



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 30, 2002 - 4 pm

For week ending 9/29/02

Fall Harvest Underway

GENERAL CONDITIONS: For the week ending September 29, 2002, there were 5.4 days suitable for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated as 10% very poor, 29% poor, 40% fair, 20% good, 1% excellent. Rain showers fell throughout New England near the end of the week. Field crops, fruit, and vegetable harvests continued. Warm weather over the weekend aided sales at farm stands and pick-your-own operations. Major farm activities included: harvesting silage corn, hay, potatoes, apples, pears, cranberries, and late season vegetables; plowing harvested fields, planting cover crops and spreading manure.

FRUIT: Orchardists continued to make good progress harvesting apple and pear crops. Fruit drop was heavy at many locations, some of which was caused by the heavy rain showers. Almost all the peaches were harvested by week's end. Massachusetts' cranberry harvest moved into full gear this past week. Rain showers helped fill reservoirs which should aid farmers who wet harvest cranberries. However, the rains came too late to increase berry size for many varieties. Full crop potential is also expected to be off due to heavier than expected cranberry fruit rot.

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	-- Percent Harvested --			Condition
	2002	2001	5-yr Avg	
Apples	60	60	60	Good/Fair
Peaches	99	99	99	Good/Fair
Pears	50	75	60	Very Poor/Poor
Cranberries, MA	15	20	15	Good/Fair

VEGETABLES: Growers stayed busy harvesting late season vegetables which included squash, pumpkins, cabbage, onions and gourds. The summer vegetable season was winding down; the remaining sweet corn, tomatoes and peppers were being picked. There were a few reports of light frost. Farm stands, farmers markets and pick-your-own operations were aided by the seasonably warm temperatures over the weekend.

SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
Topsoil Moisture			
Very Short	6	22	8
Short	33	35	48
Adequate	57	43	43
Surplus	4	0	1
Subsoil Moisture			
Very Short	28	32	33
Short	32	33	26
Adequate	37	35	41
Surplus	3	0	0

FIELD CROPS: Silage corn harvest continued despite the rain showers and half the crop was harvested by week's end. Farmers continued to harvest second and third cuttings of hay before the start of the cold weather. Maine's oat and barley harvest neared completion. Potato farmers in Massachusetts and Rhode Island made good progress harvesting tubers during the week. Maine's potato harvest fell behind last year and normal as of September 29, as growers delayed vine desiccation on late varieties to allow rains to improve size. Connecticut River Valley tobacco growers took advantage of damp conditions to take down tobacco and bundle it for sale.

FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	-- Percent Harvested --			Condition
	2002	2001	5-yr Avg	
Barley, ME	99	95	90	Good/Excellent
Oats, ME	99	95	90	Good/Excellent
Potatoes				
Maine	35	50	45	Good
Mass	65	70	75	Good
Rhode Isl	85	95	80	Good/Fair
Silage Corn	50	70	50	Good/Fair
Sweet Corn	99	95	95	Good/Fair
Tobacco				
Shade	100	100	100	Good/Fair
Dry Hay				
Second Cut	99	95	90	Good/Fair
Third Cut	80	75	75	Fair

