

Crop Weather



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United States Department of Agriculture

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For week ending 8/3/08

Farmers Grow Tired of Prolonged Rain

GENERAL CONDITIONS: For the week ending August 4, 2008, there were 3.8 days available for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated 8% poor, 19% fair, 69% good and 4% excellent. New England experienced partly cloudy skies at the start of the week. High temperatures were average and in the upper-70s to mid-80s with average to above average lows in the 60s. Far northern areas of Maine experienced thunderstorms Tuesday night while the rest of the region remained dry. Light rain and scattered thunderstorms arrived Wednesday and Thursday with most of the rain falling in the northern states. Rainfall totals ranged from 0.30 to 1.43 inches. Mid-week temperatures were average to above average with highs in the mid-70s to mid-80s and lows in the low-60s to low-70s. The weather cleared up in the southern states on Friday while the extreme north picked up an additional 0.25 to 1.06 inches of rain. Saturday brought scattered thunderstorms to the region where rainfall totals ranged from 0.16 to 1.20 inches. The south experienced partly cloudy skies and average temperatures on Sunday, while 0.06 to 1.60 inches of rain fell in the north on Sunday and high temperatures were below average in the 70s.

FRUIT: Peaches were 20 percent harvested at week's end, on par with last year and ahead of normal. Some areas reported apple drop due to the extra moisture. Pick-your-own blueberry and raspberry operations report good to excellent crops and the harvest is going strong. Highbush blueberries were 45 percent picked by Sunday, on par with last year and normal. The cranberry crop was reported as having an average fruit set and berry size. Fruit rot and fruit worm injury were starting to show but vines look healthy and beds planted in the spring look good. The wild (lowbush) blueberry harvest is underway. Cooler temperatures and adequate rainfall are improving yields and quality. Many fruit growers were busy this past week applying fungicides as the damp weather is starting to cause fungus problems in crops.

VEGETABLES: The sweet corn harvest was 30 percent picked at week's end and rated in good/excellent condition. Vegetables on damp soils are starting to show mold damage. Fungicides are being applied where needed. Crop damage such as rotting in onions and carrots are becoming evident in some of the wetter areas. The vegetable harvests are doing well in areas where there is no standing water. Growers continued to harvest cucumbers, summer squash, beans, tomatoes, beets, broccoli, cabbage, greens, lettuce, radishes, and eggplant. Potatoes are just beginning to be harvested in the southern states.

FIELD CROPS: Excessive rain has caused low lying areas in fields to collect standing water. Tobacco growers were busy harvesting shade tobacco and the broadleaf harvest began by week's end. Damage to broadleaf tobacco due to the high winds, hail, and heavy rains is becoming evident and some acreage is slated to be destroyed. Farmers are still finding it nearly impossible to harvest dry hay with both the first and second cuts making minimal progress this past week. Some early Maine potatoes were seen at roadside stands during the week. Field corn looks good although it could use some warm dry days. The crop is tasseling out across the region with ears beginning to develop.

SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
Percent			
Topsoil Moisture			
Very Short	1	1	2
Short	2	2	35
Adequate	60	75	60
Surplus	37	22	3
Subsoil Moisture			
Very Short	1	1	2
Short	2	1	24
Adequate	70	84	71
Surplus	27	14	3

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Percent Harvested			Fruit Set	Fruit Size	Condition
	2008	2007	5-yr Avg			
Apples	-	-	-	Average	Average	Good
Peaches	20	20	15	Average	Average	Good
Pears	-	-	-	Avg/Below	Average	Good
Blueberries						
Highbush	45	45	45	Avg/Above	Avg/Above	Good/Excellent
Wild, ME	10	<5	5	Avg/Above	Avg/Above	Good
Cranberries, MA	-	-	-	Average	Average	Good

FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Percent Harvested			Condition
	2008	2007	5-yr Avg	
Barley, ME	-	-	-	Good
Oats, ME	-	-	-	Good
Potatoes				
Maine	-	-	-	Good/Fair
Mass	-	-	-	Good/Fair
Rhode Island	-	-	-	Good/Excellent
Silage Corn	-	-	-	Good
Sweet Corn	30	30	20	Good/Excellent
Tobacco				
Broadleaf	10	15	10	Good
Shade	35	30	25	Good/Excellent
Dry Hay				
First Cut	90	95	95	Poor
Second Cut	45	55	45	Good/Fair
Third Cut	-	5	<5	Good

Weather Summary For New England Agricultural Statistics

Prepared By AWIS, Inc.

