January 4, 2002

A cold front that moved across the peninsula over the past few days bought rainy skies and the season’s lowest temperatures to south Florida this morning. Low temperatures recorded at FAWN weather stations around the region ranged from just over 33°F in Fort Pierce and Immokalee to just over 39°F in Fort Lauderdale and Homestead. Scattered patchy light frost was observed around LaBelle on cars and building roofs but there have been no reports of crop damage from growers.

The current cold front is the latest of several that began affecting the area in late December ending the unseasonably warm dry weather that had affected south Florida in November and early December. Each of these fronts has been accompanied by significant periods of rainy weather with total accumulations for the period ranging from 0.78 inches in Fort Pierce to 2.01 inches in Homestead. Daytime highs have ranged in 60- and 70’s with nighttime lows in the 40’s, 50’s and 60’s. Growers and scouts have indicated that the wetter weather has caused report that some increase in disease pressure but has helped slow down some of the insect problems experienced earlier in the season.

FAWN Weather Summary

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<th>Date</th>
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<td>83.1</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>0.8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Reports indicate that crops across the area are in mostly good condition. Vegetables available include tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, eggplant, endive, escarole, lettuce, pickles, radishes, snap beans, squash, strawberries, sweet corn and specialty items.
The short term forecast from the National Weather Service in Miami calls for clear skies with decreasing winds. Daytime highs should reach the mid 50’s today and will drop to the mid 30’s tonight. Looking ahead there is a chance of scattered showers on Sunday and again toward the later part of the week. Temperatures will range between from the mid 70’s during the day to the 40’s at night. For additional information, visit the National Weather Service in Miami website at http://www.srh.noaa.gov/mia/newpage/cgi-bin/master.pl?suite=home

Worm Pressure is generally low across the region. Cooler weather over the last few weeks appears to have reduced worm pressure from the unusually high level reported in the past few editions of the South Florida Pest and Disease Hotline.

Reports from Palm Beach indicate that worm populations are tapering off, although a few Southern armyworms and beet armyworms are still being found along with an occasional fall armyworm. Some growers have reported finding large worms in older tomatoes where sprays had been curtailed.

Respondents in the Boynton Beach area report finding small numbers of pinworms on eggplant and tomatoes. Growers have used Capture and SpinTor for control.

East coast growers have reported finding some diamond back moth larvae in miscellaneous cole crops.

Around Immokalee, worms have slowed some but scouts continue to find new hatches in some fields. These are mostly southern armyworms but there are also some reports of a few loopers, fruit worms and beet armyworms. Fall armyworms are still being found in sweet corn in Devils Garden, but numbers are greatly below previous levels.

There are have been a few scattered reports of pinworms on tomato from around Immokalee.

Reports from the Naples area indicate dramatic fall off in worm pressure compared to several weeks ago.

Around southwest Florida, leafminer pressure has taken over as the major insect problem. Growers are reporting problems with leafminers in range of crops including tomato, potato, pepper, cucurbits and beans. Most respondents have indicated that they have had to make repeated application for leafminer control over the past few weeks. Some growers report having to spray plants in the ground just 10 days and indicate that the leafminers just won't quit. Some growers have reported excellent results with TriGard on tomato.

Several scouts have indicated that leafminer pressure appears to be at or above normal levels for this time of year. Although there have been reports of severe pressure in some fields with 10 adults on every plant just about every visit as well as heavy stippling and counts like 35 dead per trifoliate. A number of scouts have observed that an increase in leafminer pressure in field adjacent to crops that are being destroyed after harvest is complete.

Respondents in Palm Beach indicate that leafminers are present at in moderate numbers. Some fields of tomatoes and eggplant have needed treatment within two to three weeks after transplanting.

Natural enemies, primarily parasitic wasps, will often help control leafminers. If these parasites are killed by pesticides leafminer outbreaks may become more severe.

Growers have obtained good results with abamectin (Agri-Mek), cyromazine (Tri-gard) - peppers, spinosad (Spintor) and azadirachtin (Neemix). These materials are relatively soft on beneficials. Although there are a number of other labeled materials that will give good control, growers should avoid the use of harsh chemicals to control other insects if possible to help preserve beneficial populations.
As always, growers are advised to practice resistance management and avoid repeated back-to-back applications of all pesticides. Attention to sanitation and destruction of old fields is also important as leafminer populations can build in abandoned fields.

