

12.15.10 Preliminary Freeze Damage report

Frost, freeze and high winds on multiple days beginning December 3 through December 15, 2010. Lows reaching 22 degrees in Okeechobee County on December 14th a.m., and one report of 18 degrees in Highlands County for the same period.

Temperature readings and daily report:

12/3 - 35 to 37 degrees with wind chill of 31 to 33 degrees;

12/6 - cold and high winds; 12/7 - 28 to 32 degrees, light wind with heavy frost and ice;

12/8 - 32 degrees with wind chill of 26 degrees, heavy frost and ice;

12/9 - cold with rain and wind;

12/13 - high winds, cold, 32 degrees at 10 pm;

12/14 - 27 degrees with wind chill of 21 degrees (report of 22 degrees in Okeechobee and 18 degrees in Highlands on this day), heavy frost, ice slurry, 32 to 35 degrees at 9 pm, 32 degrees at midnight;

12/15 - 27 to 29 degrees with light frost.

Pastures are damaged in both Okeechobee and Highlands Counties and will not recover until Spring. Standing forage crop is brown and burned; decay is apparent and may accelerate with rainfall and warmer temperatures forecast for the next few days. Sod is damaged but still harvestable in areas with more soil moisture and windbreak protection.

Field nursery crops are showing damage to less cold tolerant varieties, including some palm species.

Sweet corn and emerged potatoes are destroyed in Okeechobee County; reports not in for Highlands County on these crops. Outdoor tomatoes are destroyed in Okeechobee County; Quonset grown tomatoes in Highlands are not damaged. Cabbage appears to be fine.

Citrus trees do not appear damaged in either Okeechobee or Highlands Counties; fruit drop estimated as 10 percent at this time.