Projected 2027 Corn & Soybean Returns

College of Agricultural, Consumer & Environmental Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Gary Schnitkey

Nick Paulson

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2027
Illinois Crop Budgets have been released

- Prices and Supply/Demand
- Production Costs
- Returns and Income Outlook

farmdoc.illinois.edu/handbook/2027-budgets-for-all-regions

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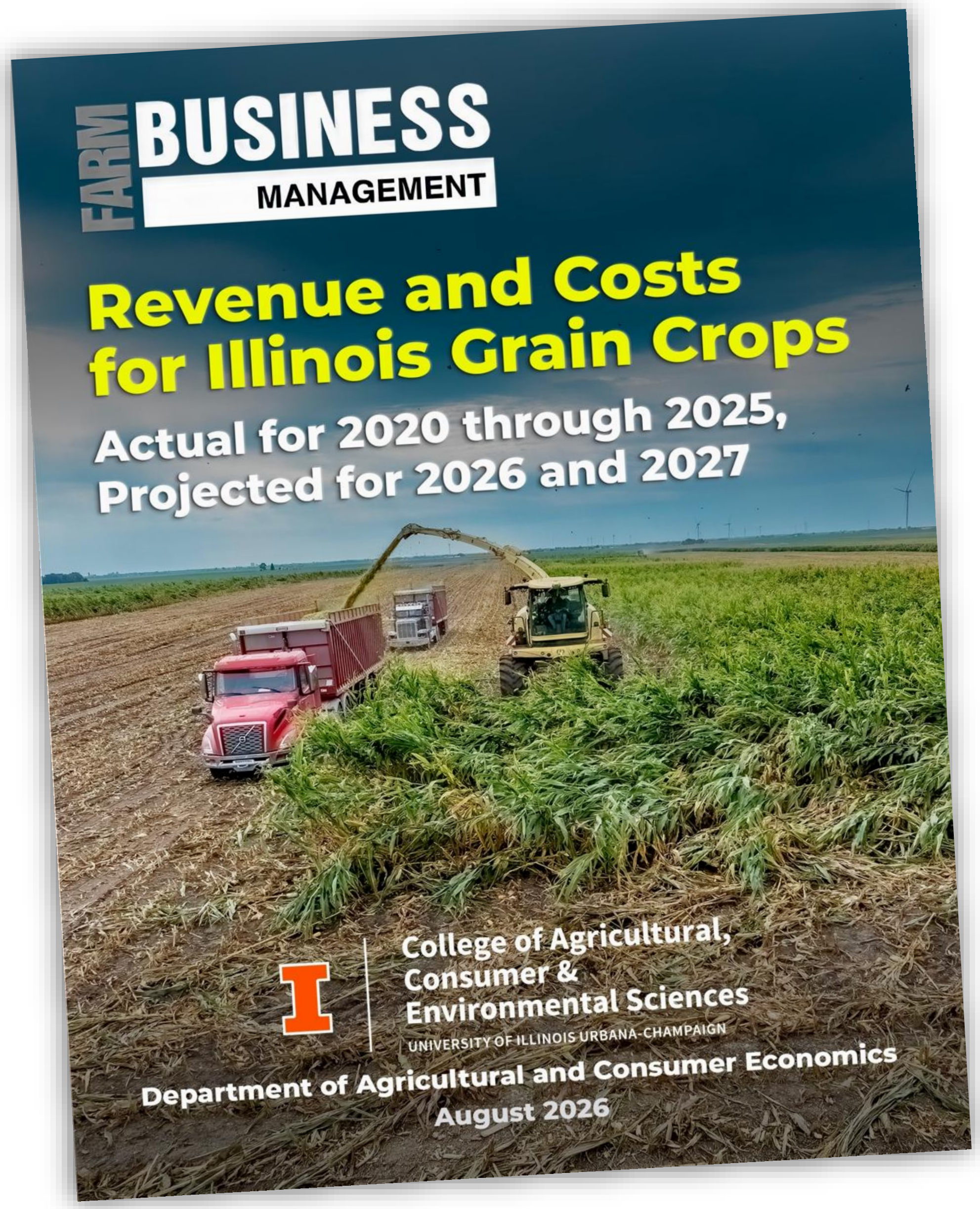
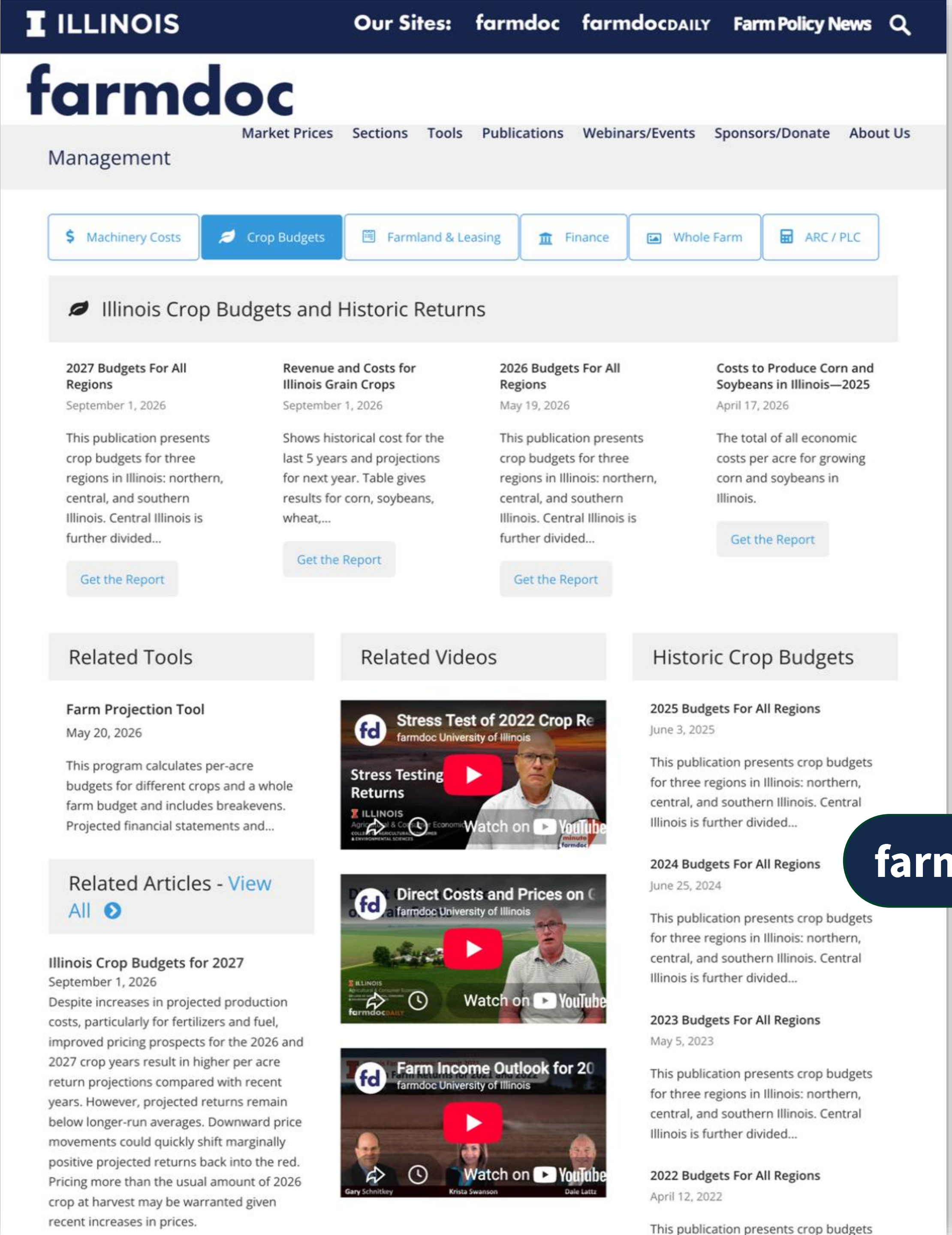


