



WEEKLY OUTLOOK

Department of Agricultural Economics
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PLANTED ACREAGE EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS

THE USDA'S JUNE ACREAGE REPORT REVEALED that U.S. farmers' plantings or, in some cases, planting intentions were surprisingly large. The report released on June 29 contained the results of a survey conducted around the first of the month. The acreage of major row crops was estimated at 307.1 million acres, down only 2.1 million acres from the record plantings of last year.

Corn plantings were placed at 82.1 million acres, about 2 million less than those a year ago. The acreage of feedgrains (corn, oats, sorghum, and barley) totaled 121 million, 2.5 million less than acreage a year ago.

Soybean acreage was estimated at a record 72.2 million acres, up 4.2 million from last year. The acreage of sunflower seed is expected to total 4.9 million acres, an increase of 1 million from last year.

Wheat seedings on the other hand, totaled 87.2 million acres compared with 88.9 million last year. The reduction was entirely in spring wheat, as winter wheat acreage is slightly more than that of last year. Cotton acreage declined to 11.6 million acres, a reduction of nearly 19 percent from 1981.

In Illinois, farmers reduced winter wheat plantings by 300,000 acres and increased corn and soybean acreage by 100,000 acres each. Oat seedings were increased by 75,000 acres.

In corn acreage, the largest reduction (700,000 acres) occurred in Georgia. Plantings declined by 400,000 acres in both Iowa and Minnesota and by about 200,000 acres in North Carolina and South Dakota. Corn acreage increased not only in Illinois but also in Indiana, Missouri, and Ohio.

Among the major producing states, soybean acreage declined only in Indiana, Kentucky, and Louisiana. Acreage is unchanged in Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee. The largest increases in soybean acreage were registered in Missouri (920,000), Minnesota (450,000), Iowa (400,000), and Georgia (400,000).

On the surface, the June acreage figures indicate that farmers other than cotton producers have rejected the Reduced Acreage Program. Although cotton acreage declined 2.76 million acres, acreage of all other crops increased by 0.66 million acres. The acreage reduced from feed grains and spring wheat was converted to soybeans and sunflower seed.

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The harvested acreage of corn is projected at nearly 73.6 million acres, down only 1 million acres from last year. Harvested acreage as a percentage of planted acreage is projected at an unusually high level. If the average yield in 1982 coincides with the trend line, the 1982 crop can be projected at about 7.7 billion bushels. (We are currently using corn at the rate of only 7.3 billion bushels per year.)

The harvested acreage of soybeans is projected at nearly 70.9 million acres, an increase of 4.2 million from last year. About 30 bushels per acre is considered a normal U.S. average yield. The 1982 average yield was 30.4 bushels; the 5-year average is 29.6 bushels. The geographic distribution of acreage changes in 1982 shows that states with below-average yields have increased production. Even if soybean acreage is as large as June intentions, however, the prospective crop size is less than 2.1 billion bushels.

Even though planted acreage has exceeded expectations, we anticipate a downward revision in the August Crop Production report: both corn and soybean acreage will be less than the June figures indicate.

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Issued by *Darrel Good*, Extension Economist, Prices and Outlook

Note: *Weekly Outlook* will not be published next week.

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