

Crop Weather



NEW ENGLAND
Agricultural
Statistics



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For week ending 5/3/09

Spring Begins Hot and Dry

GENERAL CONDITIONS: For the week ending May 3, 2009, there were 5.8 days available for field work across New England. Topsoil moisture was rated 2% very short, 22% short, 72% adequate, 4% surplus. Subsoil moisture was rated 2% very short, 15% short, 73% adequate, 10% surplus. Pasture condition was rated 2% very poor, 8% poor, 30% fair, 60% good. The week began dry and hot, with some areas breaking record highs for the second week in a row. Daytime temperatures were 16-33 degrees above average on Tuesday and averaged in the upper 80s to low 90s. A cold front moved in on Wednesday, quickly lowering temperatures back down to average ranges in the mid-50s and mid-60s. A light rain shower fell on Thursday, bringing much needed moisture to the northern states. Southern states felt some reprieve from the dry conditions on Friday when another light rain shower moved into the area. Rain fell again in northern states on Sunday. Weekend high temperatures were average to above average in the upper 50s to low 60s. Nighttime temperatures for the week were average to above average in the mid-40s to mid-50s. Light frosts occurred at night throughout the region. Total precipitation for the week ranged from 0.05 to 1.03 inches. However, more rain is needed as many locations are unusually dry for this time of year.

FRUIT: Tree fruit appears to have wintered well in most areas. However, damage from the ice storms in mid-December was fairly extensive in Massachusetts. Due to the unusual spring heat of the past two weeks, apples were in bud stage to early bloom and peaches and pears were in early bloom to full bloom, several days ahead of normal. Orchardists were busy planting trees, pruning, spraying protective fungicides, and applying fertilizer. Burning of blueberry fields was nearly complete at week's end. As increased instances of mummy berry infection were reported, blueberry growers were busy applying fungicides to prevent disease. Cranberry growers spent the week digging out ditches, applying herbicides and fungicides, scouting for pests, and renovating acreage in preparation for planting. Cranberry vines were reported to have wintered well. Berry growers were also busy planting strawberries and raspberries. Early planted strawberries were already starting to grow in some areas.

VEGETABLES: Sweet corn planting is underway and was ten percent complete by the end of the week. Sweet corn under plastic was beginning to emerge as well. Vegetable growers were busy planting early season crops such as lettuce, cabbage, spinach, peas, beet greens, onions, carrots, and potatoes. Harvesting of early planted asparagus, fiddleheads, and spinach also began last week, as growth was pushed ahead of schedule by the extreme heat of the past two weeks. Greenhouse tomatoes were reported in good condition and growers began transplanting into high tunnels.

FIELD CROPS: The dry, warm days provided ideal conditions for field work. Farmers were busy spreading manure, applying fertilizer, and tilling fields in preparation for planting. Field corn planting commenced in southern states on lighter soils. Pastures were greening up nicely, but would benefit from more rain. Hay producers were busy fertilizing and seeding new fields. Several instances of winterkill were reported in alfalfa fields in northern states.

SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
Topsoil			
Very Short	2	-	0
Short	22	-	1
Adequate	72	-	64
Surplus	4	-	35
Subsoil			
Very Short	2	-	0
Short	15	-	1
Adequate	73	-	64
Surplus	10	-	35

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Stage	Condition
Apples	Bud Stage/Early Bloom	Good
Peaches	Early Bloom/Full Bloom	Good
Pears	Early Bloom/Full Bloom	Good
Blueberries		
Highbush	Bud Stage	Good/Fair
Wild	Bud Stage	Good
Cranberries, MA	Dormant	Good
Strawberries	Dormant/Bud Stage	Good

FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	2009	2008	5-yr Avg	Condition
--Percent Planted--				
Barley, ME	0	0	5	N/A
Oats, ME	0	0	5	N/A
Potatoes				
Maine	0	0	0	N/A
Mass	45	20	30	Good
Rhode Island	N/A	15	25	N/A
Silage Corn	0	0	<5	N/A
Sweet Corn	10	10	10	Good
Tobacco				
Broadleaf	0	0	0	N/A
Shade	0	0	0	N/A
Dry Hay	-- Percent Harvested --			
First Cut	0	0	0	Good/Fair