Revenue and Costs for Illinois Grain Crops has been updated

farmdoc.illinois.edu/handbook/revenue-and-costs-for-illinois-grain-crops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Illinois Crop Budgets and Historic Returns

2027 Budgets For All Regions
September 1, 2026
This publication presents crop budgets for three regions in Illinois: northern, central, and southern Illinois. Central Illinois is further divided...
Get the Report

Revenue and Costs for Illinois Grain Crops
September 1, 2026
Shows historical cost for the last 5 years and projections for next year. Table gives results for corn, soybeans, wheat,...
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2026 Budgets For All Regions
May 19, 2026
This publication presents crop budgets for three regions in Illinois: northern, central, and southern Illinois. Central Illinois is further divided...
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Costs to Produce Corn and Soybeans in Illinois—2025
April 17, 2026
The total of all economic costs per acre for growing corn and soybeans in Illinois.
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Related Tools

Farm Projection Tool
May 20, 2026
This program calculates per-acre budgets for different crops and a whole farm budget and includes breakevens. Projected financial statements and...

Related Articles - View All

Illinois Crop Budgets for 2027
September 1, 2026
Despite increases in projected production costs, particularly for fertilizers and fuel, improved pricing prospects for the 2026 and 2027 crop years result in higher per acre return projections compared with recent years. However, projected returns remain below longer-run averages. Downward price movements could quickly shift marginally positive projected returns back into the red. Pricing more than the usual amount of 2026 crop at harvest may be warranted given recent increases in prices.

Related Videos

Stress Test of 2022 Crop Re
farmdoc University of Illinois
Stress Testing Returns
Watch on YouTube

Direct Costs and Prices on
farmdoc University of Illinois
Watch on YouTube

Farm Income Outlook for 20
farmdoc University of Illinois
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Historic Crop Budgets

2025 Budgets For All Regions
June 3, 2025
This publication presents crop budgets for three regions in Illinois: northern, central, and southern Illinois. Central Illinois is further divided...

2024 Budgets For All Regions
June 25, 2024
This publication presents crop budgets for three regions in Illinois: northern, central, and southern Illinois. Central Illinois is further divided...

2023 Budgets For All Regions
May 5, 2023
This publication presents crop budgets for three regions in Illinois: northern, central, and southern Illinois. Central Illinois is further divided...

