



New England Agricultural Statistics Service

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Crop Weather

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For week ending 8/31/03

Cooler Temperatures Begin to Arrive

GENERAL CONDITIONS: For the week ending August 31, 2003, there were 6.2 days available for field work across New England. Topsoil moisture was rated 5% very short, 16% short, 73% adequate, 6% surplus. Subsoil moisture was rated 5% very short, 15% short, 77% adequate, 3% surplus. Pasture condition was rated as 1% very poor, 13% poor, 32% fair, 47% good, 7% excellent. Northern New England states experienced below normal temperatures last week, while southern states were slightly warmer than normal. Minimal rain fell throughout the region, forcing many to irrigate where available. The dry weather allowed for much harvest to be completed. Major farm activities included: cutting haylage and making dry hay; harvesting broadleaf and shade tobacco, potatoes, small grains, apples, peaches, highbush blueberries, wild blueberries and vegetables; desiccating potato vines; spreading manure; irrigating; mowing; pruning; cultivating; monitoring fields; preparing harvest equipment; applying insecticides and fungicides; performing general farm maintenance.

FRUIT: The harvest of peaches, pears, plums and apples continued last week. Growers also proceeded with highbush blueberry, wild blueberry and raspberry harvest. As of August 31, growers had only ten percent of the highbush blueberry crop remaining to harvest. Cool nights in Maine have been favorable for wild blueberry quality as harvest winds down. Massachusetts' cranberry growers irrigated bogs last week and many geared up for white berry harvest.

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	-- Percent Harvested --			Condition
	2003	2002	5-yr Avg	
Apples	15	20	15	Good/Fair
Peaches	60	80	75	Good/Fair
Pears	10	10	15	Good/Fair
Blueberries				
Highbush	90	95	95	Good/Fair
Wild, ME	95	99	95	Good
Cranberries, MA	--	--	--	Good

VEGETABLES: Vegetable harvest was ongoing last week; growers harvested beans, beets, broccoli, cabbage, cucumbers, greens, onions, peas, peppers, pumpkins, squash and tomatoes, among others. Irrigation took place where needed. Some growers reported losing vegetable crops to rot due to consistently humid conditions that prevailed in early August. Sweet corn was rated in good condition last week as it reached 70 percent harvested, in line with last year and normal. Steady demand continues at markets.

SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
	-- Percent --		
Topsoil Moisture			
Very Short	5	0	32
Short	16	9	35
Adequate	73	72	33
Surplus	6	19	0
Subsoil Moisture			
Very Short	5	0	37
Short	15	14	34
Adequate	77	76	29
Surplus	3	10	0

FIELD CROPS: Lack of rain helped efforts to make dry hay, though cooler temperatures slowed the process. Cutting of the first hay crop was completed by week's end, while the second and third crop harvests continued close to normal schedules. Farmers prepared for the upcoming field corn harvest, many reporting a very good quality crop this year. A small number of Maine potato growers began to harvest for processors, and others continued with top kill on early varieties. Maine small grain crops were rated in good to fair condition as harvest progressed. Tobacco harvest in the Connecticut River Valley reached 85 percent complete for both shade and broadleaf crops, slightly behind normal.

FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	-- Percent Harvested --			Condition
	2003	2002	5-yr Avg	
Barley, ME	60	50	55	Good/Fair
Oats, ME	30	30	40	Good/Fair
Potatoes				
Maine	<5	10	5	Good/Excellent
Mass	25	40	40	Good
Rhode Isl	50	55	40	Good/Excellent
Silage Corn	--	<5	5	Good
Sweet Corn	70	70	70	Good
Tobacco				
Shade	85	95	95	Good/Fair
Broadleaf	85	95	90	Fair/Good
Dry Hay				
First Cut	100	100	99	Good/Fair
Second Cut	85	90	85	Good/Fair
Third Cut	35	50	40	Good/Excellent

For the Week Ending Sunday, August 31, 2003

All 86 stations appear on the Internet and in e-mail subscriptions.
 Due to space restrictions, only 41 stations appear below. These stations are well distributed across the region.