Weather Summary For New England Agricultural Statistics

Prepared By AWIS.com

For the Period: Monday April 27, 2009
 To: Sunday May 3, 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 INCHES	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL INCHES	DFN	DAYS
					TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN						
MAINE														
Augusta_State_A	39	90	57	+9	78	+61	12	+12	0.33	-0.58	3	3.53	+0.00	8
Bangor_Intl_Arp	33	90	55	+8	59	+49	6	+6	0.31	-0.48	2	3.77	+0.67	9
Bethel	30	89	54	+7	57	+46	6	+6	0.20	-0.64	3	3.32	-0.04	8
Caribou_Municip	28	76	48	+4	32	+25	2	+2	0.69	+0.06	3	2.66	+0.34	11
Dover-Foxcroft	27	89	52	+7	45	+38	5	+5	0.68	-0.16	2	3.94	+0.61	7
Frenchville	30	73	47	+5	20	+18	0	+0	0.42	-0.24	3	2.22	-0.22	9
Houlton	24	81	50	+6	38	+31	3	+3	1.02	+0.32	3	3.24	+0.74	10
Livermore_Falls	28	91	54	+9	57	+50	6	+6	0.21	-0.68	3	3.39	-0.23	8
Moosehead	27	82	50	+9	28	+28	1	+1	0.20	-0.55	3	2.44	-0.47	9
Portland_ME	32	92	57	+10	76	+68	14	+14	0.09	-0.82	2	3.85	+0.03	8
NEW HAMPSHIRE														
Benton	30	85	54	+8	64	+42	14	+14	0.51	-0.19	2	3.54	+0.90	8
Berlin_AG	30	88	54	+8	63	+46	11	+11	0.53	-0.26	2	2.65	-0.56	8
Concord	30	93	59	+10	106	+82	30	+30	0.09	-0.61	3	3.12	+0.36	9
Diamond_Pond	27	85	51	+10	34	+31	4	+4	0.84	+0.07	3	3.27	+0.35	10
Keene_AG	30	92	59	+9	90	+51	33	+33	0.09	-0.71	2	2.45	-0.56	10
North_Conway	31	92	56	+9	72	+55	12	+12	0.20	-0.74	3	3.01	-0.84	9
Rochester	32	90	58	+9	83	+54	19	+19	0.09	-0.89	1	3.51	-0.47	7
VERMONT														
Bennington_AP	31	89	59	+12	124	+100	35	+35	0.29	-0.76	2	0.96	-3.13	9
Burlington_Intl	33	89	58	+9	107	+71	26	+26	0.23	-0.45	4	1.18	-1.43	13
Island_Pond	26	82	53	+9	56	+46	10	+10	0.87	+0.17	4	2.88	+0.30	12
Montpelier	29	86	56	+10	94	+74	26	+26	0.49	-0.14	5	1.88	-0.45	14
Rochester	28	90	55	+9	62	+45	17	+17	0.90	-0.06	2	2.28	-1.30	9
Rutland_AG	29	90	57	+6	82	+33	24	+20	0.41	-0.29	2	1.47	-1.09	7
Springfield_VT	29	89	58	+11	100	+78	29	+29	0.16	-0.75	3	1.85	-1.73	10
Sutton	29	85	52	+9	47	+40	11	+11	0.70	-0.01	4	2.47	-0.28	12
MASSACHUSETTS														
Boston/Logan_In	46	93	62	+10	165	+113	44	+44	0.01	-0.80	1	3.31	-0.02	8
Fitchburg	39	94	63	+16	162	+145	51	+51	0.05	-0.75	1	3.20	+0.03	9
Greenfield	34	91	60	+8	109	+60	33	+33	0.03	-0.87	2	2.83	-0.62	11
New_Bedford	33	88	58	+6	106	+51	16	+16	0.15	-0.74	3	5.25	+1.46	10
Otis_AFB	32	93	56	+7	123	+104	18	+18	0.16	-0.75	3	5.62	+1.98	10
Plymouth	35	88	59	+10	114	+94	22	+22	0.12	-0.86	4	4.57	+0.62	13
Walpole	35	88	59	+9	101	+68	27	+27	0.06	-0.83	1	3.85	-0.04	8
Chicopee/Westov	34	94	61	+7	157	+71	46	+42	0.07	-0.84	2	2.29	-1.35	9
Worthington	30	88	57	+10	82	+61	25	+25	0.15	-0.89	2	2.21	-1.63	9
RHODE ISLAND														
Providence	37	89	61	+9	132	+90	26	+26	0.02	-0.89	2	4.65	+0.84	8
Woonsocket	36	92	62	+11	124	+95	33	+33	0.04	-0.93	1	4.09	+0.19	8
CONNECTICUT														
Bridgeport/Siko	46	83	59	+7	113	+55	21	+21	0.20	-0.71	2	2.89	-0.65	9
Hartford/Bradle	38	94	63	+10	179	+109	54	+50	0.09	-0.82	3	2.57	-1.07	10
Norfolk	37	88	59	+12	108	+90	37	+37	0.20	-0.85	2	2.34	-1.86	10
Thomaston_Dam	37	88	61	+10	121	+81	35	+35	0.17	-0.88	1	2.63	-1.38	9
Willimantic	35	89	62	+11	162	+125	43	+43	0.16	-0.82	2	4.06	+0.14	9