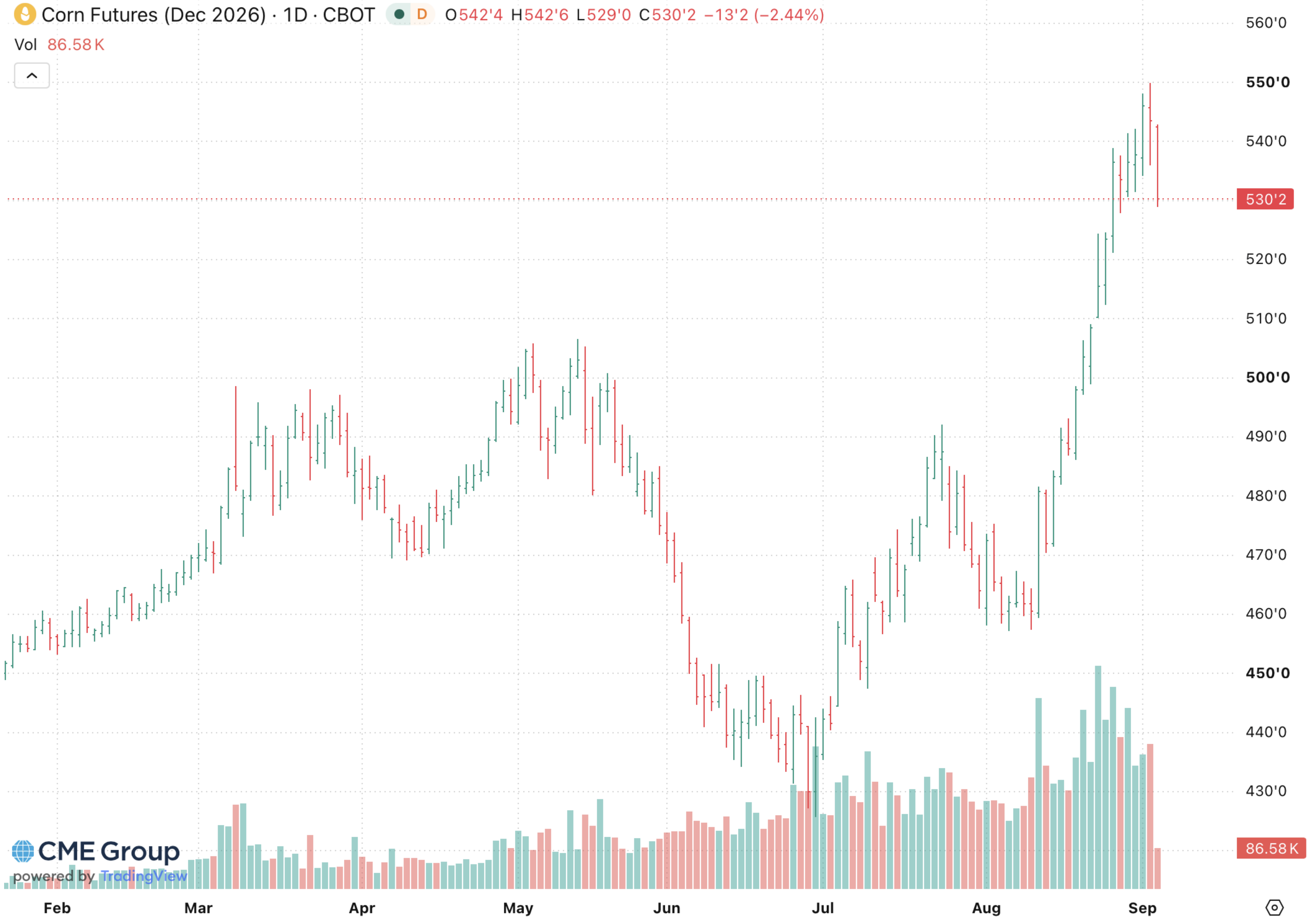
2022 Budgets For All Regions
April 12, 2022
This publication presents crop budgets

For more Crop Budget information visit farmdoc

farmdoc.illinois.edu/management#handbook-crop-budgets

Prices and Supply/Demand

Dec 2026 Corn Contract



Projected Price = $4.62

Harvest prices at current December levels mean that yield losses will need to occur before crop insurance payments.

This may be the case on ECO policies (95% and 90%)

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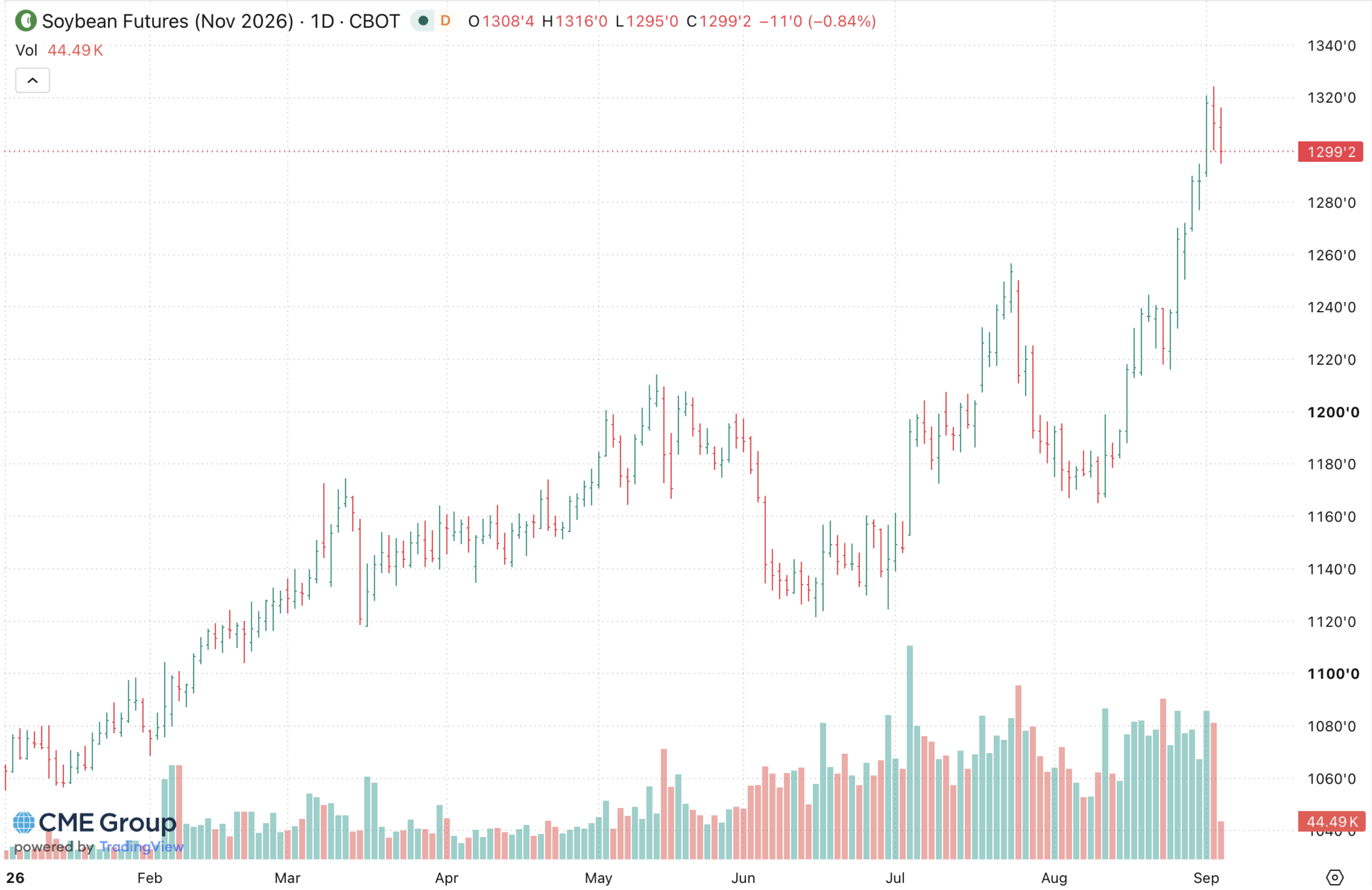
November 2026 Soybean Contract



Projected Price = $11.09

Harvest prices at current November levels mean that yield losses will need to occur before crop insurance payments.