Broadmites are still causing problems across South Florida production areas and several respondents have indicated that they appear to be more persistent this year than in the past seasons.

Outbreaks of broadmites are still being found in pepper and eggplant along with a few two spotted mites and red mites in Palm Beach County. There have been some spotty infestations appearing in new pepper plantings typically becoming apparent as they begin to flower.

Grower and scouts around southwest Florida also report continued widespread broadmite problems in pepper requiring treatment.

Reports indicate that silverleaf whitefly populations continue to buildup in crops.

Respondents in Palm Beach indicate that whitefly numbers are increasing in tomatoes and squash and that more adults can be seen blowing around.

Silverleaf whitefly populations are beginning to increase seasonally in older fields that are being harvested. Growers are encouraged to begin watching populations more closely as crops begin to mature and initial control from imidacloprid and thiamethoxam has begun to dissipate.

As control with soil-applied nicotinoids diminishes growers should begin to use other products of other chemical classes for control. Choices would include products such as Thiodan, soaps or the insect growth regulators Knack® or Applaud. With Knack® or Applaud, growers will need to work around the 14 and 7 day PHI’s where treatment is needed at harvest.

Growers are also reminded of the importance of sanitation and rapid destruction of crop residues once harvest is complete.

Respondents in Palm Beach indicate that there have been no new occurrences of pepper weevils. Pepper fields where weevils had been reported earlier have been mowed down because of the weak market.

Around southwest Florida, pepper weevils are increasing, especially in some older fields. Although not always as obvious they are following the whitefly pattern of building in older fields and then moving to new sites when the fields start to decline or get destroyed.

Reports out of Palm Beach indicate that low levels of mixed populations of thrips are still being found. Counts are averaging one per bloom with 1 in 10 being T. palmi. A small amount of foliar etching from thrips feeding has also been observed. Populations are starting to increase in blooms of older pepper where growers have curtailed spraying because of low market prices.

Around southwest Florida, very low numbers of Florida flower thrips (Frankliniella bispinosa) are being found in pepper and eggplant. At this time, pressure is light and generally not considered to be a problem.

There have been a few scattered reports of low levels of aphids and stinkbugs from across both coasts.

Several respondents have noted a modest increase in disease pressure over the past few weeks. Several periods of cool all day rain have undoubtedly contributed to this situation.

Around Immokalee, some respondents indicate that bacteria leafspot has gone wild in the fall tomato crop. In other fields bacteria remains active but at more moderate levels. Growers report seeing some bacterial
spot in the spring crop often starting in association with leafminer damage, but generally remaining low in the plant.

**Reports from Palm Beach indicate that the incidence of bacterial spot has increased more in pepper than in tomato.** In some cases, it has moved into some young pepper plantings, which are growing rapidly and is also spreading in older plantings where it had been detected earlier. In other plantings, peppers remain clean four weeks after transplanting. In a few cases, bacterial spot has been found on very recently set tomato transplants.

**Scouts continue to report finding early blight on tomato and potato around Immokalee.** Incidence and severity is low.

**Target spot remains as a problem in tomatoes and eggplant around Palm Beach County.**

**Respondents around Immokalee continue to report finding target spot in tomato but incidence and severity is mostly low.**

**Reports from southwest Florida indicate finding new sclerotinia infections (white mold) on beans, tomato, potato, and peppers.** If extended cool wet weather conditions continue this disease has the potential to become a real problem.

**Respondents from Palm Beach report a few new occurrences of phytophthora in pepper at the blooming to fruiting stage.** The incidence is estimated at less than 1% in the fields where it has been found.

**Reports of powdery mildew on squash continue to come in from both coasts.** Powdery mildew is widespread in older cucurbits especially squash. Incidence and severity is generally low to moderate although some severe infections have been noted. Producers in Palm Beach also report some problems with powdery mildew on strawberries.

Dr Pam Roberts, Pathologist at the Southwest Florida Research and Education Center has noted finding powdery mildew on tomato.

**This is relatively new disease.** This specific type, caused by the fungus *Oidium lycopersicum*, was first reported in North America in Quebec in 1993. By 1997 it had spread to Florida, and now affects tomato growers in many eastern states from north to south, including North Carolina.

