Light scattered frost struck the region on January 6th. At the FAWN weather station at SWFREC, in Immokalee, temperatures below 32 degrees were recorded from 1:00 am to 7:45 am. The lowest temperature recorded was 29.6 degrees. With few exceptions, most growers report little or no damage to most plantings – mostly leaf burn on the top and southern side of plants. Normally cooler areas, like Alva, Felda, LaBelle and Lehigh, were most affected, as were tender warm season crops like squash and melons.

Leaf miner numbers continue to be up across the area. Reports from east Naples, indicate that leaf miner counts have stabilized and possibly even declined in the past few weeks. Leaf miner is being seen widely in potato and tomato, and to a lesser extent in pepper and cucurbits. Leaf miners should be active for the next few months.

Aphid populations are starting to pick up in potato and pepper plantings. Incidence is sporadic.

Pepper weevils are being detected in traps at several locations over the past 7 – 10 days. Numbers remain fairly low and injury minimal.

A few loopers and beet army worms continue to be reported from isolated plantings in the Devil’s Garden area.

Bacterial spot and most foliar fungal disease activity continues to decline across the area. Reports of new infections are down and crop damage light to moderate in most cases.

Target spot is widely present on tomato. Damage is generally low to moderate and tends to be most severe in older crops in their second or third harvest where foliage is dense and harvesting has damaged plants and help spread the pathogens.

Thrips numbers remain low and appear to be primarily melon thrips (T. palmae).

Scattered reports of late blight on potato have been received from several locations around Immokalee. To date, infection levels are reported to be low. Heavy dews coupled with foggy morning conditions may provide optimum conditions for the spread of this disease, but growers are reportedly keeping it in check.

Southern blight has been identified on a few isolated pepper plantings in the east Naples area.

White mold is being widely reported on snap beans. Incidence is generally low.
Early fall plantings of potatoes established under high soil moisture conditions and warm soil temperatures are developing moderate to high levels of **black leg** and **rhizoctonia**, which has the potential to seriously affect yields and tuber quality.

**Tomato yellow leaf curl virus** incidence appears to be on the rise. **TYLCV** is being reported from more fields from sites across the area. Incidence is generally low around 1% and in most instances is occurring on older crops on shoots at the tops of the plants. Some newly planted fields are showing higher levels of diseased plants. Affected plants are being rogued-out upon identification. In these cases, there appears to be some correlation with the geographical source of the diseased plants. Growers would be well advised to source transplants from areas of the state with low incidence of **TYLCV** infection. With the fall crop coming to an end, the major concern is carry-over to the spring crop.

**Tomato mottle virus** and possibly **tobacco mosaic virus** has been reported in a few older plantings of tomato.

Relatively high **whitefly** counts are being reported across the area on a number of crops. This is particularly true on older plantings. With the presence of **TYLCV** in SW Florida, this should be a concern to local growers. Growers need to be especially diligent in cleaning up old crops promptly as **white flies** as well as **leaf miners** can build up rapidly in old unsprayed fields. **Pepper weevils** and **aphid** populations can also build up quickly in old pepper plantings. Information from the field indicates that Knack and Applaud may be difficult to obtain on short notice.

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The SW Florida Pest and Disease Hotline is compiled by Gene McAvoy and will be issued on a biweekly basis by the Hendry County Cooperative Extension Office as a service to the vegetable industry.

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