This may be the case on ECO policies (95% and 90%)

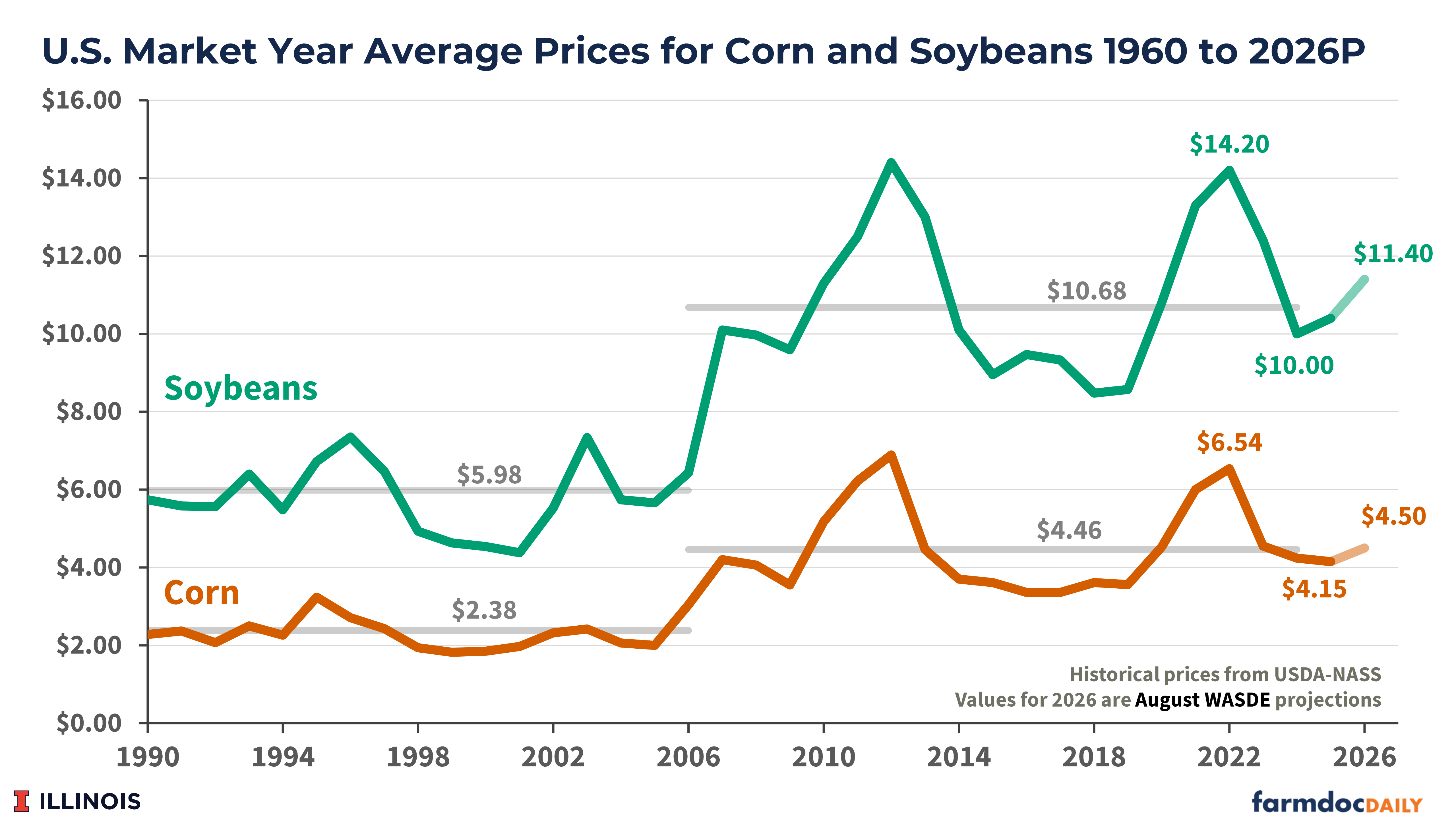
Price increases

What caused the current price increase:

- Ukraine-Russia conflict heats up
- Lower yield forecasts (not necessarily from USDA)
- Hopes about bio-fuels

What could lead to lower prices:

- Yield, in fact, are not lower
- The world settles down
- Continued trade wars with China
- Expansion, good crops in Brazil



