

Cool weather slows crop growth

HARRISBURG -- Commonwealth farm operators rated five days suitable for fieldwork during the week ending June 16. Rain limited activity early in the week, according to the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service.

Field activities included spraying; cultivating corn; filling silos; making hay and haylage; planting potatoes, soybeans and tobacco.

Soil moisture was rated mostly adequate to surplus throughout the Commonwealth. Soil moisture was rated 71 percent adequate and 22 percent surplus in the north; 76 percent adequate and 24 percent surplus in the central counties; and 91 percent adequate and nine percent surplus in the south.

Corn planting is virtually complete, the same as last year. Statewide, the average height of corn is seven inches compared to nine inches last year. The crop is six inches tall in the north and eight inches tall in southern areas.

Tobacco is 56 percent planted, behind last year's 66 percent planted at this time.

Soybeans are 83 percent planted, compared to 85 percent planted last year. The northern counties continue to lead the state with 97 percent planted while the central and southern counties reported 85 percent and 75 percent planted, respectively.

Traces of barley are ripening, with 65 percent headed, 34 percent turning yellow, and less than five percent ripe. The northern

areas reported 86 percent headed. Last year, 50 percent was headed, 45 percent turning yellow and five percent of the barley was ripe. The northern areas reported 87 percent headed and 12 percent turning yellow. In the central areas, 66 percent was headed and 34 percent is turning, while the south reports 46 percent headed, 51 percent turning and three percent of the barley ripe.

Wheat is beginning to turn at 90 percent headed and eight percent turning yellow. This compares to 84 percent

headed and less than five percent turning last year. The north reported 86 percent headed and 10 percent turning. The central portion of the state reported 96 percent headed and three percent turning, while the south reported 85 percent headed and 13 percent turning.

First cutting of alfalfa averaged 51 percent complete, statewide. This compares to 44 percent harvested last year. The north, central and southern areas reported 31, 53 and 72 percent harvested, respectively.

The southern counties also reported traces of second harvest, which is comparable to last year.

Hay quality for the week was mostly good to fair. In the north, 54 percent of the hay was reported of good quality and 31 percent fair, although many reported conditions too wet for haymaking. In the central counties, 53 percent was reported fair and 47 percent good. The southern section reported hay at 70 percent good to 20 percent fair quality.

Record Florida tomato harvest taken

ORLANDO, FL — Florida's tomato growers have just completed harvesting a record crop of 34.5 million cases. This translates into well over one billion pounds of tomatoes and represents a 14.6 percent increase over last year's all-time high. The announcement was made by Wayne Hawkins, executive vice president of the Florida Tomato Exchange.

"This year's abundant crop has meant lower prices for the consumer and gainful employment for about 7,000 American produce workers," said Hawkins. "The fact that all of Florida's tomatoes were easily marketed shows their expanding popularity."

Coincidentally, an ever-increasing amount of tomatoes picked in Florida are indigenous to that state. They come from specialized breeds of plants developed for Florida's sandy soil and meet strict criteria for taste, color and nutrition. Dramatic increases in yield per plant have meant record harvests for a fixed amount of acreage.

The new strains are emerging from the Florida Tomato Exchange's extensive research and development program which has been active for five years.

Escalated participation this year in the integrated pest management program, which is unique to the United

States, has significantly reduced the impact of pesticides on the environment. Research continues in Florida to develop a tomato species that will contain its own natural defense against pests and disease.

Planting for the 1980-81 season in Florida will begin in July.

HARRISBURG — in response to increasing public outcry against hazardous waste siting in residential areas, State Grange Master, Charles E. Wismer, Jr., has again called for the state to "take the initiative" and use state-owned land for hazardous waste dumps.

"Since the state is working so hard to pass legislation in this area," Wismer said, "it should set the example, and use some of its own land, that is far away from population centers."

Wismer stated that his organization was still working toward getting legislation passed in Harrisburg to this effect.

The need for this kind of law was reinforced by a

proposed zoning change in Franklin Township, Fayette County.

The Grange became involved as a result of a request for State Grange Action from members of the Fayette County Granges. The Granges were intensely opposed to a proposed zoning change, which would allow hazardous waste dumping sites to be constructed along Rt. 51 in Watersburg.

Concern was voiced because of possible adverse effects on local water carried in the Redstone Creek.

"If these dump sites were located in state-owned lands, and located far enough away from people," the State Master said, "it would certainly demonstrate the state's willingness to deal with the problem."

Wismer went on to say that "there was no reason why a hazardous waste disposal site has to be located near people".

In conclusion, Wismer recognized that there was a need for disposal sites of this kind, but said he felt that sitting on state lands would not only remove the problem from populated areas, but also free private-sector land for better uses.

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