For the Period: Monday July 28, 2008
 To: Sunday August 3, 2008

STATION	AIR TEMPERATURE				CUM SINCE MAR 1 GROWING DEGREE DAYS				1-WEEK PRECIP			4-WEEK CUM PRECIP		
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN	TOTAL INCHES	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL INCHES	DFN	DAYS
MAINE														
Augusta_State_A	61	81	70	+1	1410	+127	587	+106	1.43	+0.69	3	5.49	+2.61	12
Bangor_Intl_Arp	59	81	70	+2	1335	+173	542	+143	0.86	+0.16	6	3.45	+0.50	13
Bethel	59	81	69	+1	1168	+0	427	+31	1.93	+1.07	3	7.92	+4.68	13
Caribou_Municip	56	79	68	+3	1028	+67	360	+92	3.50	+2.52	6	6.87	+3.12	17
Dover-Foxcroft	56	81	68	+2	1107	+95	403	+100	1.50	+0.73	6	4.42	+1.24	14
Frenchville	57	78	66	+2	909	+19	292	+63	4.20	+3.29	6	6.24	+2.72	19
Houlton	52	80	68	+2	1011	+14	359	+64	3.31	+2.40	6	6.09	+2.61	19
Livermore_Falls	55	82	70	+4	1231	+227	477	+186	2.16	+1.33	3	6.75	+3.61	10
Moosehead	52	81	68	+4	885	+47	285	+77	0.82	-0.07	5	4.03	+0.41	14
Portland_ME	59	85	71	+3	1357	+205	556	+159	1.68	+1.05	3	5.78	+3.09	10
NEW HAMPSHIRE														
Benton	54	79	67	+1	1138	+44	382	+57	2.56	+1.69	4	9.41	+6.20	13
Berlin_AG	56	78	67	+2	1170	+70	403	+59	1.87	+0.93	4	7.16	+3.69	13
Concord	56	86	71	+3	1506	+196	666	+171	1.39	+0.62	4	6.57	+3.61	15
Diamond_Pond	53	78	65	+3	827	+95	212	+79	3.38	+2.27	6	9.92	+5.69	18
Keene_AP	57	84	70	+3	1441	+244	623	+215	0.52	-0.38	4	6.41	+3.09	15
North_Conway	56	82	69	+0	1250	+25	451	+15	2.73	+1.83	5	8.92	+5.50	15
Rochester	59	85	72	+2	1519	+127	677	+123	3.06	+2.24	3	9.44	+6.27	14
VERMONT														
Burlington_Intl	58	84	71	+2	1567	+151	682	+109	1.83	+0.94	4	8.39	+5.03	15
Island_Pond	54	78	67	+4	1066	+172	362	+141	2.51	+1.44	6	10.28	+6.34	18
Montpelier	55	81	69	+2	1280	+169	481	+129	3.00	+2.20	6	9.38	+6.48	17
Pownal	57	83	70	+3	1451	+307	610	+242	1.37	+0.46	6	7.33	+3.69	18
Rochester	55	81	68	+2	1168	+89	417	+84	1.01	+0.03	3	8.29	+4.71	14
Rutland_AG	54	81	68	-3	1277	-185	483	-110	1.74	+0.83	2	6.17	+2.62	9
Springfield_VT	56	85	70	+3	1431	+233	595	+191	0.49	-0.36	3	3.99	+0.72	17
Sutton	55	78	67	+3	1066	+156	354	+118	3.32	+2.27	6	9.66	+5.76	17
MASSACHUSETTS														
Boston/Logan_In	63	86	74	+1	1809	+159	918	+177	0.70	+0.00	3	5.39	+2.80	12
Fitchburg	61	87	74	+6	1737	+551	837	+430	0.73	-0.08	4	4.78	+1.46	12
Greenfield	51	84	69	-4	1497	-74	616	-60	2.09	+1.25	4	5.98	+2.62	14
New_Bedford	60	87	74	-2	1604	-34	791	+61	1.83	+1.00	3	4.94	+2.05	7
Otis_AFB	63	84	74	+3	1467	+156	699	+189	0.89	+0.19	4	4.01	+1.39	11
Plymouth	61	86	74	+3	1624	+251	810	+252	1.31	+0.50	3	4.88	+1.76	8
Walpole	62	86	74	+3	1688	+266	827	+251	0.93	+0.11	4	4.84	+1.71	11
Chicopee/Westov	55	86	72	-4	1659	-141	770	-74	2.34	+1.57	5	11.20	+8.01	14
Worthington	54	84	68	+1	1271	+116	478	+104	1.34	+0.36	3	6.94	+3.02	13
RHODE ISLAND														
Providence	63	87	76	+3	1933	+372	997	+315	0.97	+0.20	3	5.16	+2.25	7
Woonsocket	61	86	74	+4	1677	+277	805	+257	0.68	-0.23	3	5.71	+2.14	11
CONNECTICUT														
Bridgeport/Siko	64	90	76	+2	1955	+283	1016	+246	1.38	+0.57	3	4.38	+0.99	9
Hartford/Bradle	60	88	75	+2	1910	+173	963	+158	1.95	+1.19	3	6.90	+4.04	11
Norfolk	57	83	69	+2	1381	+220	572	+191	1.41	+0.43	4	5.26	+1.47	12
Thomaston_Dam	60	86	73	+3	1661	+275	773	+240	1.50	+0.56	3	4.63	+0.86	11
Willimantic	60	85	73	+3	1751	+340	832	+278	1.32	+0.41	4	4.35	+0.60	10