U.S. Market Year Average Prices for Corn and Soybeans 1960 to 2026P
$16.00
$14.00
$12.00
$10.00
$8.00
$6.00
$4.00
$2.00
$0.00
1990
1994
1998
2002
2006
2010
2014
2018
2022
2026
Soybeans
Corn
$14.20
$11.40
$10.68
$10.00
$5.98
$6.54
$4.50
$4.46
$4.15
$2.38
Historical prices from USDA-NASS
Values for 2026 are August WASDE projections
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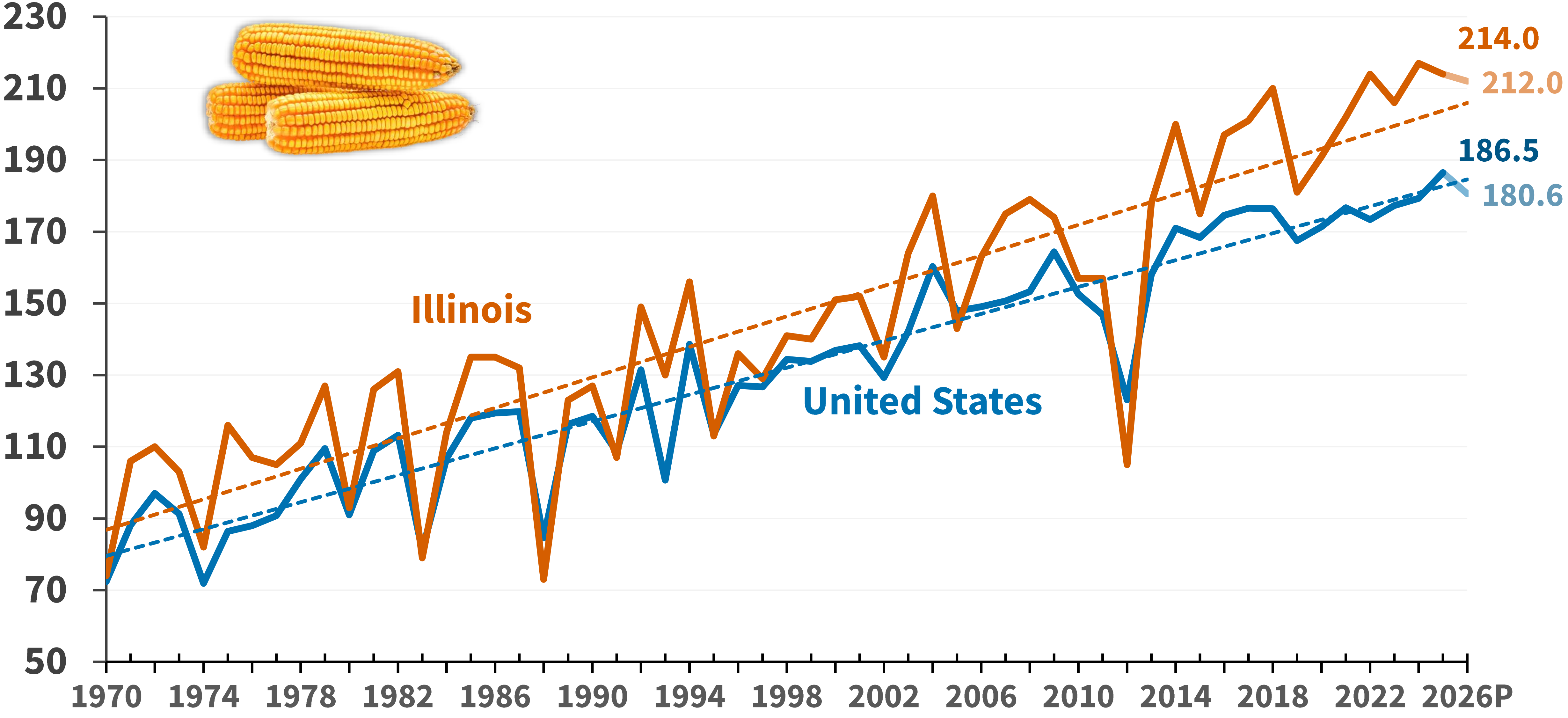
United States and Illinois Corn Yields, 1970 to 2026P

in Bushels per Acre



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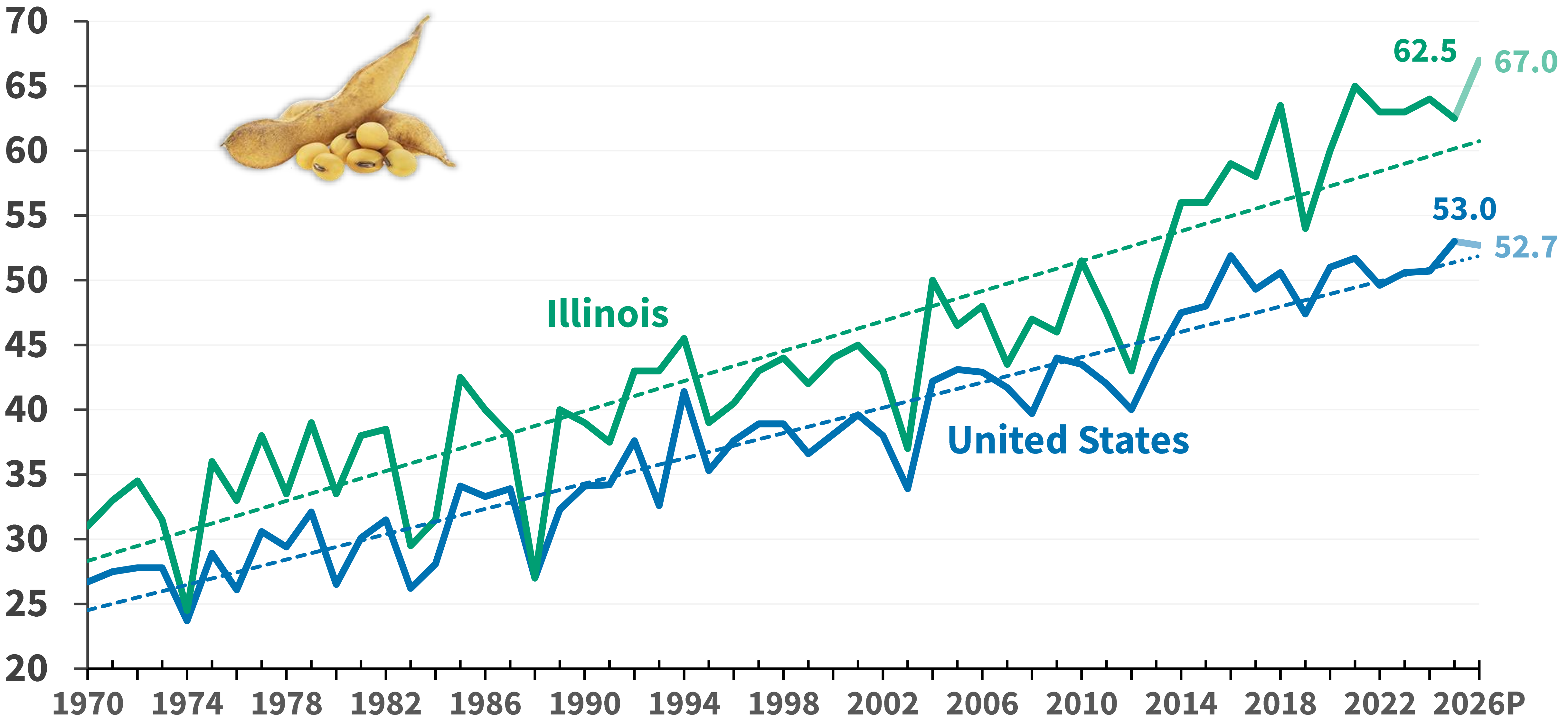
United States and Illinois Soybean Yields, 1970 to 2026P