**Worldwide, the powdery mildews are some of the most destructive fungal pathogens affecting agriculture.** The various species are distinguished from each other by physical characteristics, host range and conditions under which they thrive. *"Oidium"* has been found only in its asexual productive stage. Its primary inoculum are conidial spores, which are easily spread by air and wind currents to leaf surfaces. High relative humidity at the leaf surface and moderate temperatures are required for conidial germination. In the field, this pathogen is sensitive to local environmental conditions, which can moderate the extent of infection. *Oidium* has a large host range of plants from at least thirty families, including vegetable crops (tomato, pepper, cucumber, squash, potato, melons), tobacco, and many ornamentals, and native plant and weed species. The wide range provides a reservoir in which the pathogen survives and overwinters in proximity to tomato fields. This allows recurring infection on each susceptible crop, as well as a continuing source of infection throughout the growing season.

**Oidium lowers crop yields by reducing photosynthesis and impairing plant productivity.** This fungus lives on the leaf surface. It sustains itself by sending feeder structures through the leaf cuticle into the epidermal cells, where it absorbs nutrients, thus depriving the plant of sustenance. Typical signs of the pathogen are the distinctive white fungal growth that appears on the upper leaf surface, often affecting the lower, more mature foliage first. Starting as a small fuzzy patch, the fungus can spread until it covers the whole leaf, sometimes
moving to the underside, stems and stalks. This is followed by leaf yellowing, as nutrients are removed and photosynthesis is inhibited. As the host becomes stressed with advancing infection, respiration and transpiration increase. This continuing biological drain on leaf tissue results in desiccation, necrosis and partial defoliation. Host plants are not killed by *Oidium*, but productivity and yield are significantly reduced.

**An integrated spray program that rotates products in order to prevent development of pathogen resistance is recommended.** Bravo typically included in a tomato spray program contribute to powdery mildew control Quadris (azoxystrobin) and Nova (myclobutanil) provides excellent preventative and residual protection. Also available is a biofungicide from Ecogen. AQ10 is the parasitic fungus Ampelomyces quisqualis, and can be used with strobilurin fungicides. Refer to product labels for spray intervals.

**In southwest Florida, the incidence of downy mildew appears to be increasing on squash.**

**Respondents on both coasts continue to report finding tomato yellow leaf curl virus in a few widely scattered tomato plants.** Incidence is low although most reports indicate a gradual increase in the number of infected plants as the season progresses. In most cases incidence remains fairly low with only an occasional infected plant every few of acres present.

**On the east coast reports indicate that TYLCV has been gradually increasing in tomatoes with most incidences being spotty with less than 1% infection.** Some higher rates of infection are being noticed in older plantings where SLWF management of has decreased.

**Growers should be prepared to use alternative whitefly control measures including IGR's as Admire begins to wear off and whitefly populations increase.** Growers should rogue out infected plants as identified. It is disturbing to see some fairly large infected plants in fields that have apparently been left in place for several weeks or more. A complete IPM approach including sanitation, eradication (roguing) and chemical control of the whitefly vector is essential in controlling this disease.

**Respondents in Palm Beach County report finding patches of fusarium crown rot in some old tomato fields which have already been picked or two times.**

**Growers around Immokalee continue to report seeing fusarium crown rot in older tomato. There are also some scattered reports of Race 3 fusarium wilt.**

**Small amounts of anthracnose have been found in some old pepper plantings in the Boynton/Delray Beach area.**

**Squash producers around southwest Florida report widespread occurrence of mosaic virus.** Incidence is low to moderate. Dr Pam Roberts indicates that samples that have been received at the Disease Clinic have tested positive for Zucchini Yellow Mosaic Virus.

**Dr Roberts also reports diagnosing tomato spotted wilt virus on tomato.**

**Up Coming Meetings**

**February 12, 2002**

Training in the Production and Utilization of Compost for Horticultural Cropping Systems
Southwest Florida Research and Education Center
Immokalee, Florida
For more information contact Dr Monica Ozores-Hampton at 941-658-3400
Orlando, Florida
For more information check out the convention link at United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Website at: http://www.uffva.org

December 8-12, 2002 Cucurbitaceae 2002
Naples Beach and Golf Club, Naples, Florida
Contact Don Maynard at 941-751-7636 ext 239 or dnma@mail.ifas.ufl.edu.