State Weather Summary

For the Week Ending Sunday, May 3, 2009

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	23	94	53	+7	0.08	1.02
NH	22	94	57	+9	0.05	0.84
VT	24	90	55	+9	0.10	1.48
MA	26	94	59	+9	0.01	0.59
RI	36	92	60	+9	0.02	0.07
CT	35	94	62	+10	0.03	0.41

REPORTERS COMMENTS, By County: *Reporters are from Extension Service (Ext), Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS), or other knowledgeable individuals.*

CONNECTICUT - Howard Rood (FSA), Fairfield/Litchfield: Some field corn has been planted on the lighter soils. Dairy farmers are busy spreading manure. It is dry, but rain is forecasted for this weekend. **Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland:** Generally dry conditions for early spring have led to most areas being able to spread manure and work fields. Many greenhouses opened for the season and are moving bedding plants and flowers. Orchardists have been busy putting on early sprays. Due to fertilizer's high cost many hay fields are only getting urea to stimulate first cutting growth. Turf grass is being cut; however, not many large orders due to economic recession. Sweet corn planting coming along and some field corn planted in late April on light soils. **Richard Meinert (Ext), Litchfield:** Cold tolerant vegetables are going in. Field corn is being planted on the sandier soils in the river valleys. Grass is greening up but seems slow due to lack of water. **Nancy Welsh (FSA), Middlesex/New Haven:** Record breaking heat at the beginning of the week and cool rainy weather at the end of the week along with a frost warning mid-week. Early vegetables such as lettuce, spinach and peas are in the ground. Some silage corn and sweet corn have been planted. Alfalfa really grew with the heat early in the week. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Everything is waking up after a long, cold winter along with deer nibbling on orchards and shrubbery. Spring arrived wet and cold then we had a blast of 85 to 90 degree sunny days which prompted blossoms to burst into bloom. Pears and plums are now past bloom, peaches are in full bloom, and apples are in early bloom. Fruit trees are about ten days ahead of normal. Light frost on April 30th. Pollination activity sporadic, but a variety of flying insects are at work. Pruning is still in process. Greenhouse tomatoes are doing well. Asparagus growth pushed by warm weather, rain is needed to keep cuttings consistent. Spreading, plowing, harrowing, and getting corn fields ready to go now that the soil has warmed up a bit.

MAINE - Sandy Truslow (FSA), Cumberland/York: Nice spring weather has allowed farmers to spread manure and start plowing fields. Pastures are greening up. Some early sweet corn and silage corn has been planted. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** Good spring weather with a mix of sun, rain and heat. Maple sap run was average to above average - better than recent years. Lots of manure and fertilizer being applied. Harrowing and plowing are underway. **Valerie Porter (FSA), Hancock/Penobscot/Piscataquis:** Fields are being fertilized and tilled for preparation of planting. Could use some rain, ground is slightly dry. Rain is in the upcoming forecast. Fields and pastures are greening up. Apple trees appear to have wintered pretty good. Blueberry fields have been burned and also appear to have wintered pretty good. **Maria Granger (FSA), Kennebec:** Spring is off to a great start. Everything is greening up all around the county. Many farmers have been out spreading manure and working up the fields. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Farmers have had a busy week planting, preparing ground for planting, and spreading manure. Some much needed rain fell Friday into Saturday. Sweet corn, peas, lettuce, beet greens, onions, carrots, and potatoes are some of the crops that have been planted in the mid-coast area. Some sweet corn under plastic has emerged. Most perennial crops wintered well with plenty of snow cover to protect against winter damage. The burning of blueberry fields is nearly complete. Blueberry growers are spraying for mummyberry, and preparing to apply Velpar and place bees in fields within the next week. Orchards are being sprayed and hay fields are getting green. Farm activities appear to be on schedule. Let's hope that "Mother Nature" continues to cooperate. **Donna Coffin (Ext), Piscataquis:** Fields are being plowed, manure is being spread, and a limited planting of peas. **Janet King (FSA), Somerset:** Spring is here! Cows in the fields, land being plowed for crops and manure being spread on fields. The land is dry, in need of rain for many spring crops and hayfields, as well as to prevent fires. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Dry conditions have allowed for early field work. Lots of manure being spread. Despite good snow cover, alfalfa damage seems higher than normal. Winter grains were

