

# Crop Progress & Condition



NEW ENGLAND  
Agricultural  
Statistics



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For week ending 5/2/10

## Wildly Variable Weather

**GENERAL CONDITIONS:** For the week ending May 2, 2010, there were 5.0 days available for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated 2% poor, 49% fair, 35% good, and 14% excellent. The week began rainy, with above average temperatures in the 60s in northern New England and cooler temperatures in the southern States. Temperatures dropped on Tuesday and continued doing so on Wednesday, with daylight temperatures ranging from the upper 30s to mid-50s. These low temperatures allowed the rain to mix with snow. Northern areas of Vermont and New Hampshire received significant snowfall with some areas reporting well over a foot of snow accumulation. Elevated regions in Massachusetts also reported snowfall. The low nighttime temperatures from Tuesday to Thursday caused frost; Thursday's warmer weather was a relief to farmers. However, heavy winds with gusts up to 55 mph were reported that day, resulting in minor wind damage and scattered power outages. Temperatures continued to climb throughout the weekend with temperatures ranging from the low 70s to as high as 90 on Sunday. The week ended cloudy with little to no precipitation. Total rainfall for the week ranged from 0.12 to 1.14 inches.

**FRUIT:** Fruit trees were mostly in full bloom stage by week's end, two to three weeks ahead of normal due to the unusually warm weather during March and April. Last week's wild fluctuations in temperature were not favorable for apples and some were damaged by frost. A few ripe strawberries in southern New England had already been picked. Most peaches in southern and central New England were at petal fall. Cranberry vines wintered well and are more than two weeks ahead of a normal schedule. Therefore, cranberry growers were busy running the sprinklers in order to prevent frost. Orchard grass has grown at an extremely fast pace during April. Orchardists were busy planting fruit trees, applying fertilizers, and spraying fungicide. Many are worried about the possibility of major frost as it could cause considerable damage to fully bloomed fruits.

**VEGETABLES:** The planting of sweet corn continued and was ahead of last year and normal. Due to early April planting, 10% of the corn has emerged by week's end which is very rare at this time of year. Peas, string beans, radishes, cabbage, carrots, broccoli, asparagus, lettuce, and onions were being planted two to three weeks ahead of schedule. Farmers were harvesting fiddleheads, asparagus, and spinach. Farmers were also liming, fertilizing, plowing, disking, laying plastic mulch, and getting ready to plant fields.

**FIELD CROPS:** Farmers were taking advantage of the dry weather and planted field corn, potatoes, oats, small grains, and barley ahead of schedule. First cut hay was top dressed and may begin being chopped by mid-May. Field preparations were generally two weeks ahead of schedule throughout New England. Most nursery and greenhouse growers were open last week to prepare for Mother's Day sales. Farmers are liming and fertilizing hayfields; spreading manure, plowing, disking, and fertilizing fields.

### SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
<b>Topsoil</b>			
Very Short	1	-	2
Short	5	-	22
Adequate	85	-	72
Surplus	9	-	4
<b>Subsoil</b>			
Very Short	1	-	2
Short	4	-	15
Adequate	86	-	73
Surplus	9	-	10

### FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Stage of Development	Condition
Apples	Early Bloom/Full Bloom	Good/Fair
Peaches	Full Bloom/Petal Fall	Fair/Good
Pears	Full Bloom/Petal Fall	Fair/Good
Blueberries		
Highbush	Bud Stage/Early Bloom	Good
Wild	Early Bloom	N/A
Cranberries, MA	Bud Stage	Good
Strawberries	Bud Stage/ Early Bloom	Good/Excellent

### FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	2010	2009	5-yr Avg	Condition
--Percent Planted--				
Barley, ME	20	0	<5	N/A
Oats, ME	10	0	<5	N/A
Potatoes				
Maine	10	0	0	N/A
Mass	75	40	30	N/A
Rhode Island	N/A	10	25	Good
Silage Corn	5	<5	<5	Fair
Sweet Corn	15	10	10	Good/Fair
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 26, 2010  
To: Sunday May 2, 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		DFN	DAYS
					TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN				INCHES	DFN		
<b>MAINE</b>															
Augusta_State_A	38	78	51	+3	96	+81	8	+8	0.62	-0.29	4	2.07	-1.45	15	
Bangor_Intl_Arp	35	79	51	+5	79	+71	7	+7	0.31	-0.48	2	2.24	-0.86	10	
Bethel	33	78	47	+0	52	+43	1	+1	1.39	+0.55	4	3.26	-0.10	12	
Caribou_Municip	32	69	48	+4	43	+37	5	+5	0.32	-0.31	4	2.44	+0.13	13	
Dover-Foxcroft	31	75	47	+3	33	+27	0	+0	0.50	-0.34	5	2.76	-0.56	15	
Frenchville	29	66	45	+3	31	+30	1	+1	0.23	-0.42	4	2.48	+0.06	14	
Houlton	29	72	47	+4	42	+36	2	+2	0.35	-0.34	3	2.54	+0.06	14	
Livermore_Falls	30	78	47	+3	46	+40	2	+2	1.28	+0.38	3	3.19	-0.44	13	
Moosehead	28	74	44	+3	18	+18	0	+0	0.36	-0.40	4	2.77	-0.14	14	
Portland_ME	34	73	50	+3	90	+83	12	+12	0.39	-0.52	2	1.50	-2.32	9	
<b>NEW HAMPSHIRE</b>															
Benton	28	74	46	-1	59	+39	3	+3	1.66	+0.96	3	4.00	+1.38	12	
Berlin_AG	31	74	46	+0	44	+29	1	+1	1.47	+0.67	3	3.07	-0.14	11	
Concord	27	82	50	+2	109	+88	24	+24	0.24	-0.46	2	2.13	-0.62	9	
Diamond_Pond	24	64	39	-3	6	+4	0	+0	1.56	+0.79	5	4.48	+1.57	15	
Keene_AG	27	88	50	-2	93	+58	11	+11	0.48	-0.31	3	1.64	-1.35	11	
North_Conway	31	79	48	+2	69	+54	4	+4	1.06	+0.11	4	3.24	-0.61	16	
Rochester	30	77	52	+2	109	+83	13	+13	0.34	-0.64	2	2.23	-1.75	7	
<b>VERMONT</b>															
Bennington_AP	29	82	51	+4	115	+94	27	+27	0.58	-0.47	3	1.66	-2.42	10	
Burlington_Intl	29	76	48	-2	114	+82	24	+24	1.18	+0.50	4	3.20	+0.60	14	
Island_Pond	30	73	47	+3	55	+46	11	+11	0.85	+0.15	3	3.12	+0.56	15	
Montpelier	29	74	46	-2	84	+66	21	+21	1.20	+0.57	4	3.46	+1.14	15	
Rochester	28	82	47	+1	54	+39	4	+4	0.69	-0.26	4	2.58	-0.98	13	
Rutland_AG	27	82	47	-4	77	+32	12	+9	1.17	+0.47	4	3.34	+0.80	11	
Springfield_VT	28	83	51	+4	107	+88	21	+21	0.47	-0.44	3	2.47	-1.10	11	
Sutton	29	69	45	+3	47	+41	3	+3	1.54	+0.84	4	4.06	+1.33	17	
<b>MASSACHUSETTS</b>															
Boston/Logan_In	35	76	54	+2	191	+144	30	+30	0.12	-0.70	3	1.78	-1.56	10	
Fitchburg	32	88	54	+7	183	+168	37	+37	0.21	-0.60	3	1.33	-1.84	10	
Greenfield	31	84	51	-2	100	+56	16	+16	0.19	-0.72	3	1.12	-2.33	10	
New_Bedford	32	76	52	-1	128	+78	16	+16	0.45	-0.45	4	1.69	-2.12	11	
Otis_AFB	36	73	51	+3	86	+69	7	+7	0.39	-0.52	4	1.64	-2.00	10	
Plymouth	34	78	53	+4	147	+129	24	+24	0.38	-0.60	3	1.64	-2.31	9	
Walpole	30	88	53	+3	161	+131	31	+31	0.38	-0.53	3	2.17	-1.74	9	
Chicopee/Westov	31	87	53	-2	157	+77	33	+30	0.23	-0.68	3	0.78	-2.85	7	
Worthington	31	85	50	+3	87	+68	13	+13	0.42	-0.61	4	1.25	-2.56	11	
<b>RHODE ISLAND</b>															
Providence	34	78	54	+3	208	+170	31	+31	0.35	-0.56	4	2.18	-1.64	9	
Woonsocket	32	79	53	+3	152	+126	24	+24	0.33	-0.64	4	2.00	-1.89	10	
<b>CONNECTICUT</b>															
Bridgeport/Siko	38	71	54	+2	159	+106	10	+10	1.30	+0.39	3	2.18	-1.35	9	
Hartford/Bradle	35	87	56	+3	234	+170	47	+44	0.56	-0.35	3	1.30	-2.33	9	
Norfolk	32	84	51	+4	122	+106	26	+26	0.85	-0.20	3	1.94	-2.25	11	
Thomaston_Dam	34	83	53	+3	144	+108	25	+25	0.78	-0.27	3	1.68	-2.32	9	
Willimantic	32	82	53	+3	162	+129	30	+30	0.54	-0.44	3	1.79	-2.13	8	