State Weather Summary

For the Week Ending Sunday, August 3, 2008

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	AIR TEMPERATURES				PRECIPITATION	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	52	85	69	+2	0.52	4.33
NH	44	88	69	+2	0.38	5.58
VT	54	85	69	+1	0.30	3.32
MA	51	88	72	+2	0.43	2.44
RI	61	87	75	+3	0.68	1.95
CT	55	90	73	+1	0.59	1.95

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: Damage on broadleaf tobacco became more evident this past week with some acreage slated to be destroyed. Others started to harvest their broadleaf. Shade tobacco harvest continues. Some vegetables on damp soils starting to show mold damage from the very wet conditions of the fourth wettest July on record. Vegetables in most other cases are doing well and in good supply. With showers in the forecast for nearly every other day making dry hay is nearly impossible. **Marsha Jette (FSA), New London:** Silage corn is looking good. Hay is still a challenge to keep dry with showers. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Excellent blueberry picking. Birds are going after the sweet corn, farmers using gun shot and distress calls to keep them out of blueberries and sweet corn. The average temperature in July was 75.5, 1.8 degrees above normal, it was also the fourth wettest with 7.88", 2.1" above normal according to Channel 3 News. It was hot and dry and passing showers dropped a lot of water. Now August is starting with 85 degree sunny weather and a quick shower on Saturday. The field corn looks excellent in many areas with 11 feet height, tasseled out, and ears developing. Vegetables are doing well, good production on squash, cucumbers, beets, etc. Hail damage in apples and pears is being monitored from July 2nd storm. Harvesting dry hay a challenge with passing storms. Price of hay is expected to be higher. Farmers getting equipment ready to start chopping corn in two to three weeks. **Nancy Welsh (FSA), New Haven:** Weather improved greatly since last week's rains. Hot and humid weather took over. Sweet corn harvest is continuing and the corn is very sweet and delicious. Making dry hay was still a challenge due to the high humidity levels. Field corn for silage looks very good. **Richard Meinert (Ext), CT Cooperative:** Field corn is tasseling. Scouting for rootworm adults. Showers continue to hamper dry hay harvest. PYO operators report good to excellent crops of raspberries and blueberries.

MAINE - Pam Hickey (Ext), Aroostook: Farmers have not been able to get into the fields much this week because of all of the rain - two to four inches received in different areas in Central Aroostook County. Crops are very wet right now because of all the rain received this week. A few more areas have reported late blight finds. We definitely need some sunshine to help dry fields. Some early harvest of potatoes at roadside stands. **Jill Littlefield (FSA), Cumberland/York:** The rain is causing big problems. With more than ten inches in the last week farmers are saying enough already. Mold, mildew, and blight are now real issues. Small veggies are rotting before they can be picked and hay was near to impossible to make this last week. Quality is really starting to suffer with all this water. We need sun and heat now. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** A damp weather pattern is plaguing this area causing fungus problems for fruit and vegetable growers, as well as problems with the blueberry harvest in some areas. Farmers have been unable to harvest the remainder of their first crop due to the dampness. The forecast is for more of the same with the exception of one day this week. The apple crop is doing well with the harvest of early varieties expected by the end of this month. The blueberry harvest is underway with early reports of good yields. The sweet corn harvest has been underway for approximately three weeks and sweet corn is available in almost all local stores selling fresh produce as well as farm stands. More frequent spraying of some vegetable crops and apples is occurring to control fungus caused by current weather conditions. This mid-coast area has been fortunate to escape severe storms, excessive rainfall and hail which has occurred in other areas of the state. **Marcia Hall (FSA), Oxford:** Oxford County along with several other counties within Maine have received several inches of rain with some areas getting extremely heavy rain. Very little sun has been seen in the past two weeks. Apple producers have reported size of fruit is growing bigger than they should be at this time. Potato, grain corn, silage corn, and sweet corn crops are in standing water due to the excessive rain. Small vegetable growers are very concerned about the amount of

