



The Outlook

January 11, 2010

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Southeastern Chill

Clear skies across Florida, combined with the current Arctic cold air advection, have led to many areas experiencing record low temperatures over the weekend into this morning. Record lows were broken across Northern and Central Florida with even some southern zones (Fort Myers 30 degrees) reporting record low temperatures. Forecasts expect another couple of cold nights, especially in Central Florida and to the north, before temperatures begin to moderate mid-week, returning to seasonal temperatures with a chance of showers late this week.

At this point growers are attempting to mitigate crop damage with irrigation, heaters and other means as cold overnight temperatures continue over the next couple of days. Crop damage assessments will be an ongoing process following these temperatures but it is safe to say that all crops have been affected to some degree. With numerous crops and such a huge area impacted (entire Gulf Coast) accurate crop assessments will take some time to complete. Many crops were already behind schedule, due to weeks of cooler temperatures, before these latest freezing temperatures hit. Rain expected late this week will only exasperate problems as mold, mildew and disease gain easy access to plants damaged by the freeze.

Another important factor to keep in mind is the upcoming spring acreage in these regions. Many growers have delayed plantings in anticipation of these temperatures, while others may have to replant their acreage. This may create a gap in supplies from this region come spring harvests.

Crop damage assessments and evaluations will continue well into January as many crops will take weeks to show the true extent of damage. Upcoming weather patterns will play a crucial role as to future supply and quality. There is speculation (long range forecasts) of another freeze event possibly later this month. As always we will do our best to keep you up to date with the ever changing information.