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	46	82	64	-2	1840	+87	819	+134	0.05	-0.65	3	1.62	-1.39	15	
Bangor_Intl_Arp	41	84	64	-2	1813	+212	802	+227	0.02	-0.75	1	0.69	-2.36	5	
Bethel	41	81	60	-4	1622	+33	650	+94	0.04	-0.86	2	3.54	-0.09	12	
Caribou_Municip	34	73	56	-5	1466	+168	567	+202	0.31	-0.59	3	3.38	-0.27	17	
Dover-Foxcroft	36	80	59	-4	1358	-37	489	+58	0.20	-0.67	1	1.35	-2.00	9	
Frenchville	37	73	55	-5	1339	+133	473	+160	0.12	-0.79	3	2.65	-1.07	11	
Houlton	32	76	58	-3	1544	+188	613	+205	0.50	-0.41	2	3.67	-0.02	11	
Livermore_Falls	36	83	60	-3	1694	+321	735	+325	0.05	-0.86	2	1.31	-2.41	12	
Moosehead	36	75	56	-4	1277	+115	441	+144	0.37	-0.47	2	3.29	-0.07	13	
Portland_ME	46	86	66	+1	1787	+176	768	+178	0.05	-0.65	2	1.04	-1.56	10	
NEW HAMPSHIRE															
Benton	40	78	59	-4	1577	+110	610	+160	0.27	-0.62	1	3.43	-0.19	10	
Berlin_AG	39	78	60	-3	1625	+147	641	+168	0.02	-0.92	1	3.04	-0.85	8	
Concord	39	86	66	+2	2051	+285	974	+287	0.00	-0.70	0	4.82	+1.83	13	
Diamond_Pond	37	70	53	-5	1165	+166	371	+174	0.55	-0.56	4	2.55	-2.07	16	
Keene_AP	39	82	65	-2	1976	+9	885	+50	0.02	-0.80	2	2.44	-1.07	13	
North_Conway	40	82	62	-2	1832	+184	812	+214	0.18	-0.71	1	5.88	+2.26	13	
Rochester	42	86	65	-2	1846	-36	820	+43	0.00	-0.77	0	2.39	-0.83	12	
VERMONT															
Burlington_Intl	43	82	65	-1	2163	+273	1014	+233	0.39	-0.52	3	2.11	-1.56	7	
Island_Pond	39	74	57	-3	1502	+289	561	+255	0.67	-0.35	4	3.83	-0.53	16	
Montpelier	40	78	61	-2	1630	+140	639	+162	0.34	-0.49	3	4.43	+0.95	12	
Rochester	42	80	61	-3	1661	+198	655	+192	0.00	-1.02	0	2.49	-1.67	11	
Rutland_AG	43	81	62	-5	1784	-164	741	-72	0.12	-0.79	2	3.36	-0.44	13	
Sutton	39	76	58	-3	1512	+282	561	+241	0.31	-0.69	3	4.36	+0.09	17	
Townshend_Lake	44	84	63	-3	1824	-23	775	+24	0.13	-0.75	1	5.07	+1.47	16	
MASSACHUSETTS															
Ashburnham	46	80	65	+3	1927	+322	858	+295	0.05	-0.70	1	4.22	+1.07	13	
Boston/Logan_In	55	87	73	+4	2306	+73	1169	+115	0.00	-0.76	0	1.99	-0.95	11	
Greenfield	46	85	66	-3	2082	-18	950	+15	0.07	-0.72	2	7.67	+4.36	16	
New_Bedford	51	87	70	-2	2074	-175	986	-83	0.00	-0.95	0	3.61	-0.22	12	
Otis_AFB	54	86	71	+4	2064	+232	1005	+244	0.00	-0.79	0	3.96	+0.87	13	
Plymouth	49	85	69	+2	1999	+106	924	+118	0.00	-0.98	0	4.91	+1.26	12	
Walpole	50	85	68	+2	2141	+216	1030	+221	0.00	-0.91	0	4.02	+0.45	11	
Chicopee/Westov	46	86	68	-3	2173	-228	1021	-153	0.22	-0.62	3	3.97	+0.77	15	
Worthington	40	81	62	-3	1663	+93	646	+119	0.01	-0.90	1	4.91	+1.17	12	
RHODE ISLAND															
Providence	55	87	72	+3	2283	+154	1133	+153	0.00	-0.84	0	4.58	+1.28	11	
Woonsocket	50	85	68	+2	2094	+201	988	+217	0.00	-0.91	0	3.13	-0.51	11	
CONNECTICUT															
Bridgeport/Siko	59	87	74	+3	2345	+59	1187	+74	0.08	-0.62	2	5.04	+2.13	11	
Hartford/Bradle	50	86	71	+2	2383	+74	1177	+70	0.01	-0.87	1	4.91	+1.59	11	
Norfolk	47	78	63	+0	1740	+166	692	+160	0.00	-1.05	0	4.42	+0.29	13	
Thomaston_Dam	48	86	67	+1	2156	+284	1001	+252	0.01	-0.97	1	4.69	+0.83	13	
Willimantic	49	85	68	+2	2205	+297	1063	+283	0.00	-0.91	0	2.22	-1.35	11	

