

April 5, 2000

## Strawberry Information

### Freeze Alert

GENERAL SUMMARY - Colder, drier air will moving into the region today, combined with clear skies and diminishing winds Tuesday night will promote isolated frosts early Wednesday morning.

NORTH CAROLINA - Clearing and colder early Wednesday morning with the chance of isolated frost. Low temperatures 31-35F. Winds speeds diminishing to 3-6mph after midnight. Dew points lowering to about 30F.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS - WNC MAY BE AT SOME RISK IN EARLY MORNING According to the meteorologist at SkyBit, it is taking a while for the cold air to make its way to North Carolina (coming tonight). It has already hit the Mississippi Valley and it is bringing some very dry air (in TN and KY they are getting depoints in 20's).

But, according to our latest information, there is only a chance of "isolated frosts" early Wednesday morning, and these will occur mainly in the western sections of NC at elevations greater than 1500 ft. There is only a 5-10% probability of going below 30 F in other areas (lower elevation areas, or for the rest of the state). Two other factors working in our favor are: 1) the April sun is "doing its job" and taking much of the bite out of this strong Canadian cold front ; and 2) wind speeds should be up most of the night. When winds are up there is less probability of freezing temperatures.

Potential for RADIATION FROST in WNC areas above 1500 ft - clouds will begin breaking up after sunset this evening, and it will turn very clear tonight. It will take some time in the early evening for the cold air to become established (windy), and then by 3 am winds will likely subside. Have the frost alarm set on 36 F, and it will be important to monitor this situation closely through the night and early morning. If the winds subside in the early morning, it may be valuable to run the irrigation system if: 1) you have a crop that is at the popcorn or open blossom stage; and, 2) there is a good possibility of getting below 30 F before sunrise (temperature at the strawberry blossom level in the field). If you have not reached the popcorn stage (still in tight bud), then I would be reluctant to do anything unless the temperature is going into the mid-20s.

LOOK FOR ANOTHER SHOT OF COLD AIR THIS WEEKEND! There will also be more rains coming in prior to this cold front.

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