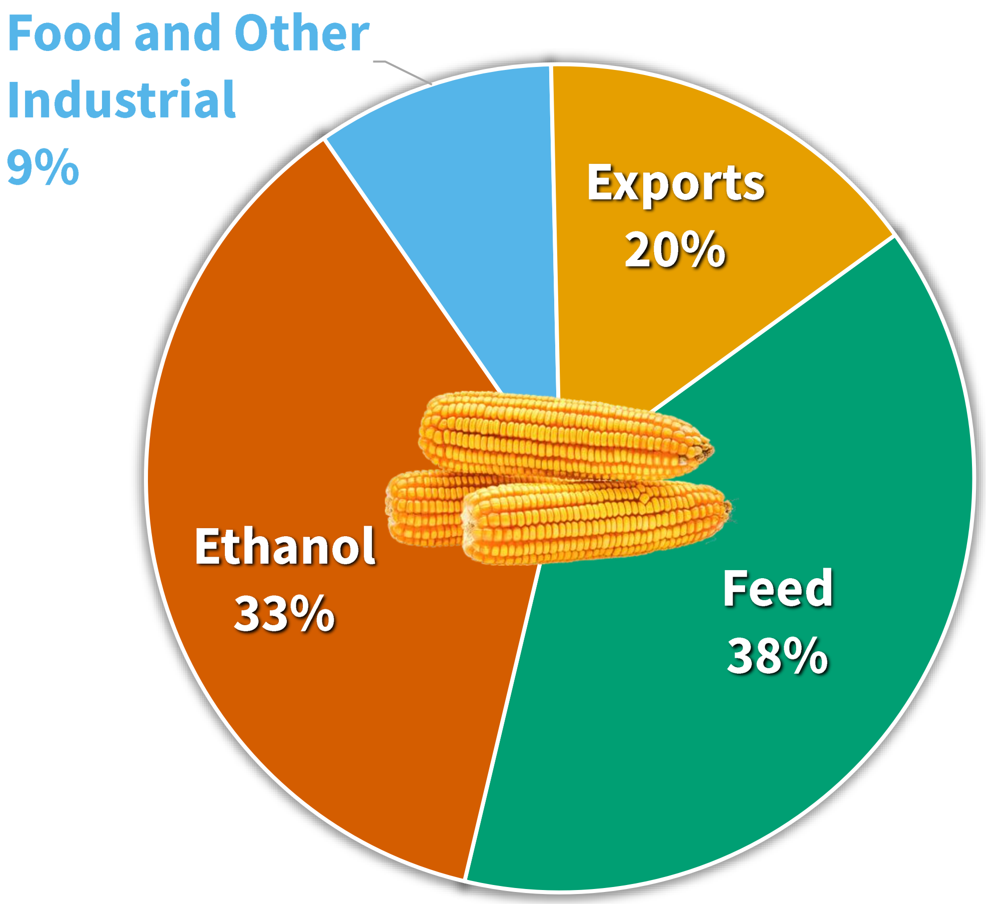
in Bushels per Acre



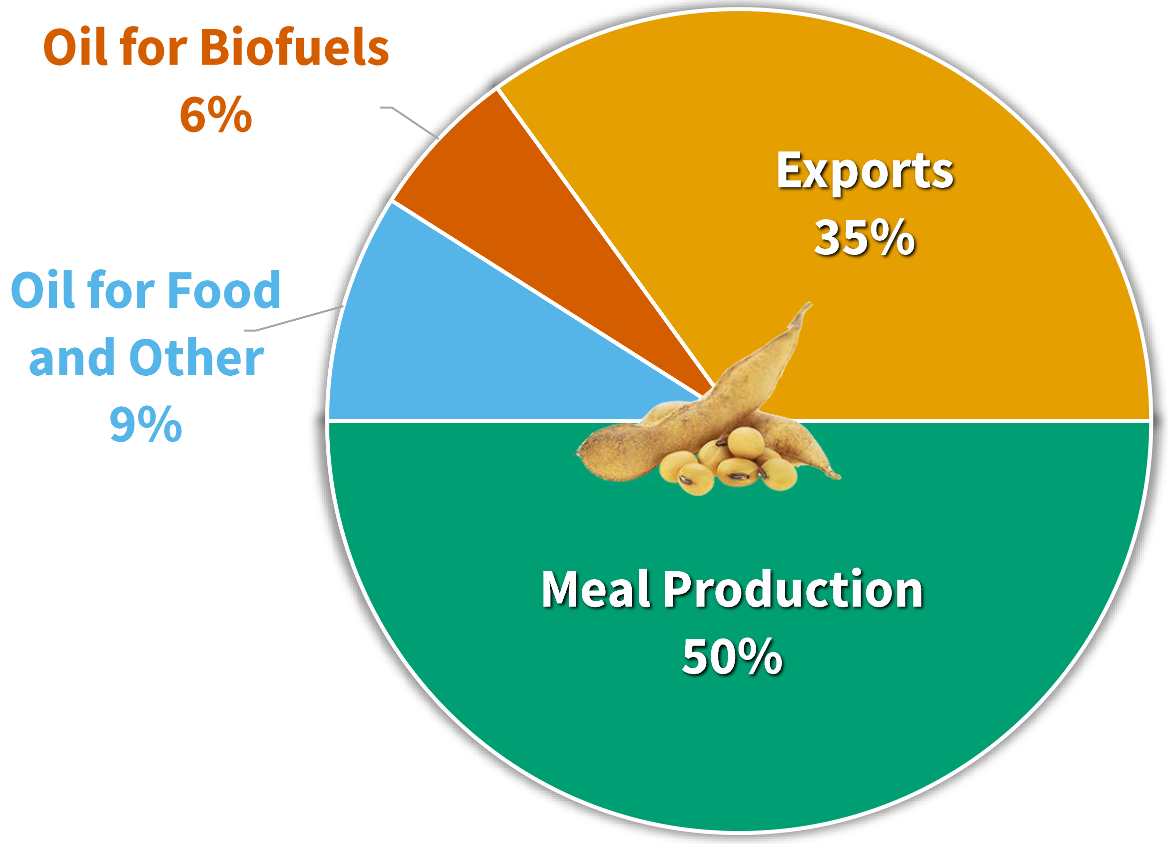
Composition of corn and soybean use

as percentage of total use, 2025/26 marketing year

Corn



Soybeans



Source: USDA WASDE and *farmdoc* calculations

Biofuels

Ethanol

- Flat to declining motor fuel use in the US
- Growth in EVs
- E-10 vs E-15 and higher blends
- CO2 capture and storage

Biodiesel/Renewable Diesel

- Biodiesel must be blended
- Renewable diesel as a “drop in”
- Latest RFS RVO announcements and other rules
- Competition among fats/oils as feedstocks

Wildcards: 45Z and SAF

Revenue in Budgets

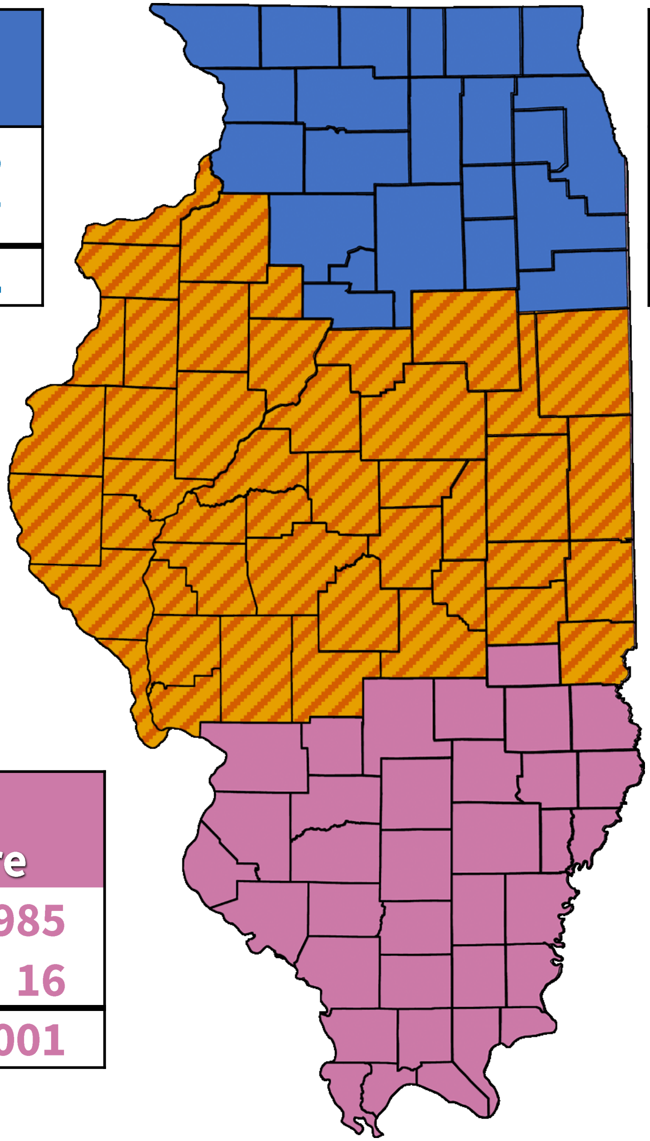
Central Illinois – High Productivity Farmland

		Corn			Soybeans		
	Crop Year	2025	2026P	2027P	2025	2026P	2027P
	Yield per acre	242	240	245	75	76	77
	Price per bu	$4.09	$4.95	$5.00	$10.24	$12.20	$12.00