rain received and have reported to be working in MUD. In need of sunshine. **Amanda Ray (FSA), Penobscot:** Damp, humid conditions preventing producers from getting in their hay crop. Blueberry and raspberry harvest underway. Some blueberry damage being reported in Hancock County. Full array of produce now available at farmers markets and farm stands! **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Undependable weather has made harvest and field work difficult, especially for dry hay. Sweet corn harvest is in full swing. **Dr. David Yarborough (Ext), Washington:** Wild blueberries: Wild blueberry harvest continues mid-state and begins in Washington County this week. Cooler temperatures and adequate rainfall are providing for higher yields and good fruit quality. Looks like a better than average crop.

MASSACHUSETTS - Aimee Thayer (FSA), Berkshire: Serious wind and rain at week's start with trees down and some stream bank erosion. Then everything dried out until Saturday when there were a couple of quick storms. We are almost six inches above normal for precipitation. Fungicides being applied. Fruit crops are good, but there was an apple drop this week perhaps due to the extra moisture. Summer veggies are great. Field corn is looking good. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** Another hot and humid rainy week. The Connecticut Valley has had some disease outbreaks of late blight in tomatoes and potatoes and Phytophthora capsici in cucurbits and peppers. This is caused by the past heavy rains and hail storms. Many crop fields are saturated from past rains. Harvesting tobacco, beans, greens, cabbage, lettuce, potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers and many other summer crops. **Janice Barnes, Franklin:** Continuing to have thunderstorms making it difficult to get hay in. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: There is very good fruit set with berries sizing up well so far. Fruit rot is starting to show up, as well as fruit worm injury. There was scattered rainfall this week, but nothing in general over the region. Vines look very healthy in most beds. Growers are mostly treating weeds with Callisto and Round-up at the present time. Some renovated beds are still being planted with rooted cuttings. Beds planted in the spring look very good. All in all, we've had no complaints about this growing season so far.

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Amy Ouellette (Ext), Belknap: We're in the midst of the highbush blueberry harvest. Apple crop looks good so far and we're happy to report no hail damage in orchards. Low spots in fields are sopping wet making some tractor work difficult. Several vegetable crops are being harvested including new potatoes, eggplant, tomatoes and peppers. Alton and Barnstead are recovering from fallen, broken, and uprooted trees caused by a tornado. **Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll:** Showers and thundershowers daily. Clean-up and damage assessment from last week's tornado continue. Sweet corn could use some warm dry days, as could other vegetables. Pastures and hay fields are lush and green, but there have been no days dry enough for haying. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Relatively dry weather this week - that is, it didn't rain every day! Field corn still looks good, though there's some isolated flooding on fields adjacent to the river. Most folks able to manage harvesting haylage and baleage, but conditions for dry hay are abysmal. Some veggie crops getting lost to diseases. Blueberry crop looks really good - heavy yields and good size. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Rain, heavy at times, continues to hamper farm operations. Rivers look like spring, flooding low lying fields. Hay and haylage activities remain challenging. Lots of hay well past maturity, looking at quality and quantity losses. Pasture grasses decent if able to graze without punching up sodden fields. Corn mostly tasseling, needs some heat. Summer veggies, raspberries and blueberries available. Fungal problems beginning to be apparent with gray mold showing up. Secondary scab infections and various others. Leaf hopper here now. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** We need some sun and dry weather! For the week ending August 2nd, we received over 2.25 inches of rain here at our Woodsville location. Some areas

