



New England Agricultural Statistics Service

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United States Department of Agriculture

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Crop Weather

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September 23, 2002 - 4 pm

For week ending 9/22/02

Scattered Showers Welcomed

GENERAL CONDITIONS: For the week ending September 22, 2002, there were 6.0 days suitable for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated as 16% very poor, 34% poor, 35% fair, 15% good, 0% excellent. Scattered showers fell throughout New England last week, supplying much needed moisture to parched soil. Fruit, vegetable and field crop harvests continued on dry days. Pick-your-own operations and farm stands did good business over the warm weekend. Major farm activities included: harvesting shade tobacco, silage corn, potatoes, oats, barley, apples, peaches, pears and vegetables; applying vine desiccants to potatoes; cutting dry hay and chopping haylage; applying manure.

FRUIT: The harvest of apples, peaches, plums and fall raspberries continued last week. Increased drop of apples has been reported throughout the region, due to previously high winds coupled with rain. The mostly sunny, warm weekend was favorable to pick-your-own customers, and businesses did well. Some dry harvesting of cranberries continued in Massachusetts, but harvest is expected to really pick up next week.

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	-- Percent Harvested --			Condition
	2002	2001	5-yr Avg	
Apples	45	40	45	Good/Fair
Peaches	95	95	95	Good/Fair
Pears	40	45	40	Very Poor/Poor
Cranberries, MA	<5	15	5	Good/Fair

VEGETABLES: Cucumbers, beans, cabbage, pumpkins, squash, sweet corn, tomatoes, and other summer and fall vegetable crops were harvested last week. Lack of frost has extended vegetable harvest past normal. Fall crops and decorations were good sellers at farm stands during the nice weekend. Sweet corn has a mere five percent left to be harvested and remains in good to fair condition.

SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
Topsoil Moisture			
Very Short	22	32	25
Short	35	37	44
Adequate	43	31	28
Surplus	0	0	3
Subsoil Moisture			
Very Short	32	39	40
Short	33	32	28
Adequate	35	29	29
Surplus	0	0	3

FIELD CROPS: Second cut hay being wrapped up, with twenty percent of third cut remaining after last week. Some field corn is in milk stage, some in dough stage. Silage corn harvest progressed to 35 percent complete. Maine oat and barley crops have ten percent remaining to be harvested after last week. As Maine potatoes are being harvested, growers are finding that tuber size is larger than expected. Potato crops in Massachusetts and Rhode Island are over half harvested and are reported in good to fair condition. Connecticut shade tobacco harvest is winding down, a couple of weeks behind Massachusetts. Growers are starting to take tobacco out of sheds.

FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	-- Percent Harvested --			Condition
	2002	2001	5-yr Avg	
Barley, ME	90	95	85	Good/Excellent
Oats, ME	90	90	80	Good/Excellent
Potatoes				
Maine	20	25	20	Good
Mass	55	55	65	Good/Fair
Rhode Isl	80	85	70	Good/Fair
Silage Corn	35	50	35	Good/Fair
Sweet Corn	95	95	90	Good/Fair
Tobacco				
Shade	99	100	100	Good/Fair
Dry Hay				
Second Cut	99	95	90	Good/Fair
Third Cut	80	70	65	Fair

For the Week Ending Sunday, September 22, 2002

The 42 stations shown below are limited by space but are well distributed across the region. All 86 stations appear on the Internet and in e-mail subscriptions.