**State Weather Summary**

For the Week Ending Sunday, May 2, 2010

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	27	81	48	+3	0.10	1.39
NH	14	88	48	+2	0.12	2.82
VT	20	87	47	+0	0.30	2.40
MA	27	88	52	+2	0.06	0.63
RI	32	79	53	+3	0.17	0.78
CT	30	87	54	+2	0.40	1.30

**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:** Dairy farmers have planted very little field corn at this time. They have been busy spreading manure and doing some plowing. Warm weather earlier in the season pushed the fruit trees to flower about two weeks earlier than usual. We have not had any damaging frosts to harm the fruit trees. **Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland:** Planting continues for sweet corn and green beans. Orchards are two weeks ahead of normal with some concerns over frost through this last week. Field corn fields are beginning to get ready to plant. Broadleaf and shade tobacco fields are tilled and beds are seeded. Most green houses are open for sales as of this Saturday. First cut hay is topdressed. We could use a little rain (not a lot). **Richard Meinert (Ext), Litchfield:** It appears another mixed up crop year is underway. May 1st and the orchardgrass is in full bloom and alfalfa is budding. Apples are in full bloom and the peaches are finished blooming. Strawberries are finished blooming, in fact the first ripe berries have already been picked around here. After record rainfall in March we were mostly dry in April. Crop season is off to a dry start. **Patricia Smith (FSA), New London:** Field conditions are good. Everything is about 2 weeks ahead of schedule. The grass is growing well and producers should be chopping it in about 2 weeks. **Nancy Welsh (FSA), New Haven:** April was the 5th driest on record and the warmest on record. Producers have been able to get into their fields and planting is going nicely. The orchards are about two weeks early due to the warm weather. Some producers are concerned about pollination but it is too early to tell. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** From 35 degree cold, gray days with one heavy frost, two light frosts, then really windy; to sunshine and 70 degrees this week. Most fruit trees are three weeks ahead in blossom stages. Asparagus is early. Farmers are busy in the orchards finishing pruning, mowing, fertilizing; getting vegetable beds ready for early crops. Spreading manure, harrowing fields to get ready to plant corn. Bees came through the winter with mixed success. Some bee keepers pushed nutrients to help the queens keep producing young bees; their hives came through the winter better. Some hives were complete losses, maybe do to the stress of the poor season last year was too hard on the bees. Pollination seemed to go well for fruit tree bloom, bumblebees helped out with the work to be done.