For the Week Ending Sunday, September 29, 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	40	79	61	+6	2268	+240	997	+251	1.78	+1.01	4	3.26	+0.36	9	
Bangor_Intl_Arp	34	78	60	+6	2122	+273	888	+266	2.12	+1.35	3	3.81	+0.61	10	
Bethel	34	80	58	+5	1999	+179	781	+185	1.15	+0.38	1	2.40	-0.73	8	
Cari bou_Muni ci p	32	70	55	+6	1634	+200	595	+217	0.78	+0.02	3	3.84	+0.62	14	
Dover-Foxcroft	32	79	55	+4	1589	+15	523	+71	1.62	+0.71	4	3.45	-0.19	10	
Frenchville	32	71	56	+7	1506	+173	545	+222	0.54	-0.27	2	3.15	-0.29	14	
Houlton	33	74	56	+6	1675	+177	606	+182	1.91	+1.14	3	4.89	+1.52	10	
Livermore_Falls	31	83	58	+7	2049	+506	847	+418	1.82	+1.04	2	3.39	+0.05	9	
Moosehead	33	75	55	+5	1502	+200	481	+171	1.72	+0.88	2	4.51	+1.11	10	
Portland_ME	39	77	61	+6	2233	+354	948	+311	1.73	+0.96	5	3.60	+0.72	11	
NEW_HAMPSHIRE															
Benton	34	73	55	+3	1938	+275	746	+270	1.04	+0.34	2	3.77	+0.81	7	
Berlin_AG	34	77	56	+4	1863	+196	684	+187	1.42	+0.71	1	3.64	+0.58	6	
Concord	35	84	60	+5	2519	+490	1174	+435	1.33	+0.70	4	3.63	+1.02	10	
Di amond_Pond	31	67	52	+4	1318	+212	385	+180	0.84	-0.01	4	4.74	+0.99	12	
Keene_AP	36	81	60	+3	2434	+153	1083	+170	1.42	+0.79	3	3.49	+0.70	6	
North_Conway	35	78	58	+6	2297	+425	1019	+386	1.36	+0.56	2	2.92	-0.28	7	
Rochester	40	88	61	+4	2454	+267	1116	+266	1.09	+0.32	4	2.55	-0.44	8	
VERMONT															
Burlington_Intl	37	73	59	+4	2538	+381	1185	+344	3.75	+3.05	2	6.35	+3.27	8	
Island_Pond	31	72	54	+4	1721	+353	601	+276	1.93	+1.23	4	6.74	+3.60	10	
Montpelier	34	70	55	+3	1997	+305	771	+259	1.66	+1.03	5	3.94	+1.26	11	
Pownal	37	78	57	+4	2062	+286	797	+245	2.58	+1.74	3	5.56	+2.03	8	
Rochester	36	72	56	+3	2012	+331	785	+281	2.51	+1.67	3	6.38	+2.84	8	
Rutland_AG	34	72	56	+0	2123	-130	860	-31	1.23	+0.47	3	4.24	+0.91	6	
Sutton	33	72	55	+6	1793	+417	645	+308	2.19	+1.47	3	5.21	+2.02	9	
Townshend_Lake	38	79	59	+4	2311	+175	984	+163	1.74	+1.04	2	3.58	+0.52	8	
MASSACHUSETTS															
Ashburnham	40	81	61	+7	2410	+573	1056	+458	1.93	+1.26	3	3.27	+0.55	10	
Boston/Logan_In	50	84	65	+4	3085	+418	1610	+403	1.68	+0.98	4	3.39	+0.54	10	
Greenfield	41	82	61	+3	2633	+171	1222	+183	1.54	+0.77	3	2.98	-0.21	9	
New_Bedford	45	81	67	+5	2781	+73	1316	+73	1.85	+1.12	4	4.46	+1.30	12	
Otis_AFB	50	79	65	+7	2656	+466	1235	+379	4.02	+3.18	5	5.94	+2.79	11	
Plymouth	45	80	64	+7	2646	+405	1238	+343	1.57	+0.66	4	3.92	+0.09	12	
Walpole	43	82	63	+6	2746	+504	1327	+441	1.87	+1.03	4	4.47	+1.01	9	
Chillicothe/Westov	39	82	61	+0	2895	+64	1445	+118	1.81	+1.04	3	3.15	-0.14	8	
Worthington	34	79	58	+4	2136	+317	870	+295	1.68	+0.84	3	3.21	-0.21	11	
RHODE_ISLAND															
Providence	50	80	67	+7	3087	+545	1607	+491	2.03	+1.26	4	5.25	+2.00	10	
Woonsocket	43	82	64	+7	2727	+519	1301	+457	1.79	+0.95	4	4.54	+1.00	9	
CONNECTICUT															
Bridgeport/Siko	50	80	66	+4	3144	+392	1641	+344	1.56	+0.86	3	5.89	+3.02	9	
Hartford/Bradlee	43	84	64	+5	3096	+396	1603	+373	1.82	+0.98	3	3.23	-0.31	8	
Norfolk	42	78	59	+6	2417	+603	1050	+477	1.74	+0.83	3	3.94	+0.09	9	
Thomaston_Dam	43	82	62	+5	2669	+473	1232	+398	1.64	+0.73	4	3.54	-0.21	9	
Willimantic	43	80	64	+7	2765	+522	1324	+457	2.21	+1.30	3	4.88	+1.22	9	