also impacted on low ground. Some corn planted. **Dr. David Yarborough (Ext), Washington:** Wild blueberries: Fields being pruned by mowing and burning, and fertilizer and herbicides are being applied to pruned fields. Monitoring for mummyberry disease indicates plants are at a susceptible stage and spores are being produced so infection is occurring state-wide. Fungicides to protect the plants from infection are being applied. Results of the monitoring may be viewed at <http://mainewildblueberries.blogspot.com/>

MASSACHUSETTS - Aimee Thayer (FSA), Berkshire: The winter weather story here was the ice storm of December 11th and 12th. There was serious damage to orchards, timber, sugar bushes and livestock fencing above 1100 feet. Maple sap that was harvested was inferior in quality. Other than that, it was a steady winter in the Berkshires, with lower than normal precipitation. Precipitation for April was down almost two inches and we are abnormally dry here. Last week saw supra-normal heat with four days in the upper 80's to 90 degrees prompting red flag warnings for fire potential. The start of the growing season was advanced due to the temperatures with asparagus showing up two weeks earlier than usual and orchard buds developing quickly. The potential for a damaging frost is high. **Lori Carver (NRCS), Franklin:** Sweet corn planting is underway. Asparagus picking has begun. Ground is very dry. Three days of record breaking heat last week. Areas hit by the ice storm in December continue to remove brush from pasture and hayfields. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** Crop field conditions are on the dry side and rain is needed. Dairy farmers are spreading manure, repairing fences and seeding new hay fields. Vegetable growers are plowing and spreading lime. They are planting potatoes, peas, sweet corn, lettuce, cabbage, carrots, spinach, parsnips and strawberry plants. Sweet corn is up eight inches under plastic and looks good. Asparagus, fiddleheads and spinach are being harvested. Orchardists are applying fertilizer and a protective fungicide spray on their crops. Greenhouses are full of spring flowers and annual bedding plants. Nurseries are digging trees and shrubs. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: The cranberry vines seem to have wintered well. At least 6,000 acres received sand on the ice in January, so that will reduce this year's crop on those acres. There is minimal winter injury; early varieties are green, later varieties still have the winter red color. Water tables are high, resulting in low areas being fairly wet. One frost incident last week had growers running their sprinklers. The hot weather of April 26 and 28 moved phenological development ahead of the normal schedule. Growers are digging out their ditches, applying pre-emergent herbicides, applying fungicides for root rot, fairy ring and upright dieback, starting to scout for insects, and getting renovated acreage ready for planting. The cranberry industry is upbeat, having had their largest crop ever (by far) in 2008, with a price per barrel that has rebounded from the depths on the early part of the decade.

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Melinda Marston (FSA), Belknap/Merrimack: There has not been a lot of rain recently so many producers have been able to get on most fields pretty early. Many producers are preparing their fields for their crops. Corn producers are fertilizing and harrowing and hay producers are fertilizing. **Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll:** Spring has arrived, with a bang! Peaches, apples, plums, cherries, if they are not in bloom, they are very close. Wild cherry blossoms were open before the first of May. Very warm spring weather to date. Pastures and hay fields very green and growing well. Significant rain would be welcomed. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Generally good weather for farmers preparing for spring fieldwork. Soaking rain at week's end, still frosty mornings. Some lighter textured soils being worked up for corn plantings. Grass meadows greening up, a little early pasturing as conditions permit. Apples at green tip to almost pink, depending on variety and location. Greenhouses and nurseries operations in high gear readying for Mother's Day openings. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** For the week ending May 2nd, the better drained soils along