**MAINE – Casey Cote (St John Valley Soil & Water Conservation Dist), Northern Aroostook:** Farmers in our region have begun to cultivate farm fields for the raising of crops including potatoes, oats and barley. Above average weather conditions have given farmers a head start to the 2010 planting season. On the 27<sup>th</sup> of April 4 inches of snow fell on the Valley, but warm day temperatures had it all melted by next day. Cool at the beginning of the week in mid 70's towards the end of week. **Larry James (FSA), Central Aroostook:** Potatoes, small grain and broccoli being planted. Planting should be in full swing this week. We need some rain to get the hay fields growing. **Pam Hickey (Ext), Central Aroostook:** Broccoli being planted, grains being planted. Potato farmers are getting fields ready for planting. Some growers got potatoes in the ground over the weekend between showers. **Sandy Truslow (FSA), Cumberland/York:** It is a very early spring here with crops 2-3 weeks ahead of schedule. Early vegetables have been and are being planted. Manure is being spread and everything looks green right now. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** Fantastic weather this spring. This last week went from snow to summer! There has been a good mix of warm weather and moisture. Maple sap harvest was early with mixed results. Some with vacuum lines did real well. Some producers were very short. Lots of land preparation underway. There are lots of black flies to help those trying to pound in fence posts! **Megan McDonough (FSA), Kennebec:** The grass is off to a great start here in Kennebec County. April has been a bit drier than average this year, this despite a few thunderstorms and even a spring hail last week. Sunny days have given way to light evening frosts. While some folks are planning on planting at the usual time, we have spoken with others that are calibrating planters in hopes of getting an early start planting corn. **Valerie Porter**

**(FSA), Hancock/Penobscot/Piscataquis:** Field work is underway. Manure has been spread on 50% of the fields and tilling is underway. Hay/grass fields look pretty green, but still there are some wet spots. Cattle are out grazing and loving it. Apples and blueberry's are in early stage of greening and buds are setting slowly. Cool evenings still are not warming soil up very fast. Precipitation is coming this week and we could use a little bit. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Farmers have had excellent weather conditions to prepare ground for planting, and for spreading fertilizer and manure. Pastures are lush and green and livestock should be out in the fields within the next few days. Peas, string beans, radishes, potatoes and lettuce have been planted while tomatoes plants can be found in hoop houses. Soils are perfect right now for all field activities. No one wants to see a repeat of 2009 and we all have our fingers crossed that Mother Nature will cooperate this season. Reports are the apple and blueberry crops are ahead of schedule by approximately 2 weeks. All seems to be going well in Knox and Lincoln Counties for the moment. **Marcia Hall (FSA), Oxford:** Spring is here and tractors are busy! Warm weather has started field work early. Producers have reported dry conditions in parts of Oxford County. Heavy soils are still wet in spots, but the warm weather is helping. Manure being spread. **Kathy Hopkins (Ext), Somerset:** This spring has gotten field work and crop development off to an early start. Some manure is being spread and the ground is being worked. **Janet King (FSA), Somerset:** Field preparation including disking, harrowing and manure spreading. Need some rain top soil is dry. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Dry weather has allowed a lot of field work to begin. Some sweet corn is planted. Lots of manure being spread on fields. Strawberries that were under row covers are flowering. We seem to be about two weeks ahead of normal. **Dr. David Yarborough (Ext), Washington:** Wild blueberries; Crop development this year is two to three weeks early. Mummyberry disease infection periods began in early April (see <http://mainewildblueberries.blogspot.com/>) and two to three fungicide applications have been made to protect the plants from infection. Bloom is starting and bees are beginning to be moved into the fields. Pre-emergence herbicide and fertilizer applications are being made to the non-bearing fields.