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 29, 2002

State	Air Temperatures				Precipitation	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	26	83	57	+5	0.12	2.88
NH	24	88	57	+4	0.84	2.36
VT	29	80	56	+3	0.83	4.07
MA	34	87	63	+6	0.68	4.64
RI	43	82	66	+7	1.79	3.89
CT	39	84	63	+5	1.53	3.03

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: Rain fell at the end of the week, but not enough to slow field corn harvest. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Corn silage chopping progressing with results varying from good grain and small stalks to great harvest. Light rain reduced dust in fields and gave a boost to new seedings. Apple cider and winter squash are good. **Nancy Welsh/Karen Lockman (FSA), New Haven:** Heavy rains and strong winds during the week. Cool temps and with heavy dew at night. Winter squash has cracked. Apples and pears are being harvested. Poor yields on silage being harvested. **Richard Meinert (Ext), CT Cooperative:** Rain was welcome but we needed it a month or two ago. Corn silage harvest continued through the rain. Pumpkin sales growing as homeowners build fall lawn decorations. Corn mazes seem to be doing well this year.

MAINE - Marvin Hedstrom, Northern Aroostook: Harvesting rest of small grains. Potatoes: Harvest continues. Potato quality very good; yields on later varieties better than anticipated. Harvesting conditions excellent with growers covering ground rapidly. **Albert Dow (NRCS), Piscataquis:** Heavy rain Friday brought greener landscape. **Donna Lamb (Ext), Piscataquis:** Recent rains have helped the pastures come back. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Finally some rain to green things up. Corn harvest almost done. Apple yields seem to be smaller. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Bush hogging and flail mowing on blueberry fields now going on. Rain arrived Friday night, most areas getting 1 to 2 inches. **Michael Tardy (FSA), Androscoggin:** Harvest is winding down. Many farmers are getting fields and equipment ready for winter. Some silage corn is still going through the chopper and ending up in the bunker. Most producers had a light crop. Market gardens and apples are still plucking away. **Parker Rand (FSA), Cumberland/York:** Recent rain has helped, apples have sized nicely. Some potato growers are gambling and waiting to kill as potatoes are responding as well. Things are starting to green up and we are heading into fall! **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** We need some rain from some of these hurricanes and lots of snow this winter to get those ground water levels back up. Harvest is easy because the dry fields are very easy to work. FALL IS HERE!!! **Laura Rand (FSA), Oxford:** The rain received the first of the week was a blessing. Grass has started to get green again!!! Cooler nights have set in and frost has been reported in the valleys. Silage and potato harvest well underway.

MASSACHUSETTS - Arthur Williams (FSA), Berkshire: Harvesting continues. Last full week of sweet corn. Final summer vegetable push. One report of 90 percent crop failure in apples, also some pumpkin crop failures. Frost warnings, no hard frost. 2.5 to 3 inches of rain this week. **Paul Russell (FSA), Southeast Massachusetts:** Cranberry growers are expressing disappointment over the size and quality of their crops. The fruit is small and there is more rot than expected. The early varieties are a big disappointment however, growers are hopeful the late varieties will be closer to normal. The region got some much needed rain this past week helping to fill reservoirs for growers who need harvest water. Vegetables harvest winds down this week as growers finish harvesting an extremely poor crop of pumpkins and squash. Shellfish continue to have excellent growth with a very soft market. Growers are waiting for their field corn to dent before starting harvest with the crop severely stunted because of drought. **Kip Graham (FSA), Worcester:** Third cutting hay is wrapping up. Many farmers are moving rapidly in chopping silage corn. They are seen out there very early in the morning 'till way after the sun goes down into the night chopping corn. Very few vegetables being harvested, trying to beat the early frost. Farm stands still going strong trying to keep their doors open as much as possible before that killer frost. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: Harvest moving into full-bore. Crops have been as expected, with average to small berries. Horror stories of fruit rot, preventing some loads from being delivered. Possible frost night (the first) last night. **John Devine (FSA), Franklin:** Rain on Friday brought welcome relief