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		
MAINE															
Augusta_State_A	49	80	64	+6	2192	+207	980	+239	0.96	+0.23	2	1.91	-0.93	6	
Bangor_Intl_Arp	47	79	63	+7	2053	+242	875	+255	1.03	+0.24	2	1.94	-1.26	10	
Bethel	43	86	63	+7	1939	+153	769	+173	1.10	+0.33	4	1.51	-1.74	8	
Cari bou_Muni ci p	37	83	59	+8	1591	+173	589	+211	0.49	-0.29	3	3.07	-0.29	12	
Dover-Foxcroft	41	79	59	+6	1551	+1	515	+63	0.46	-0.45	3	1.83	-1.78	6	
Frenchville	35	82	58	+7	1461	+143	539	+216	0.37	-0.47	4	2.74	-0.80	14	
Houlton	36	82	60	+8	1631	+149	596	+172	1.09	+0.25	2	3.10	-0.41	9	
Livermore_Falls	40	86	63	+10	1991	+471	835	+406	1.07	+0.23	3	1.75	-1.72	8	
Moosehead	36	89	58	+7	1463	+178	472	+162	1.19	+0.35	3	2.79	-0.61	8	
Portland_ME	49	80	65	+7	2155	+318	931	+294	1.24	+0.53	2	2.81	+0.00	7	
NEW_HAMPSHIRE															
Benton	44	78	62	+8	1896	+263	737	+261	2.18	+1.48	3	3.19	+0.05	6	
Berlin_AG	42	82	62	+8	1820	+179	675	+178	1.54	+0.80	2	2.32	-0.96	6	
Concord	45	82	67	+11	2448	+460	1160	+423	2.03	+1.40	2	3.50	+0.82	7	
Diamond_Pond	42	76	60	+9	1290	+197	382	+177	2.12	+1.21	4	3.94	-0.06	9	
Keene_AP	46	81	67	+8	2366	+137	1071	+165	1.96	+1.26	2	3.35	+0.38	5	
North_Conway	45	84	64	+8	2237	+397	1007	+374	1.49	+0.72	3	2.12	-1.16	7	
Rochester	47	87	67	+8	2378	+242	1095	+252	1.20	+0.44	2	2.41	-0.58	5	
VERMONT															
Burlington_Intl	48	81	66	+9	2475	+360	1174	+338	1.11	+0.36	2	2.88	-0.40	7	
Island_Pond	42	76	61	+8	1686	+340	597	+272	2.62	+1.88	3	4.88	+1.43	7	
Montpelier	45	79	63	+8	1957	+296	767	+256	1.75	+1.12	3	2.47	-0.40	8	
Pownal	48	78	64	+8	2011	+271	788	+238	2.76	+1.89	2	4.38	+0.72	7	
Rochester	43	79	64	+9	1969	+322	781	+280	3.26	+2.42	2	4.22	+0.51	6	
Rutland_AG	45	80	64	+5	2076	-125	853	-31	2.19	+1.38	2	3.40	-0.08	4	
Sutton	43	78	61	+9	1755	+398	641	+304	1.15	+0.38	3	3.10	-0.36	7	
Townshend_Lake	47	82	66	+9	2247	+158	975	+161	1.66	+0.90	2	3.27	+0.04	7	
MASSACHUSETTS															
Ashburnham	48	79	66	+11	2334	+533	1039	+441	0.98	+0.33	2	2.57	-0.22	9	
Boston/Logan_In	59	83	70	+7	2977	+391	1572	+385	0.45	-0.25	2	2.60	-0.31	8	
Greenfield	51	83	69	+8	2555	+157	1209	+182	1.16	+0.39	2	3.26	+0.05	9	
New_Bedford	49	79	67	+3	2664	+42	1269	+50	1.14	+0.37	3	2.79	-0.58	10	
Otis_AFB	52	79	67	+7	2550	+423	1198	+352	0.88	+0.11	2	2.72	-0.38	8	
Plymouth	51	80	66	+6	2544	+364	1205	+318	0.62	-0.34	3	2.75	-1.15	11	
Walpole	50	81	68	+10	2654	+465	1300	+421	1.72	+0.88	2	3.55	+0.02	7	
Chicopee/Westov	48	81	69	+6	2813	+60	1424	+116	1.07	+0.23	3	2.48	-0.88	7	
Worthington	45	80	65	+8	2080	+302	861	+290	1.31	+0.47	3	3.59	+0.10	10	
RHODE_ISLAND															
Providence	54	81	69	+7	2965	+498	1555	+456	1.96	+1.16	2	3.78	+0.46	8	
Woonsocket	51	80	67	+8	2628	+472	1269	+432	1.50	+0.62	2	3.97	+0.36	7	
CONNECTICUT															
Bridgeport/Siko	58	80	71	+6	3029	+365	1596	+325	1.82	+1.12	2	6.40	+3.53	8	
Hartford/Bradlee	53	83	70	+9	2998	+366	1571	+355	0.55	-0.33	2	2.52	-1.07	7	
Norfolk	50	80	66	+9	2352	+576	1041	+470	1.61	+0.65	3	3.86	-0.13	8	
Thomaston_Dam	48	82	67	+8	2587	+448	1215	+391	0.55	-0.36	2	3.17	-0.65	9	
Willimantic	50	80	67	+8	2663	+479	1288	+430	1.42	+0.49	2	3.81	+0.15	8	