**MASSACHUSETTS - Aimee Thayer (FSA), Berkshire:** A warm early spring cut the maple syrup crop 30 to 50 percent. Then unseasonable heat in the 80's a for a couple of weeks in April has put some fruit crops at risk from early development leading to frozen buds etc while other growers took the opportunity to plant some early corn. In the midst of that, we got snow over the higher elevations of the county on Wednesday (April 26). Then up into the 80s again Saturday (May 1). A wild ride so far. **Thomas Monahan, Berkshire:** Some Frost damage on apples and stone fruit very minimal. Hot then cool then hot not good for fruit set we will wait and see. **Elizabeth St Laurent (FSA), Bristol/Norfolk:** Very early in the season only some corn has been started outside. We had a very rainy month in March. **Lori Carver (FSA), Franklin:** Wow what a wild spring we are having! Hot temperatures got things started early, but then this week we had snow showers in the first part of the week, followed by a windy day. Asparagus is emerging early, but getting hit with frost in some areas. Early sweet corn is in the ground under plastic. Producers are working hard to get fields prepared for the spring planting rush. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** Temperatures were below normal this week with a few days of scattered frost and rain showers. Planting of crops are about 2 weeks a head of normal because of that very warm spell. Planting of potatoes is about 75% complete and sweet corn about 35% complete, also planting peas, beans, cabbage, carrots, lettuce and onions. Harvesting fiddleheads, asparagus, and spinach. Farmers are also plowing, subsoiling, and spreading lime and manure. Small fruit producers were setting up irrigation for frost control and vegetables growers were irrigating because of the dry soil conditions. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: Cranberry vines wintered well. All of the rain in March flooded many acres and

'forced' many beds to be kept under a late water flood. Warm weather forced many growers to withdraw the flood prematurely. Vines are 14-18 days ahead of a normal schedule. Consequently, growers have been out at least 20 nights running the sprinklers for frost or being prepared to do so. Growers are applying herbicides, insecticides for winter moth and other early caterpillars, scouting for insects, improving drainage and maintaining ditches. Renovation projects are being completed so vines can be planted.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE – William Lord (Ext), Belknap:** Growth and development continue about 2 weeks ahead of the normal. There has been extremely limited damage to king blossoms in apple, limited to low spots in frost prone blocks. Pastures are growing well as are hay crops. Both wild blueberry and highbush blueberry wintered well and both have a normal blossom load. Field work is progressing ahead of schedule. **Debra Eddison (Ext), Carroll:** The weather for the last of April and 1st of May has been like a rollercoaster. Started the week in the 60's, and then mid week had 3 inches of snow and temperatures in the mid 30's, then back up to 80's on Sunday. Fruit trees, apples and pears, are mostly in full bloom. In the woods shadbush (serviceberry), crabapples, and cherries are in full bloom. Definitely an early start for spring this year. We are about 3 weeks ahead of our normal weather schedule. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** A pretty mild winter, and an early start to spring with unusually warm weather. Farms have spent the last few weeks with field prep and planting, in some cases a good two weeks ahead of schedule. Warmer weather has led to an early bloom on fruit trees so far so good, but growers are concerned about a late frost/freeze. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Quite a week, from heavy wet snowfall, breaking branches from trees in mid-week to high in 70's- 80's by the end! Dry conditions have helped farmers over the past couple of weeks get a jump on field preparation. Fertilizing, manure spreading, discing up corn fields has been on going. Early grasses like orchardgrass growing vigorously, seems most has survived winter well. Greening, on sodden fields have allowed livestock/dairy farmers to get animals on pasture for grazing. Dandelions starting to bloom. Nurseries/Greenhouse growers prepping operations, retail outlets are looking to Mother's Day weekend with optimum earlier than usual crop season as we enter May, keeping our fingers crossed. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** Spring has sprung earlier than normal for the area. Unusually warm conditions earlier in April, followed by a few days of winter like weather late in the month. Soil conditions early in the month were conducive to getting the manure spread on the better drained soils along the river bottom. For the month of April, we received nearly 3.5 inches of rain. **Heather Bryant (Ext), Grafton:** Some farms in this area are still cleaning up debris left behind by flooding over the winter. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Fruits: Made sure bees were in apple orchards beginning of week. Most Peaches and Plums were at petal fall beginning of the week. Apples and Pear were in full bloom. Planting fruit trees. Fertilizing orchards. Protective fungicide sprays applied on fruits. Field Crops: Farmers are liming and fertilizing hayfields; spreading manure, plowing, disking fertilizing and planting corn. Vegetables: Continue early season vegetables (peas, lettuce, greens) planting, along with sweet corn and potatoes. High tunnels tomatoes looking good. Liming, fertilizing, plowing, disking and