from the drought. Farmers have been busy cutting silage and harvesting fall crops. Potato producers are reporting that their harvested yields are better than normal, especially on rotated or irrigated land. Silage producers are reporting that the 2002 yield is very high in spite of the weather. Most believe that the corn crop benefitted from timely rains. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** A few days of rain caused tobacco to dampen. Many growers took down tobacco to bundle for sale. The harvest of summer vegetable crops is winding down. Fall harvest is full speed with harvesting silage corn, apples, cabbage, potatoes, winter squash and many more fall crops. **Gary Guida, Worcester:** Still no frost. Picking tomatoes, peppers and eggplant. Fall crop harvest complete. Seeding down rye, removing plastic and mowing along fields. Excellent weekend for retail farm stands, as sales of fall related items did extremely well. "Mum" sales picked up. However, this is a time of diminishing revenue as year-long customers start making their "final big purchase." With that in mind, do retail stores have to GIVE AWAY mums at a ridiculous price? Don't they make enough money? Apparently not.

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Amy Ouellette (Ext), Belknap: Apple, plum and pear harvests are in full swing with several varieties being harvested. Pumpkins and winter squash harvest coming along nicely. Retail farm stand, farmers' market and garden center businesses are busy with fall sales. Many vegetable harvests are coming to an end. Farmers are busy plowing crops under, preparing soil and planting cover crops. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Generally pleasant weather most of the week, with significant rainfall on Friday. Second cut hay is mostly done, and most of the third cut is being chopped or put into wet round bales. Some alfalfa almost ready for a fourth cut. Corn harvest is going strong - weather has generally been cooperative, and some farms are already done. Apple harvest and PYO continues - now harvesting Macouns. Vegetable farms still harvesting some corn, beans, and tomatoes. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Corn silage harvest now going on full steam with concern of what tropical storm may bring. Field checks with FSA indicate good overall maturity with somewhat better than average yields. Potatoes also coming in. Grass regrowing well with cool, wet weather we've been experiencing. Cows on pasture to conserve feed supplies. Pumpkins featured at farm markets. High tunnel tomatoes still productive. Cool nights with scattered light frosts. Still no really hard freeze. Good heavy rain this weekend to recharge wells. Aply assisted this week by State Police and FSA to weigh farm trucks throughout county to compute actual loaded truck weights. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Fruit: Apple harvest is in full swing with most growers concentrating on second picking McIntosh and Gala apples; working on Cortland and Macoun. Fruit size is excellent, but bruising can be a problem. Seeing a high amount of apple drop and with heavy rain showers on Friday sizeable number of apples dropped. Fall raspberries and pear harvest continued. Peach, plums, and blueberry harvest is completed. Vegetables: Harvesting wide array of vegetables, including warm season vegetables like tomatoes and peppers. Harvesting cabbage, kale, brussel sprouts, winter squash and pumpkins. Good demand for all vegetables continues. Farmers kept busy disking, cleaning up and planting cover crops on harvested fields. Field Crops: Field corn harvest in full swing. Second and third cuts of hay and haylage continue between showers. Some manure spreading on fields taking place. Cover crops were being planted in harvested fields. **David Seavey (Ext), Merrimack:** Apple harvest going well. Silage corn and vegetable harvest continues. Field corn harvest delayed on certain fields to improve ear quality. Winter squash and pumpkins were harvested. "Mum" sales are slow. Winter rye seedings following field clean up. Rain helped the drought situation but more is needed. Apple yield is down this year due to early spring frosts. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** No frost yet, which means harvesting still different vegetables. Harvesting apples, pumpkins. Apples: fruits could use some cooler night temperatures. Corn silage chopped earlier this season: as with