Ag News

According to a law that went into effect on Oct. 1 in Florida, persons who destroy or damage agricultural crops now face felony charges and double civil damages. The bill establishing the law (Section 604.60 F.S.) passed unanimously in both the state house and senate. The bill also created Section 810.09(f) F.S., that provides for third-degree felony charges against trespassing on property that is posted as an agricultural testing or research site. (Chemical Regulation Reporter, Vol. 25, No. 41).

Source: Chemically Speaking newsletter, University of Florida Pesticide Information Office

Growing pains for Eden Bioscience

Eden Bioscience had a rotten 2001, and it started the New Year with news so dreadful that it wasn't even worth trying to sugarcoat. Yesterday, the Bothell-based biotech reported zero fourth-quarter sales for its lone product, Messenger, a protein-based powder that boosts crop yields.

Even in a year when 85 percent of Eden's stock value evaporated, its chief executive resigned and it cut 40 jobs, yesterday's news was a low point. It means the company sold about $3.5 million of Messenger in its first full year on the market — a fraction of the $30 million some analysts were expecting.

The sales job doesn't appear to be getting any easier as the farm economy continues to slump, but Eden has a new strategy. Eden will no longer concentrate sales on citrus and cotton growers in the South, who have been hurt by low commodity prices, downpours and drought. Instead, it will focus this coming growing season on crops such as strawberries, grapes, tomatoes and grapefruit in Florida and California.

The Seattle Times - 1/4/02

Job Opportunity

Major agricultural chemical company is seeking an Account Manager for Southwest Florida. Should be experienced in selling and recommending crop protection products to citrus and vegetable growers. College degree preferred. Salary + incentive, company car, and benefits. Please fax resume to 813-754-3840

Gallagher Shifts Focus to Technical Sales Support at Entomos

Entomos, a biological pest control company in Gainesville, FL, has promoted Kimberly A. Gallagher. Gallagher, who has previously been responsible for insect research and mass-production systems for beneficial insects, will assume new responsibilities. She will now be in charge of technical support for sales to growers and consumers, and preliminary insect field trials.

Gallagher joined Entomos in May 1997. She helped to develop the artificial diet currently used to produce Entomos’ Beneficials and is a co-inventor on the related patents held by Entomos. Before joining Entomos,
Gallagher was a student and a biological science aide at the USDA CMAVE in Gainesville, FL. She received her B.S. degree in Entomology from the University of Florida.

Entomos utilizes novel technology and handling methods to cost effectively produce predatory insects in large numbers for a range of agricultural, horticultural and home-garden applications. The assignment of Gallagher to the technical development and sales efforts is another step towards the company’s goal of being a major producer and supplier of beneficial predatory insects.

Entomos develops, manufactures and sells products based on naturally occurring, indigenous organism that accelerate the normal ecological response to pest and disease infestations of plants. Other technologies include a bio-nematicide based upon Pasteuria penetrans and a bio-fungicide for soil-borne diseases based upon Streptomyces. The company is focused on delivering cost-effective bio-rational pest control products to the marketplace.

Gainesville, FL - July 12, 2001

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4445 SW 35th Terrace, Suite 310
Gainesville, FL 32608
(352) 371-6490

Websites

Entomos, LLC - Visit their website at http://www.entomos.com

IPM Net - The Consortium for International Crop Protection (CICP), a non-profit organization, was formed in 1978 by a group of U.S. universities. One of the many services that it provides is a database of IPM resources, which are electronically expedited via the IPMnet on the Internet system. This unique system is available free of charge to all registrants. Go to http://ipmwww.ncsu.edu/cicp/cicp.html

Learn Spanish – Want to improve your Spanish language skills – visit http://www.studyspanish.com/ for a free online tutorial.

Spurrier resigns as Gators coach

Florida coach Steve Spurrier resigned Friday, leaving the Gators after 12 years in which he turned them from losers into Fun 'N Gun winners. Spurrier apparently is ready to pursue an NFL job, The Gainesville Sun said, citing unidentified sources.

Spurrier led the Gators to the 1996 national championship and six Southeastern Conference titles.