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 WEATHER SUMMARY
 For the Week Ending Sunday, September 22, 2002

State	Air Temperatures				Precipitation	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	31	89	61	+7	0.30	3.55
NH	36	87	64	+9	0.75	2.43
VT	39	86	64	+9	0.68	3.26
MA	44	86	67	+8	0.45	3.53
RI	51	81	68	+6	0.83	1.96
CT	48	83	68	+7	0.55	2.71

Prepared by AWIS, Inc.

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:

Farmers are starting to cut field corn. Early corn harvest looks good. **Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland:** Corn silage harvest continues with some finished. Some dry hay taken in. Vegetable harvest continues and apple harvest in full swing. Some tobacco ready to be taken down. Sowing rye seed for cover crop. "Celebrating Agriculture" in Woodstock had a great day and super turn out on Saturday the 21st. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** One-third of silage corn and apple crop harvested. Chopping grass. Peaches almost done. Pumpkins and vegetables being harvested. Unusual mac drop, apples are smaller. Fall bringing leaves tumbling down as harvest approaches its end. **Nancy Welsh/Karen Lockman (FSA), New Haven:** Humid weather continues with cool, dewy nights. Apples being picked and silage chopping continues.

MAINE - Marvin Hedstrom, Northern Aroostook:

Potatoes: Potato harvest has begun in earnest. Good soil conditions for harvesting with sufficient soil moisture to carry soil in harvesting equipment. Vine desiccation continues, also last of small grains being harvested. Some growers have chosen to let late season varieties grow a little longer than usual to get maximum tuber size. Crop quality is very good with tuber size a little larger than expected. **Pam Hickey (Ext), Central Aroostook:** Harvesting continues for small grains. Harvesting of potatoes has begun full swing. The scattered showers lately are welcomed. Crops are looking good. **Albert Dow (NRCS), Piscataquis:** Two inches of rain last Monday was welcomed. It did slow harvest down. **Donna Lamb (Ext), Piscataquis:** Corn silage harvesting has started. Sweet corn harvest is about at the end. Vegetable farms have started harvesting their pumpkins and winter squash. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Corn harvest continues. Rain again on Sunday night helping to keep the dust down. Apples in good shape. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Pumpkin, squash and corn stalks for sale at roadside stands. Harvest of silage corn has begun. Eighty-degree weather over the weekend, great for working outdoors! **Michael Tardy (FSA), Androscoggin:** It has been a good week for harvesting. I've seen some of the silage corn and it runs from terrible to pretty good. It appears as if there is more of the marginal silage than the good silage. A late surge of summer-like weather will bring out the "pick your own" folks and those that enjoy the market garden atmosphere. We see some schools taking students to the apple orchard and barnyard for visits. Everything helps and the students get a sense of the farming community. Soon they will be out in the pumpkin patch. I've also seen manure spreading pick up as the fields are harvested and prepared to go again next year. At least the dry weather is good for field work. **Parker Rand (FSA), Cumberland/York:** Weekend showers are good for the crops, but bad for u-pick operations. Still harvesting apples, corn, pumpkins, and some hay. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** Harvest is in full swing. Pastures have improved some. Ground water keeps dropping. **Laura Rand (FSA), Oxford:** Sunday and Monday's rain did little to relieve the dry conditions. Silage and potato harvest in full swing. Farm stands are an array of fall colors with pumpkins, squash, and mums displayed.

