

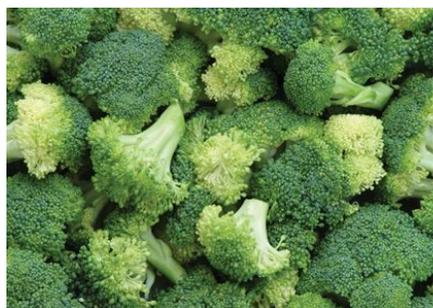


The **SUNFRESH** Series

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PITTSBURGH WEATHER FORECAST COURTESY OF *WEATHER UNDERGROUND*

Sat 1/6	Sun 1/7	Mon 1/8	Tue 1/9	Wed 1/10	Thu 1/11	Fri 1/12	Sat 1/13	Sun 1/14
9° -4° F	24° 22° F	35° 30° F	35° 22° F	44° 37° F	52° 42° F	45° 29° F	33° 19° F	29° 16° F
Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Snow	Cloudy	PM Showers	PM Showers	Rain	Rain/Snow Showers	Cloudy

FEATURED PRODUCE ARTICLE

ARTICLE COURTESY OF:

THE PRODUCE NEWS

Florida crops suffer brunt of cold front

The 2017-18 Florida growing season got off to a rough start when Hurricane Irma hit last September, causing growers to hustle to clean up the mess it left and get new plants started.

This week the cold front that snapped everyone to attention in the state is leaving behind yet another potential crop disaster.

Calvert Cullen, president of Northampton Growers Produce Sales Inc., headquartered in Cheriton, VA, said the company's Florida crops suffered some frost damage including a tremendous amount of bloom damage.

"We won't know until early next week what percentage of loss we had," he told The Produce News. "Some of our growers are reporting they took a hard hit on green beans, but some others said they fared okay. Bloom drop is a big issue."

Cullen added that there is no reported freeze damage, which would render the plants totally destroyed.

"When frost hits the younger plants, they can still grow and produce, but they will be stressed and may yield less," he explained.

Northampton Growers follows the seasons from south, central and north Florida to Georgia, the Carolinas, Virginia and then on to Michigan. It then it reverses its growing program and moves back toward the south for year-round supplies.

"We also took a heavy hit in Georgia when Hurricane Irma scathed through the state," said Cullen. "That storm also messed up the Florida fields. They had to be cleaned up and new plastic laid. We had a bad ending in Georgia and a bad start in Florida."

Steve Veneziano, vice president of Oakes Farms' in Immokalee, FL, also had a bad start in Florida when Hurricane Irma hit. The company lost a large portion of its early plants.

Veneziano shared a weather forecast for western Florida for this week's cold snap. It stated that on Thursday night there was widespread frost after 2 a.m., with a low of around 29 degrees. On Friday, widespread frost was reported before 11 a.m., with wind chill values as low as 24 degrees early in the day. For Saturday, the forecast predicted patchy frost before 11 a.m., with a wind chill as low as 31 degrees. Things are looking up for Sunday, with a forecast of a high near 73 degrees.

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We encourage our customers to check out and support all of those that we service!

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