STATE WEATHER SUMMARY
 For the Week Ending Sunday, August 31, 2003

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	AV	DFN	LO	HI
ME	32	87	60	-4	0.00	0.94
NH	30	90	60	-3	0.00	1.19
VT	36	87	61	-2	0.00	1.67
MA	40	87	68	+1	0.00	0.93
RI	50	87	70	+2	0.00	1.82
CT	45	88	68	+1	0.00	0.08

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 - Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland: Another dry week for harvesting crops. Vegetable producers moved many crops to market. Worms in sweet corn required many acres to be unmarketable and harrowed down. Crops on sandy soils required irrigation so producers were moving pipe late in the week. Broadleaf tobacco harvest continued with a few fields complete and others nearing completion. Shade producers were nearing the final priming on some farms and still applying fungicide to remaining leaves. More dry second and third cutting hay baled. **Marsha Jette (FSA), New London:** Producers taking advantage of good hay weather, finishing second cutting and starting some third cutting. Area sweet corn producers reporting many skips in the field. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Lots of late blueberries, small in size. Sweet corn winding down. Haying as much as possible this week. Apples and peaches are tasty and nice looking. Cool mornings upon us. Corn silage harvest begins where feed is short and at the opening of fields, the big effort is right around the corner. **Nancy Welsh/Karen Vozarik (FSA), New Haven:** Weather has been hot and humid with cool nights. Harvesting what is left of vegetables, since most rotted in fields. Mums are available. Macintosh apples are available and Gingergold apples. Some early pears making it to the market. **Richard Meinert (Ext), CT Cooperative:** Making third cut hay and trying to finish first cutting hay were the major activities this week. Cooler temperatures slowed drying, but a little rain was a welcome change. You can almost feel the anticipation as farmers scout field corn for correct moisture to harvest.

MAINE - Marvin Hedstrom, Northern Aroostook: Potatoes and small grains: Cooler weather persists with a few showers but ground is beginning to dry out after excessive rains received during the past month. Growers continue to apply vine kill on early varieties of potatoes, but later varieties need to size up a bit. Small grains being harvested when weather permits. Growers busy getting equipment and storage ready for harvest. A few potatoes have been harvested green and delivered to processors. **Steve London, Southern Aroostook:** Potatoes and small grains: Crops look good so far. **Albert Dow (NRCS), Piscataquis:** Farmers caught up on trimming un-mowed areas and on some construction. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Another dry spell as this area seems to have missed out on the last few rain events. Corn silage harvest will begin soon as the corn is starting to dry out on several of the sandy sites. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Blueberries are finished. Weed control with RoundUp has begun. Apples are ready. Cool weather has arrived. Haying continues. **Dr. David Yarborough (Ext), Washington:** Wild blueberries: Crop harvest finishing up. Cool night temperatures keeping berries firm and crop quality high. **Michael Tardy (FSA), Androscoggin:** What a great week! We saw lots of hay harvested and put away for the winter months. Those early apples were finding their way into the stores and into homes. Some dairy folks were spreading manure and the market garden owners were having brisk sales. People really like that fresh produce from the local grower. Let's look for a great fall and a great harvest. **Parker Rand (FSA), Cumberland/York:** This is the season for all manner of fresh vegetables. Farmers' markets doing a brisk business. It was very good hay weather last week and a lot was made. Farmers are gearing up for the fall harvest. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** A local farmer measured some of his silage corn at 14 feet tall with ears at a level over his head. Could be a record crop here. **Laura Rand (FSA), Oxford:** The harvest season is upon us. Potatoes, apples, squash, pumpkins, cucumbers, peppers, onions and other assorted vegetables are being harvested. Sweet corn harvest is in full swing. The week was cool and dry.