MASSACHUSETTS - Arthur Williams (FSA), Berkshire:

Harvesting corn going in high gear. Sweet corn nearly done as well as some veggies. Tomatoes slow to turn red. Still meat is some sweet corn, no known problems in other crops. Some light showers twice this week; no mud for the corn harvesting yet. **Kip Graham (FSA), Worcester:** Third cutting of hay underway. Some areas won't get a third cutting. Some areas of field corn looking good, in others it's not quite as good as past years. Considering

the lack of rain when needed most, it is holding its own. Sweet corn is nearing completion. In some areas, the sweet corn has not fully matured. Harvesting of most vegetables is coming to an end. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: A little dry harvesting in places, but the real fall harvest begins this week. As I write this on Monday morning (9/23), a nice rain is falling. This will certainly help to bolster the water supplies, a major concern for many growers. We have not had a single frost night so far! Nonetheless, color looks good at this point. **John Devine (FSA), Franklin:** Fall crop harvest continues. Silage harvesting is going at a rapid pace. Pumpkin and hard squash are also being harvested at this time. Apples and peaches, as well as pears look good right now. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** Two rainy nights caused tobacco damps so a few farmers took down tobacco to get ready to bundle. All farm stands have a great display of fall crops for sale. Dairy farmers are harvesting silage corn and vegetable growers are harvesting all their fall crops. **Gary Guida, Worcester:** Finished picking last of sweet corn this weekend. Harvesting of pumpkins, gourds, winter squash and tomatoes continuing. Big pumpkins and fall decorations good sellers this week along with - surprise - perennials! Hot weather has been slowing sales of mums. No appreciable rain, as my well has run out for the 6th time this year. Local fruit sales good. Harvest season coming to a close. Happy fall!? What we need is a merciful killing frost to end this awful season.

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Amy Ouellette (Ext), Belknap:

Harvesting McIntosh and Gala apples, plums, fall raspberries, pumpkins, and winter squash this week. Large amount of dropped apples this year. Tomato and pepper harvests winding down. Cover crops are being planted with hopes of rain for germination. Third cutting of hay continues. **Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll:** Recent rains have brought a bit of green to pastures and lawns. Some corn silage fields have spotty drought damage, some have just slightly reduced yields. All in all, harvest is going well and most corn looks good. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Most farms growing field corn are busy chopping - maturity is about ½ milk line. Areas showing severe drought stress are relatively small, but many farms are noticing somewhat lower yields. Haying continues with favorable weather. Orchards are busy with PYO and harvesting. Lack of frost has enabled vegetable growers to continue harvesting tomatoes, beans, and corn considerably later than normal. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Corn silage harvest begins in southern half of Coos County and Canada Geese are back. Generally nice weather for fieldwork. Last of second cut hay being put up. Heavy rains at weekend. Pumpkins and sweet corn available from local farms. Having looked at more corn fields this week, would say a lot still in milk stage. Could use more time to reach soft dough. Hoppers in one alfalfa field planted this spring in high numbers. Seeing curly top in corn fields under water this spring, very spotty but attention getting. Crop insurance agents out checking corn maturity. **Tom Buob (Ext), Grafton:** Corn silage harvest moving quickly. Quality varies from poor to good. Much of the corn affected by dry weather in August. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Fruit: Apple harvest continues with most growers concentrating on McIntosh and Gala apples - second picking, and Cortland and Macoun apples - first picking. Fall raspberry and pear harvest continued, along with peaches and plums. Blueberry harvest is nearly completed. Pick-your-own apple operations had a wonderful weekend. Vegetables: Harvesting wide array of summer and fall vegetable crops. Farmers kept busy irrigating crops not harvested and starting to clean up harvested fields. Pumpkin crop and winter squash yields vary from field to field and within a given field. Good demand for