of the county received considerably more rain. The ground is saturated, soils are inoperable on many fields, and making good quality dry hay has been very difficult, if not impossible. Some haylage is still being produced on the well drained soils. More sun and a few good drying days are needed. The corn is doing well, although there are some areas in fields that have been impacted by wet conditions, and/or flooding. Weed control has been a problem in some crops and fields due to the unusually wet conditions of the last few weeks. Post-emergence spray applications on some crops have not been successful. A few fields still have not been hayed for 1st cut due to wet soils and rainy conditions. In other areas the 2nd cutting of hay has been delayed. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Fruit: Peach, blueberry and raspberry harvests continued, along with the first apples. Orchardists busy monitoring for pests, spraying if needed, and mowing orchard floors. Insurance adjusters are assessing damage to apples from hail storm that had occurred. Vegetables: Farmers kept busy cultivating, hoeing weeds, monitoring pest pressures, spraying pesticides for insects and diseases - if needed. Growers harvesting an array of vegetables including: beans, beets, broccoli, cabbage, cucumbers, greens, lettuce, potatoes, radishes, snap beans, sweet corn, summer squash and first field tomatoes and peppers. Continues to be a very good demand for local produce at local farmers' markets and farm stands. Field Crops: Farmers making baled hay. Silage corn is rapidly growing. Field corn was tasseled and beginning to silk. Second crop of hay is looking good. **Dorothy Perkins (Ext), Merrimack:** Excessive rain is causing fungal infections to increase across commodity areas. Pastures are boasting excellent growth because of the rain and sun. Raspberries suffered high losses due to fungal infections. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** Blueberries, raspberries, peaches, apricot, plums, sweet corn, potatoes, tomatoes, all types of squashes, a whole array of vegetables and herbs, and cut-flowers are being harvested. Haying has been challenged this season with almost every afternoon we have severe thundershowers and rain. Pastures are OK. On Saturday and Sunday late afternoon we saw severe thundershowers and gusty winds. Harvesting, weeding, monitoring for pests, spraying, and irrigating are the activities of the week among with many others. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** Grass in pastures and hayfields are doing well. However due to rain showers everyday of the week it was not possible to do any haying. Vegetable growers were busy harvesting an array of different vegetable crops including sweet corn. The moist warm weather is favorable for some fungal diseases and growers were applying protective fungicides as needed. Fruit growers were busy harvesting blueberries, raspberries and peaches. Business for greenhouse and garden centers has slowed down, and growers are taking care of fall mums and poinsettias.

RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport: Field corn must have jumped three feet this week. Potatoes are doing great. Harvesting sweet corn, cukes, beans, squash, eggplant, some greenhouse tomatoes and peppers. Blueberries and peaches are coming in strong. Some rain midweek did a nice job. Started with some second cut hay and it looks pretty good.

VERMONT - Jeffrey Carter (Ext), Addison: Very wet soil and heavy rain storms. Corn looks very poor with tassels showing and lots of bright yellow firing in stunted corn plants. Little field work with heavy rains. Grass re-growth good. Some first cut hay still not harvested due to rain. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Another very wet week. Too wet for any crop work. In St. Johnsbury, July was the wettest July on record, and the third wettest month on record. Very little flooding here as of Sunday a.m. **Paul Stanley (CCA), Franklin:** Still wet conditions in Franklin County. Corn is plugging along with wet areas in fields not able to catch up because of the continued rains. Soils are beginning to get saturated and will cause flooding if heavy rains continue. Second cut harvest done on some farms this week as haylage. Good yields, however quality is expected to be down, have not heard of any quality reports on second cut harvest to date. Second cut dry hay is very difficult with wet fields and no drying weather. Sweet corn is coming into full swing with many vegetable stands selling. Prices are up per dozen and unsure of how sales are going on the first round. Blueberries are in full fruit and have heard that wild blackberries are easy picking this year. August has arrived and it looks like the fruits of the growers' labor are starting to pay off. If we can get a stretch of good weather it will lift the spirits to go along with the harvest. **John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille:** More of the same wet weather is starting to take a toll on crops. Nutrient leaching in corn is quite evident and many veggie producers are struggling with weather related problems. Had hardly any weather to harvest even grass silage. July rainfall set records in this area. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** Another very wet week has all but stopped harvesting hay. It rains almost everyday. The rivers are getting very near flood stage. The hot weather that has gone a long with the rain is helping the corn to grow. Some corn has begun to tassel. A lot of fields are six to eight feet tall. Pastures are also doing well with the adequate moisture however some grazers are keeping the livestock in due to the mud. **Sherwin Williams, Rutland:** Mulching down unplanted fields. Still spraying for blight on potatoes. Will start seeding winter rye on harvested fields soon. Berries all done for the season. Apple crop promise of a good crop. Good rain for the week, 0.895 inches. Rain and hot weather, good week for crop to grow and mature. Real good sweet corn in the market, also plenty of good summer vegetables, new potatoes, cabbage, broccoli, and cauliflower doing well. Some real good cukes and beets. All in all season is really looking up. Should be good vegetable exhibits at fairs this year. Have a good week! **Julie Jacque (FSA), Windham:** Vegetable farmers in the northern part of the county reported standing water in fields and crop damage such as rot in onions, carrots, garlic and lettuces. Fields are being harrowed and hopefully replanted to a short maturity crop. A hay farmer has reported alfalfa weevil infestations and is preparing to spray. Second crop is somewhat un-uniform in quantity and quality. The weather has made it extremely difficult to get dry hay made with continuous spotty showers. Many reports throughout the area are saying first cutting was not good quality and was difficult to complete for dry hay, but good if they were making silage. Corn seems to be fairing well in most parts of the county.

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