the lack of rain, growth was poor. **Pam Marvin (FSA), Sullivan:** Harvesting of silage corn still progressing. Manure spreading and applying winter rye is ongoing. Much needed rain fell on Friday. Too late for the corn crop but good for restoring water supplies and watering orchards. The last of the hay crop and haylage being harvested. Farmers markets are still being held to sell their late vegetables and products. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** The pastures are greening up due to the rain showers and cooler temperatures experienced in the week. Growers continue to harvest 3rd cut hay. Harvesting of sweet corn, pumpkins and other vegetables continued in the week. Fruit growers continued harvesting apples this week. Nurseries and garden centers continued to enjoy good sales for the fall garden mums.

RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport: Some third cut hay being done, crop is very light. Harvesting field corn; yields down at least 40%. Sweet corn yields for the season down 30%, unirrigated tomatoes down 60%. The high heat irritated the blossoms on the early peppers and they dropped like stones reducing the crop by 70-80%. The cool weather and rains have helped some of the later tomato and pepper crops. Farm ponds looking a little better after this weeks rain. **Marilu Soileau (FSA), All Counties:** Heavy rain fell this week. Pastures are greening up again. Cover crops and fall seedings are nearing completion. The weather was beautiful for pick your own harvesting this past weekend. Seasonal temperatures are welcome after an outrageous summer of extreme conditions.

VERMONT - John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille: There was a lot of rushing around last week trying to get crops harvested before heavy rains arrived at week's end. Corn silage harvest is a little ahead of schedule with many finding better yields than they expected. There were a few pockets of killing frost on Sunday morning but no widespread frost as yet. **Bill Snow (Ext), Orange:** Another good soaking rain on the weekend with 2.4 inch in my rain gauge. A little rush on Friday to get in as much corn silage before the predicted heavy rain. Still no frost except some reports of light patchy frosts in the upper elevations on Sunday. Prediction: Should be colorful next weekend in higher elevations! Safety Alert: Had two silage truck turnovers in the past few days within 10 miles of each other. One of the drivers is in critical

condition. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** Farmers are cutting corn. Most corn looks good. The ears are fully developed and are in the dough to dent stage. Most of the third crop has been harvested. It looks like most farms will have adequate feed for the winter. **Lynette Hamilton (FSA), Windham:** We received about 2 inches of rain last Friday. Veggie growers reported that about all winter squashes have been picked with some Butternut smaller in size because of the dry weather. Other fall crops are onions and cabbage that are still in high demand with local stores. Apple producers are reporting smaller apples but good color. Forage corn harvest is in full swing with third cutting mixed in when the weather permits. **Richard Noel, Franklin/Grand Isle:** It's either feast or famine as far as the moisture levels! Over 2 inches of rain Friday and fields are starting to get cut up. Much corn being chopped and more will be done after it reaches dent or frost whichever is first! That corn is too early to chop now, crop is still too green, making moisture levels extremely high even for bunkers. Last of third crop being chopped when the sun shines. Manure being spread, tillage work being done. Farmers getting ground ready to put to bed for the winter! **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Hurricane dropped 2 inches of good rain here, very little run off from it. Corn chopping in full swing, finishing up haying. Fall foliage seems a little 'late.' **Sherwin Williams, Rutland:** With nice weather, many farmers have finished chopping corn. We are still seeding winter rye as crops are cleaned up. Early seeded fields show a nice green cover. 75 percent of potato crop has been dug with good average crop. Great crop of winter cabbage. Rain over the week has been a bonus to finish slow maturing squash, pumpkins and gourds. Into final season for market garden. Halloween in the air. People love to decorate, that makes for good sales on pumpkins, squash, Indian corn, corn stalks, gourds and apples. A fun time for folks and kids to come to market. Have a nice fall week. **Chris Benedict (Ext), Chittenden:** Last week we had low temperatures and huge amounts of rain. As Isidore hit the Northeast we had over 2" of rain in Northwestern Vermont. The apples are developing good and harvest is almost halfway through. Beautiful weekend in terms of weather.

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