"I'm announcing my retirement today, Jan. 4, 2002, as head football coach at the University of Florida. I simply believe that 12 years as head coach at a major university in the SEC is long enough," Spurrier said.

The school scheduled a 5 p.m. news conference, although Spurrier will not be present. He is expected to address the media on Monday.

Spurrier compiled a 122-27-1 record, but as much as the numbers, it was the attitude that made Florida great.

He took the Gators, a team that had never won the SEC or won 10 games in a season, and made them winners. And he did it with style.
In a statement issued by the athletic department Friday, Spurrier said he was "not burned out, stressed out or mentally fatigued from coaching. I just feel my career as a college head coach after 15 years is complete and if the opportunity and challenge of coaching an NFL team happens, it is something I would like to pursue."

Spurrier always has hinted that an NFL job could appeal to him one day. He came close to signing a contract with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in 1995, saying it was a job that always intrigued him.

Spurrier, who won the 1966 Heisman Trophy as Florida's quarterback, loved throwing the ball, didn't mind running up the score and shocked not only Southern football fans, but the whole country, when he started having success almost immediately with the Gators.

Gator fans loved him. Hardly anyone else could stand him, as they watched him flinging his visor, yelling at referees and generally acting more like a college kid than a 50-something coach.

"Call me arrogant, cocky, crybaby, whiner or whatever names you like," Spurrier said in a recent interview. "At least they're not calling us losers anymore. If people like you too much, it's probably because they're beating you."

**The Lighter Side**

**Alligator Shoes**

A young blonde was on vacation in the depths of Louisiana. She wanted a pair of genuine alligator shoes in the worst way, but was very reluctant to pay the high prices the local vendors were asking.

After becoming very frustrated with the "no haggle" attitude of one of the shopkeepers, the blonde shouted, "Maybe I'll just go out and catch my own alligator so I can get a pair of shoes at a reasonable price!"

The shopkeeper said, "Be my guest. Maybe you'll luck out and catch yourself a big one!" Determined, the blonde turned and headed for the swamps, set on catching herself an alligator.

Later in the day, the shopkeeper was driving home, when he spotted the young woman standing waist deep in the water, shotgun in hand. Just then, he saw a huge 9-foot alligator swimming quickly toward her. She took aim, killed the creature, and with a great deal of effort hauled it on to the swamp bank. Lying nearby were several more of the dead creatures. The shopkeeper watched in amazement. Just then the blonde flipped the alligator on its back, and frustrated, shouted out, "Dang it, this one isn't wearing any shoes either!"

**Eating Crow**

According to the Knight-Ridder News Service, the inscription on the metal bands used by the U.S. Department of the Interior to tag migratory birds has been changed. The bands used to bear the address of the Washington Biological Survey, abbreviated, "Wash. Biol. Surv." until the agency received the following letter from an Arkansas camper:

"Dear Sirs: While camping last week I shot one of your birds. I think it was a crow. I followed the cooking instructions on the leg tag and I want to tell you it was horrible."
We would like to wish you and yours all the very best for a very happy, healthy and prosperous New Year!

Contributors include: Joel Allingham/AgriCare, Inc, Karen Armbrester/SWFREC, Jim Connor/SWFREC, Bruce Corbitt/West Coast Tomato Growers, Fred Heald/Farmers Supply, Sarah Hornsby/AgCropCon, Cecil Howell/H&R Farm, Bruce Johnson/General Crop Management, Leon Lucas/Glades Crop Care, Gene McAvoy/Hendry County Extension, Alice McGhee/Thomas Produce, Jimmy Morales/Pro Source One, Tim Nychk/Nychk Bros. Farm, Chuck Obern/C+B Farm, Dr Ken Pernezny/EREC, Dr. Pam Roberts/SWFREC, Nancy Roe/Farming Systems Research, Wes Roan/6 L's, Kevin Seitzinger/Gargiulo, Jay Shivler/ F& F Farm, Ken Shuler/Palm Beach County Extension, Ben Stanaland/Pacific Tomato Growers, John Stanford/LNA Farm, Mike Stanford/MED Farms, Dr. Phil Stansly/SWFREC, Eugene Tolar/Red Star Farms, Dr.Charlie Vavrina/SWFREC, Donna Verbeck/GulfCoast Ag. and Mark Verbeck/Bayer Crop Protection.

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

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