Dollars per acre	Crop revenue	$990	$1,188	$1,225	$768	$927	$924
Dollars per acre	ARC/PLC	42	17	17	42	17	17
Dollars per acre	Ad hoc Federal payments	44	0	0	31	0	0
Dollars per acre	Crop insurance proceeds	4	10	0	2	5	0
Dollars per acre	Gross revenue	$1,080	$1,215	$1,242	$843	$949	$941

Revenue in 2027 Crop Budgets

$5.00
per bushel

Northern Corn 237 bushels per acre	
Crop revenue	$1,185
ARC/PLC	17
Gross revenue	$1,202



Northern Soybeans 71 bushels per acre	
Crop revenue	$852
ARC/PLC	17
Gross revenue	$869

$12.00
per bushel

Central Corn	High 245 bu/ac	Low 233 bu/ac
Crop revenue	$1,225	$1,165
ARC/PLC	17	16
Gross revenue	$1,242	$1,181

Central Soybeans	High 77 bu/ac	Low 71 bu/ac
Crop revenue	$924	$852
ARC/PLC	17	16
Gross revenue	$941	$868

Southern Corn 197 bushels per acre	
Crop revenue	$985
ARC/PLC	16
Gross revenue	$1,001

Southern Soybeans 60 bushels per acre	
Crop revenue	$720
ARC/PLC	16
Gross revenue	$736