getting ready to plant fields. Laying plastic mulch and drip irrigation tape. Harvesting asparagus. **Amy Ouellette (Ext), Merrimack:** Farmers are soil testing, liming; and fertilizing crop fields. Orchard's are spraying for apple Scab. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** Preparing vegetable fields and planting early varieties of beans, lettuce, peas. Also transplanting tomatoes in high-tunnels, liming and fertilizing hay fields. Finishing pruning raspberries and blueberries. Applying protective fungicides in fruit orchards. Soils are dry. Gusty winds of 40 mph occurred on Thursday (April 29).

**VERMONT – Jeff Carter, (Ext), Addison:** Snow this week stopped field work. It has been nice the past two weeks to spread manure on corn and hay fields. Spread fertilizer on hay fields. Some secondary tillage in a few fields to prepare for corn planting. Hay crop seems in good condition with green up. Dandelions are out and lilacs about to bloom. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Spring came in early April, a couple of weeks early, allowing farmers to get going early on Spring's Work. A lot of manure was spread in early April. A record snow on Wednesday gave us about a foot of snow. Tulips blooming, grass is growing. **Paul Stanley (CCA), Franklin:** We are off and running on another growing season and NASS reporting. Franklin County has had a wild start to the 2010 growing season with some wild swings in temperature and precipitation. Temperatures in the 70's and 80's have brought flowers to bloom, including apple tree's with big concern over a hard frost that could be detrimental to apples trees in full bud stage. A heavy snow last week was a poor mans fertilizer in surplus. Much power outage across Franklin County and drove cows inside that had been out grazing. Pastures are doing very well and the snow did not do a lot of damage, except limbs that came down on fences. Very little corn planted to date. A lot of manure and tillage has been done with the early good weather. This will allow for quick planting once we get soil temperatures up to the 50 degree mark. **John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille/Washington:** Despite last week's late snowstorm conditions are almost two weeks ahead of normal. Usual spring work underway including fencing, manure spreading, and tilling. Corn planting should start this week for the early birds as long as the weather cooperates. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** Last week was interesting weather-wise. Mid week brought us 12 to 18 inches of snow and then hot, hazy and humid weather by the weekend. There is some concern with the apple growers as the blossoms had just started when the snow came. I noticed trees had dropped some blossoms since the snow. About 20% of the corn ground has been planted and there has been some emergence as well. Germination looks pretty even. Plants are about 2-3 inches tall. Moisture is about average in the county. Last weeks snow added some needed moisture and with the warn weather that followed grasses have really started to take off. I have not seen anybody pasturing yet but a lot of preparations. Right now farmers are completing spring manure spreading and spreading fertilizer on pastures. Crop growers are finishing seedbed preparations and are getting ready to plant corn. **Julie Jacque, (FSA), Windham:** Plowing, harrowing and field conditioning ongoing, cold crops planted in minimal areas, some seeding going in for forage crops. Warm temperatures last weekend were followed by cold front and heavy frosts. Mid to late week, fluctuations may cause growth and blossom development problems.

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