all vegetables continues. Field Crops: Hay cutting continued, along with making haylage. Farmers continuing corn silage harvest. **Pam Marvin (FSA), Sullivan:** Some rain this week with cooler temperatures has improved conditions slightly. Silage corn harvesting continues with varying yields due to too much rain in the spring and then the drought. Apple picking is continuing with reports of apple size smaller than normal. Spreading of manure is ongoing as the corn comes off. Same with hay fields as the final cutting is being completed.

RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport: Potato harvest continues amid clouds of dust, crop is definitely down. Sweet corn, pumpkins, gourds, squash and cabbage being harvested. Raspberries and peaches look better than you would think, however the peaches are smaller. Some rain at the beginning of the week helped, but not enough to save some of the summer crops. Field corn being chopped, the crop is definitely shorter, total yields remain to be seen. **Marilu Soileau (FSA), All Counties:** Apple harvest is well underway. Cider making is up and running now that there are a variety of apple types. Strong winds mixed with rain knocked many first quality apples to the ground. The apples split open from rapid growth before the windstorm. They are unmarketable, even for cider! Pumpkins aren't curing well in this wet weather. At farm stands, decorative items are as popular as edible ones. Painted squash are a new hot item with the old standbys of corn stalks, gourds and pumpkins.

VERMONT - John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille: Corn silage harvest is progressing nicely. Growing conditions remain generally favorable for this time of year. Haven't come even close to frost yet and the weather looks good for at least another week. **Bill Snow (Ext), Orange:** Corn silage harvest now in full swing. Some farms waited for moisture levels of the corn to drop. Another good rain on Sunday will help keep the dust down. No frost yet, which is late for this area. Trees are starting to turn in

the higher elevations. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** Farmers have begun to chop corn. Conditions are still dry which makes chopping corn easier. Corn crop overall looks good. Ears are in the dough stage. Most of third crop hay has been harvested. Hay quality appears to be good but quantity is low. Two days of rain showers have helped ease the drought, but it is still really dry. **Lynette Hamilton (FSA), Windham:** Another dusty week in Windham County. We received more moisture from the fog than we did from rain. Corn harvest is in full swing and it looks like the yields will be OK. Apple producers are reporting that the crop is smaller in size than in past years and the color is late developing. They also report that the overall production is not as bad as had been predicted. **Jeff Carter (Ext), Addison:** Corn silage harvest. Immature ears and dry stalks. Some manure spread on harvested land. **Richard Noel, Franklin/Grand Isle:** Excellent week to harvest corn silage. First planted corn ready to harvest, but 2nd planted, 1st week of July, still in milk stage. But farmers missed the frost on the full moon, so they're good until the next moon hopefully! On some farms with heavy soils corn looks pretty poor. Grasses are doing better with last week's rain. All sorts of field work going on, conditions are good for working in the fields. Time to get wood in the wood shed - winter's coming! **Chris Benedict (Ext), Chittenden:** This past week was good overall. We had good, prolonged periods of rain with good sunshine. It is the middle of picking season with good quality apples coming off the trees. **Sherwin Williams, Rutland:** Still seeding winter rye, digging potatoes and picking good sweet corn from late varieties. Local farmers chopping corn. Frosts holding off good, but watch out for the full moon. Received 1.672 inches of rain. "New gauge works great." Crops left benefitted a lot from it. Still picking summer squash and cukes. Lots of tomatoes and cole crops. Winter squash and pumpkins ripening now and we have them in the market. Late cabbage looks good. Have a nice week.

To receive this report every Monday evening, send an e-mail message to listserv@newsbox.usda.gov and in the body, type **subscribe usda-new-eng-crop-weather**

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