

March 30, 2020

FLORIDA: March temperatures were on average 1 to 10 degrees warmer than historical values. Total rainfall for the month ranged from no rain in multiple locations to 3.7 inches in Leon County. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, the state went from 39.5 percent experiencing abnormally dry conditions at the beginning of March to 88.5 percent by the end of the month. Pasture conditions steadily declined throughout the month due to the dry soil and the increasing temperatures. Cattle conditions remained mostly good. Sugarcane harvest was ongoing. Pest and disease pressures were reported on strawberries and tomatoes throughout the month. A wide range of vegetable crops came to market but the impacts of COVID-19 began impacting producers due to the closing of restaurants and food service operations. Citrus fruit harvested for the fresh market included white and red grapefruit, Valencia oranges, as well as Honey, Tango, and Royal tangerines. Citrus grove activities were normal for this time of year, which included mowing before harvest, fertilizing, hedging, topping, and irrigation.