MASSACHUSETTS - Arthur Williams (FSA), Berkshire: Good days with several showers, but some hay was made - first, second and third cutting. Field corn is looking great with hope of no high wind with rain to knock it down. There have been a few reports that early spring conditions, wet and cold, deterred pollination and have affected the production of vegetable crops. **Kip Graham (FSA), Worcester:** Fall is quickly approaching. Seems like the summer has already passed us by. As the cooler weather approaches, crop growth slows to a stop. Most first and second crop of hay is in. Many farmers are green chopping. More and more are doing the round bales. Farmers getting machinery ready to begin chopping corn. It's a constant battle... repairing machines. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: Berries continue to develop. The size of the earlier varieties is the best I have seen in many growing seasons, on commercial beds as well as wild beds. Irrigation has been necessary, as no rain has fallen since August 17. Fruitworm continues to be a big problem for many growers. Several instances of slime molds in beds due to the excessive high humidity for nearly three weeks. Stem gall in three beds, indicating the harsh winter took its toll in some places. White berry harvest should begin this week. The crop looks very good at this point. **David Rose (FSA), Bristol:** Good weather for making hay. Harvesting of all crops

continues. A few pumpkins showing up on farm stands. Insect pressure is lessening. Disease pressure is still high. Fruit crops look very good. **John Devine (FSA), Franklin:** Fall harvesting continues. Most tobacco growers have finished with field work and the crop is drying quickly. Silage corn looks excellent but won't be ready for at least two weeks. The potato harvest is just starting and growers are concerned about storage problems. Producers are reporting earworm problems in sweet corn and Phytophthora problems in vine crops and peppers. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** The weather was excellent - dry and cool. All hay producers were harvesting their crop. Growers were harvesting apples, pears, potatoes and pumpkins for roadside markets and banana peppers for processing. Blueberries, cucumbers and tobacco are winding down. Growers were also applying a winter cover crop on many of the harvested acres. **Gary Guida, Worcester:** Went two weeks ago to visit family in Long Island, NY - farms stands and produce plentiful and the PRICES! If we could only get them here. And, yes, they do grow most of produce. Labor Day weekend and of course sales of corn was crazy! Mums all over the state and so are the prices. Pumpkins sizing up well, hope for nice, long fall season with no frosts! Consumer demand for tomatoes and other produce strong. Second application of herbicide in renovated strawberry fields, spraying fungicides and spraying corn for fall army worm. Corn infestation rate at two percent - glad I'm doing something right.

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll: Weather has been cool, with showers often enough to stop second cutting from progressing. There is not a lot of time left to get hay in, a few dry, sunny days would allow for some excellent second cutting to get in the barn. Powdery mildew on pumpkins and squash, but crop looks like it is just about ready. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Plenty of sun all week. Most field corn in late milk stage, some is just starting to dent. Great drying conditions - producers have been making lots of dry hay (second & third cut) and haylage/baleage. Blueberries starting to wind down. Early apple varieties available PYO and in farm stands. Farm stands also offering lots of veggies, some starting to harvest pumpkins. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Good week for the Lancaster Fair and haying with dry weather only spoiled by an evening shower. Seeing good second cut to compliment good first cut this year. Some third cut haylage also coming in. Some temperatures in the mid-30s with frost threatening. Lots of late season veggies on the market. Fall mums in flower, pumpkins coloring up, both showing up for sale. Fresh market potatoes being dug. Field corn looks excellent, later planted fields starting to catch up. Sweet corn readily available. Some earworm problems. Late season raspberries coloring. **Tom Buob (Ext), Grafton:** Third cut continuing. Regrowth is good to excellent due to sufficient moisture. Cooler weather has slowed growth, but still ahead of schedule. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** Another good week for weather. We received a tenth of an inch on Friday night, but other than that, there was no rain. The temperatures were cool, with the mornings remaining foggy. Typical weather for this time of year. The corn that was planted early is in full dent stage and is ready for harvest. Some of the later planted pieces still need another couple of weeks to a month for late planted fields. Ground water is still below normal. We were able to cross "wet areas" of pasture ground with a tractor, that normally you could not even get near. Crops are still growing well and using the available topsoil moisture. This may explain why subsoil moisture is still below normal. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Fruit: Orchardists harvesting peaches, plums, pears and Paula Red apples. Highbush blueberry harvest winding down, and fall raspberry harvest continuing. Cultivating and weeding newly renovated strawberry beds. Orchardists busy monitoring for pests, summer pruning trees, mowing orchard floors, fixing up orchard roads and moving bins into orchards. Vegetables: Harvesting an array of vegetables. Farmers kept busy harvesting crops, monitoring pest pressures and spraying pesticides for insect and disease control where needed. Field Crops: Hay making and cutting haylage continued during the week with the second cut and some third cutting being made. The remaining first cutting is only good for mulch hay. **David Seavey (Ext), Merrimack:** Heavy corn crop, but ears are a little smaller than normal. Some dry second and third cut hay put up. Poor pepper crop due to lack of heat units and poor start in the spring. Farmers spraying for ear worm but some finding this difficult during showers. Excellent sweet corn crop. Apple harvest underway. Orchards being mowed. Ideal conditions prevail for fruit and vegetable diseases. Apple maggot sprays applied.

RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport: Good haying weather and lots of field work being done. Harvesting potatoes, sweet corn and summer vegetables. Still spraying fungicides. Tomatoes and squash doing beautifully. Roadside stands are displaying colorful mums and fall crops.

VERMONT - John St. Onge/Kim Peterson (FSA), Lamoille: Another nice week for fieldwork. Corn silage harvest is now just around the corner and some producers will be starting next week. Vegetables have been doing well, especially sweet corn. Some manure being spread on second and third cut fields. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** Farmers are continuing to harvest second and third crop hay. The weather has become much cooler promising the fall to come. **Lynette Hamilton/Perley Sparrow (FSA), Windham:** Apple size has been reported smaller this year by several producers. The production is better than last year and the color they think will be OK. Field corn harvest will be one of the best we have seen, wet ground could be a problem at harvest time. There is still a strong sweet corn market and fall vegetables are starting to show up at farm stands. **Jeff Carter (Ext), Addison:** Some manure being spread on hay fields. Winter wheat at harvest. Soybeans vegetative. Corn variable in growth and vigor. Poorly drained sites range from complete loss to less than 5 ton/acre silage. Harvesting of first cut dry hay stretched out all season, some second cut dry bales. Haylage harvest on third cut in full progress. Good to excellent yield and quality alfalfa. Grass regrowth good during August. Pastures look improved with rain. Newly seeded hay fields look good, but planted very late, June through August, so no harvest expected. Late season weed control problems moderate in both new seedings and corn. **Eric Winchester (FSA) Orange/Windsor:** The past week has been relatively cool with little precipitation. We finally received a little rain over the Labor Day

weekend. Most farms are working on their third cut grass. This cut has been heavy. A fourth cutting may be possible this year for some fields. Corn looks good. It is starting to dry out and will be ready to chop very soon. The last of the sweet corn crop is being sold at farm stands. One farmer noted that worms have just started to show up in the sweet corn this past week for the first time this season, although other producers have had appreciable numbers of the pests all season long. I talked to one Orange County pumpkin grower who, despite sufficient weed control, ample opportunity for plant pollination, and healthy-appearing plants, has not had any pumpkins this season. The cause for this is unknown at this time. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Good late-summer, early-fall week. Heavy fog in valleys in mornings. Showery on Friday. Lots of hay moving. Corn is looking real good. Most dairy farmers very pleased with this growing season. A few trees beginning to show some color. **Chris Benedict (Ext), Chittenden:** Cooler weather last week quickened the ripening process in early apple varieties. Most early varieties have been picked. **Heather Darby (Ext), Franklin:** Third cut still being harvested. I've seen corn from blister to dent stages. Some early maturing corn fields being harvested. **Sherwin Williams, Rutland:** Rain was a bit short (0.192 inches) for the week, but two light showers helped. Seeding winter rye on fields as they are picked. Picking good crop of late varieties of sweet corn. All cole crops doing well, especially cabbage. All crops showing maturity, tomatoes finally made it. Will start to pick winter squash after Labor Day. Have a good week at the fair.

August 2003 Crop Weather Summary: Hot, humid and rainy weather dominated the month of August, turning cooler and dry toward month's end. These conditions encouraged increased levels of insect activity and disease, so farmers actively sprayed fields for control. Pasture and hay condition continued to improve throughout the month. By August 24, both the third crop of hay and silage corn were rated in good to excellent condition by crop specialists, a significant improvement from ratings earlier in the season. Potato harvest was well underway in Rhode Island and Massachusetts, though slightly behind normal schedules. A small number of cases of potato late blight surfaced in northern Maine, but overall quality and condition of the Maine crop remained good to excellent. The harvest progress of Maine small grains was behind normal schedules earlier in the month, but then caught up to the five-year average during the week ending August 24. Shade and broadleaf tobacco harvest were both well behind normal progress and were rated in fair to good condition; blue mold had been detected in Connecticut broadleaf fields. Peach harvest continued throughout the month of August, progressing behind schedule after experiencing a late start. Apple and pear harvests were just getting underway by month's end. Specialists in Maine rated highbush blueberries in poor condition; however, good to fair conditions prevailed throughout the rest of New England as harvest was winding down. Maine's wild blueberry harvest was also nearing completion by month's end and looked to be in good condition. Cranberries in Massachusetts were also rated in good condition at month's end; growers irrigated and prepared for the first harvest of white berries.

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