extremely low and they feel the need or have already had to drill wells; another producer reported their irrigation supply has dried up. The ground water situation is critical. Although Hurricane Earl dropped 2.25 inches of rain over the weekend in the south eastern portion of this county, there is no indication at this point that the rainfall was sufficient to replenish the groundwater. Apple harvest has begun, and some corn is being chopped. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Earl brought us some much needed rain, but it may have been too late for some corn fields. Dairy farmers have started harvesting some of the drought stressed corn. Pastures responded and are starting to look green again.

MASSACHUSETTS – Aimee Thayer (FSA), Berkshire: Weather got increasingly hot and humid until Friday night when a cold front moved in from the west. A trace of rain fell in some places in the county, but no real effect from the passing hurricane. The weekend was breezy, cool and in the 40s at night. More hay is being cut and cured; fall crops and apples are early. Sweet corn is through except for a couple of growers who gambled on a long summer. Farmers will start cutting field corn in the coming week. **Lori Carver (FSA), Franklin:** Earl missed Franklin County-no rain, just wind and cooler temps. Apple harvest is getting into full swing. Third cut of hay finishing up - silage corn harvest should begin early this year. **Ted Smiarowski Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** This past week resulted in another heat wave! It was hot and humid weather with no rain in sight. Growers are irrigating their fall crops. Fall crops such as mums, Indian corn, winter squash, cabbage, pumpkins, apples, fall raspberries, and onions are being harvested. Corn silage is drying down very fast due to the dry weather and many farmers have started their harvest. Vegetable growers are scouting for downy mildew in their vine crops and caterpillars in the fall brassicas crops. The tobacco harvest has come to an end and only a few growers have lost their crop to blue mold. Many growers report their tobacco crop is curing down very good in their barns. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: After a lot of hype, Earl wasn't even much of a nor'easter. The area received between 2 and 5 inches of rain, but not enough wind to cause any damage, and activities were limited to getting ready for a much more significant storm as it approached. Growers are essentially getting ready for harvest, and the first harvesting will occur this week. Berries are developing decent color. The two hot days last week were very stressful, and berries scalded in several beds as a result. Fruit rot is minimal for the most part.

NEW HAMPSHIRE – William Lord (Ext), Belknap: While a soaking rain a couple of weeks ago helped, moisture levels are still short with farm ponds and hay fields showing the effects most. Apple harvest is well underway with overall fruit quality good. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** What hurricane? Very hot weather most

of the week, with only a quick sprinkle Friday night before a cooler weekend. It is very dry out there. Corn chopping has begun - a number of fields showing moisture stress, some of it pretty serious. Some farms finishing up 3rd or 4th cutting alfalfa; other farms continuing hay harvesting, but yields are down. Vegetable crops continue to do well as long as they're irrigated. Late PYO berries and apples continuing. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Generally dry weather despite hurricane off coast. Lots of second crop hay being mowed, raked, and baled. Dried quickly in the hot weather earlier in the week. Field corn moving to maturity, milk stage to about half dent depending on planting time. Many large ear sweet corn, pumpkins, and other summer veggies at market. Crows and blackbirds hitting the outside rows of cornfields. Late summer grasses setting seed. Good weather for most of the Lancaster Fair. Starting to see some color on the hillsides. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** Excellent haying weather for the week! The corn crop looks good. The 2 inches of rain received late in August has given everything a needed boost. **Heather Bryant (Ext), Grafton:** Late blight was confirmed in one home garden in Grafton County, NH on September 1st. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Soil conditions are still very dry and very little rain was received with Hurricane Earl. 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 clean up harvested fields and planting cover crops. Mildew has killed many pumpkins and winter squash vines, so farmers are starting to cut and pickup fruit. Fruit: Orchardists harvesting Marshall McIntosh, Ginger Gold, Gala and Honeycrisp apples, peaches, plum/prunes and fall raspberries. Apple drop has orchards concerned. Field Crops: Farmers continued cutting hay during the week with the second and third cuttings being made. Getting ready for chopping corn silage. **Amy Ouellette (Ext), Merrimack:** Harvesting apples and late peaches. Late Blight arrived on tomatoes. Downey mildew arrived on many cucurbit crops. Many vegetables petered out early due to heat and lack of water. We are still in need of rain. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** Harvesting apples, a whole array of vegetables, fall raspberries, late blueberry varieties, and cut flowers. Haying. Monitoring for pests. Hurricane Earl brought some gusty winds with localized rain. Nights are getting cooler. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** Much needed rain showers towards the end of the week. Hay producers continued to cut and bale hay and haylage. Some of the silage corn was showing moisture stress and signs of wilting before the rains at the end of the week. Last week of harvesting peaches. Apple harvesting was going strong and growers were also mowing orchard floors. Some growers were harvesting fall raspberries. Vegetable growers were harvesting an array of vegetable crops. Growers also continued to monitor for insect pests

and diseases and were applying pesticides as needed. Farm stands and farmers markets had an abundance of produce. Garden centers were also offering fall mums for sale. Because of high temperatures in the last few weeks there is some delay in the flowering of mums and very few are showing full color.

RHODE ISLAND – Paul Brule (FSA), All Counties: RI missed the hurricane, but we received in the vicinity of an inch and a quarter to two inches of rain. Before the hurricane there was a lot of picking of vegetables. The plants were heavy with peppers for example and they were afraid the plants would break with any heavy rain or winds. There is an abundance of small crops available right now. All the early potatoes have been dug. They are starting to get into the winter potatoes now. Livestock is still being supplementally fed as pastures are still short.

VERMONT – Jeff Carter (Ext), Addison: Continued nice weather for dry hay harvest. Third cut dry nearly complete. Fourth cut haylage harvest continues. Some farmers report a fifth cut possible this year. The soybeans have filled out pods nicely and fields look very uniform after a less than ideal start. Corn silage harvest started with field edges opened up. Some small piles made for feeding in a few weeks. Major harvest not yet started. Still new seedings of hay being planted, tillage on harvested grain fields to fit up for winter wheat or spring hay planting. Manure spreading continues on hay fields. **Paul Stanley (CCA), Franklin:** Getting on the dry side for Franklin County this week. Long spell of dry, hot weather is catching up with the moisture needs. Good weather for hay harvest. It's hard to tell what cuts we are on. It's a matter of pick the fields and go. Growth has been great and lots of fourth cut will be yielding enough for another cut. Corn is still doing super and we are close enough to maturity that moisture needs are very low and will not be affected by the dry weather. Gardens are drying up and most are at the end of growing so moisture needs are low here also. Apples are ripening very well with the sunshine and hot weather. This dry spell has happened at a prime time, however, if this continues we will be short on water for wells going into the fall and winter. Still a while to go here and we will see what happens. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** It was a very hot and humid week. Temperatures got into the 90's for several days. There was also plenty of sun during the week. This made for great drying weather and a lot of dry hay was harvested. Soil moisture levels are getting a bit low, however, as you could see a lot of dust turned up as farmers were working their fields. The corn is mature enough to begin harvesting and I'm sure this will begin soon. The moisture level in the corn is still fairly high so some landowners may wait a bit for it to dry down. Pastures have dried up from the hot weather but most farmers are fall feeding hayfields.

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