the Connecticut River had dried out quite a bit. Some fields needed a little rain, while others were still adequate. Upland areas with poorer drainage remain too wet to work. Corn land is being tilled and planting has begun. Grafton County has seen a very high degree of winter kill on alfalfa. Farmers are attributing the winter kill to the rain which we received earlier in the year, which then froze into a thick blanket of ice. On many fields, the loss was close to 100% on alfalfa stands. Almost all the alfalfa stands were affected. Even some mixed grasses and Triticale were heavily damaged. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Field Crops: Liming and fertilizing hayfields. Spreading manure, plowing, disking, fertilizing and planting corn. Making new pasture and hayfield seedings. Vegetables: Transplanting tomatoes into high tunnels. Early season vegetables (peas, lettuce, greens) are being planted, along with sweet corn. Fruit: Peaches were in full bloom to petal fall in the Hollis area. The earliest blooming apple varieties are in king bloom and most of the apple trees are in pink stage. Strawberry plants starting to grow. Planting fruit trees, raspberries, blueberries and strawberries. Fertilizing orchards and protective fungicide sprays being applied. Weather: 90+ degrees temperature weekend of April 25-26, caused fruit blossoms to develop very quickly. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** Sunny to cloudy week with cool nights. Lots of field work this week and getting ready to plant. Pastures are greening up nicely. Spreading manure and planting early vegetable crops. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** Grass in pastures and hay fields seem to be growing more rapidly due to warm temperatures in the last two weeks. Some produces were seeding new hay fields. Vegetable growers were plowing and preparing fields for planting. Others were planting cool season crops. Fruit growers were spraying protective fungicides due to the expected rains in the week. Some growers were still busy pruning peaches. This was the first week of business for most greenhouse operations and garden centers. Most of them had a good start.

VERMONT - Jeffrey Carter (Ext), Addison: Grass growth is strong, alfalfa growth a little slow this year, but coming on. Little winter kill. Dandelions in bloom, lilacs just still in bud stage. Fertilizer and manure was spread on grass fields and now still manure is being spread on corn fields. Soil conditions are dry for this time of

year and a lot of primary and secondary tillage (plow, chisel, harrow) in normally wet fields. Most new seedings of hay crop are planted and corn fields are being fitted. Some new seedings are sprouted with oats up to one inch. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Dairy farmers are spreading manure, those who pasture are beginning to fix fencing, and those with corn ground are harrowing the manure in. Some cows out, there's really not enough out there to eat yet. The spring has been on the dry side, still getting frosts at night. Forsythia and daffodils blooming, with tulips getting ready to open. **Paul Stanley (CCA), Franklin:** Spring greetings from Franklin County. We are off to a fantastic spring to kick off our 2009 crop reporting. We are all in hopes that this great weather continues as a way to buffer the low milk prices we are receiving. Pastures are coming super with a little moisture to help keep the growth going. Manure spreading has gone well with the good weather helping get more manure out in early spring and help bolster growth. This also helps water quality by keeping the manure on the fields for the crops instead of run off and nutrients ending up in the streams. The maple season was a bright spot in Franklin County with a bumper crop and prices holding up to date. Orchards are doing well with apple and berry bushes at bud stage and gardens are tilled and ready to go with some early plantings of potatoes in the ground. Some corn is planted; however, much tillage has been done and if the weather holds will make for some quick planting. **John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille:** Spring has sprung with somewhat drier than normal conditions and fieldwork running about a week earlier than average. Manure spreading has been progressing nicely for the last few weeks. Corn planting began last week for a few early birds. The soil can be easily worked just about everywhere given our dry conditions so veggie growers have gotten a jump start. Had a light frost one morning last week. Will it be the last???

Julie Jacque (FSA), Windham: Vegetable producers have been planting lettuces, broccoli and potatoes for a few weeks now. Plowing, harrowing and seeding down hayfields and some field corn (in lower elevations). Some producers like to wait until the end of the month for soil temps to increase before putting corn in the ground. Fruit crops look good as producers are keeping their fingers crossed and frost-prevention equipment ready, if used, as the temps threaten to drop at night.

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