No Ad hoc Federal Payments or Crop Insurance Proceeds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Production Costs
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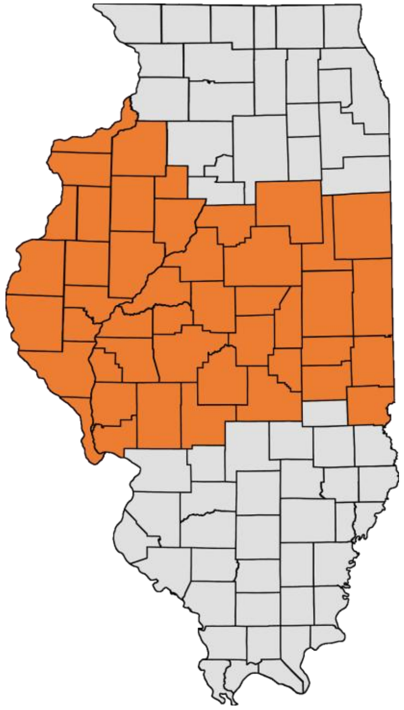
Non-land Costs

for Central Illinois, High-Productivity Farmland



		Corn			Soybeans		
	Crop Year	2025	2026P	2027P	2025	2026P	2027P
Direct Costs	Fertilizers	210	229	263	63	66	77
	Pesticides	116	116	119	70	70	72
	Seed	130	129	134	84	83	87
	Drying	14	15	14	0	0	0
	Storage	14	14	14	8	8	8
	Crop insurance	30	31	35	10	11	12
	Total direct costs	$514	$534	$579	$235	$238	$256
Power Costs	Machine hire/lease	20	20	21	19	19	20
	Utilities	6	6	6	5	5	5
	Machine repair	37	38	38	34	35	35
	Fuel and oil	22	28	30	19	23	26
	Light vehicle	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Mach. depreciation	91	89	89	79	77	77
	Total power costs	$178	$183	$186	$158	$161	$165
Overhead Costs	Hired labor	27	28	28	24	25	25
	Building repair & rent	6	6	6	12	12	12
	Building depreciation	17	17	18	16	16	16
	Insurance	16	16	16	15	15	15
	Misc	12	12	12	12	12	12
	Interest (non-land)	36	39	40	30	33	33
	Total overhead costs	$114	$118	$120	$109	$113	$113

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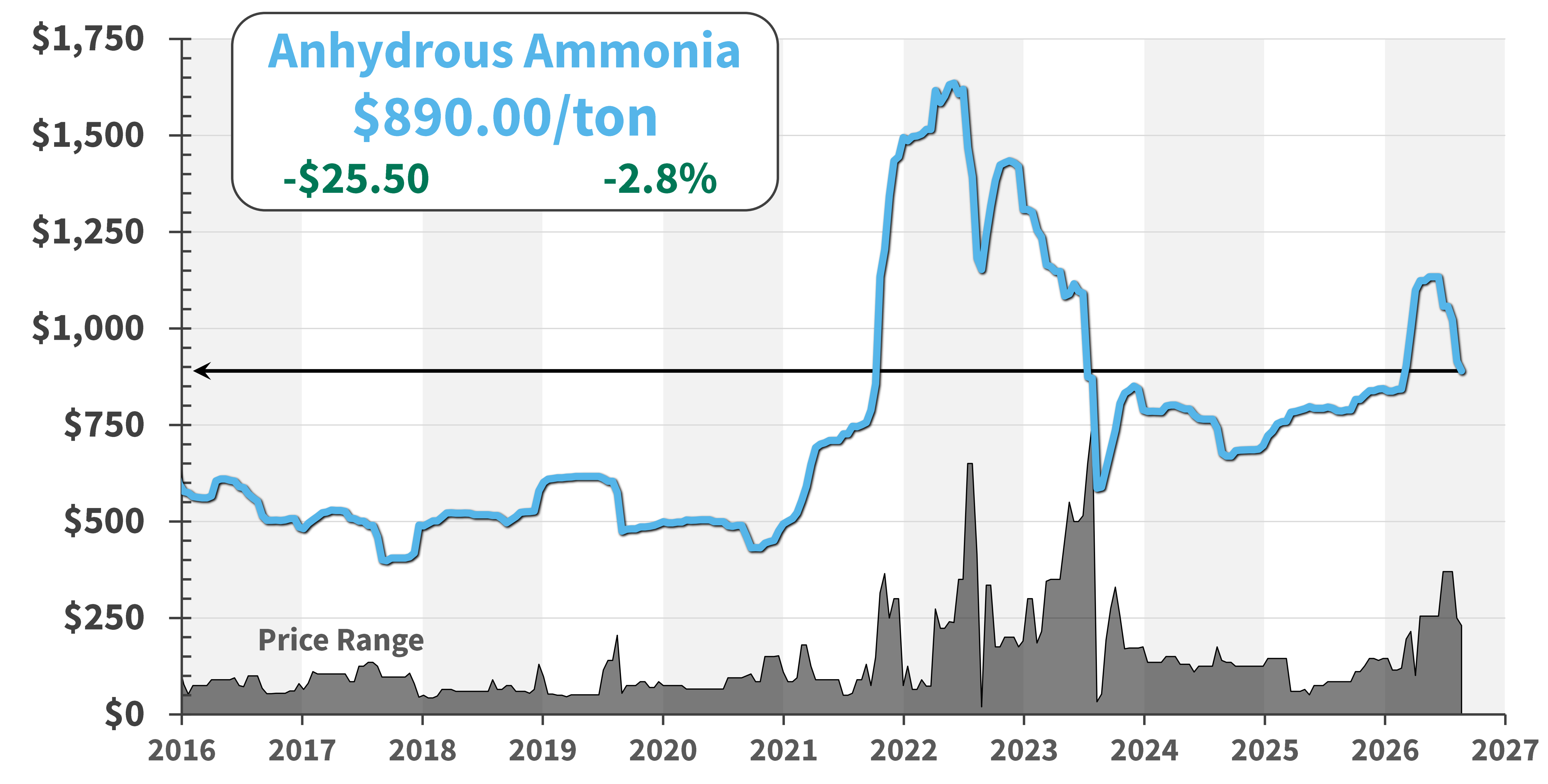
Illinois Fuel & Fertilizer Cost Report for week ending August 21, 2026



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Source: USDA AMS Livestock, Poultry & Grain Market News

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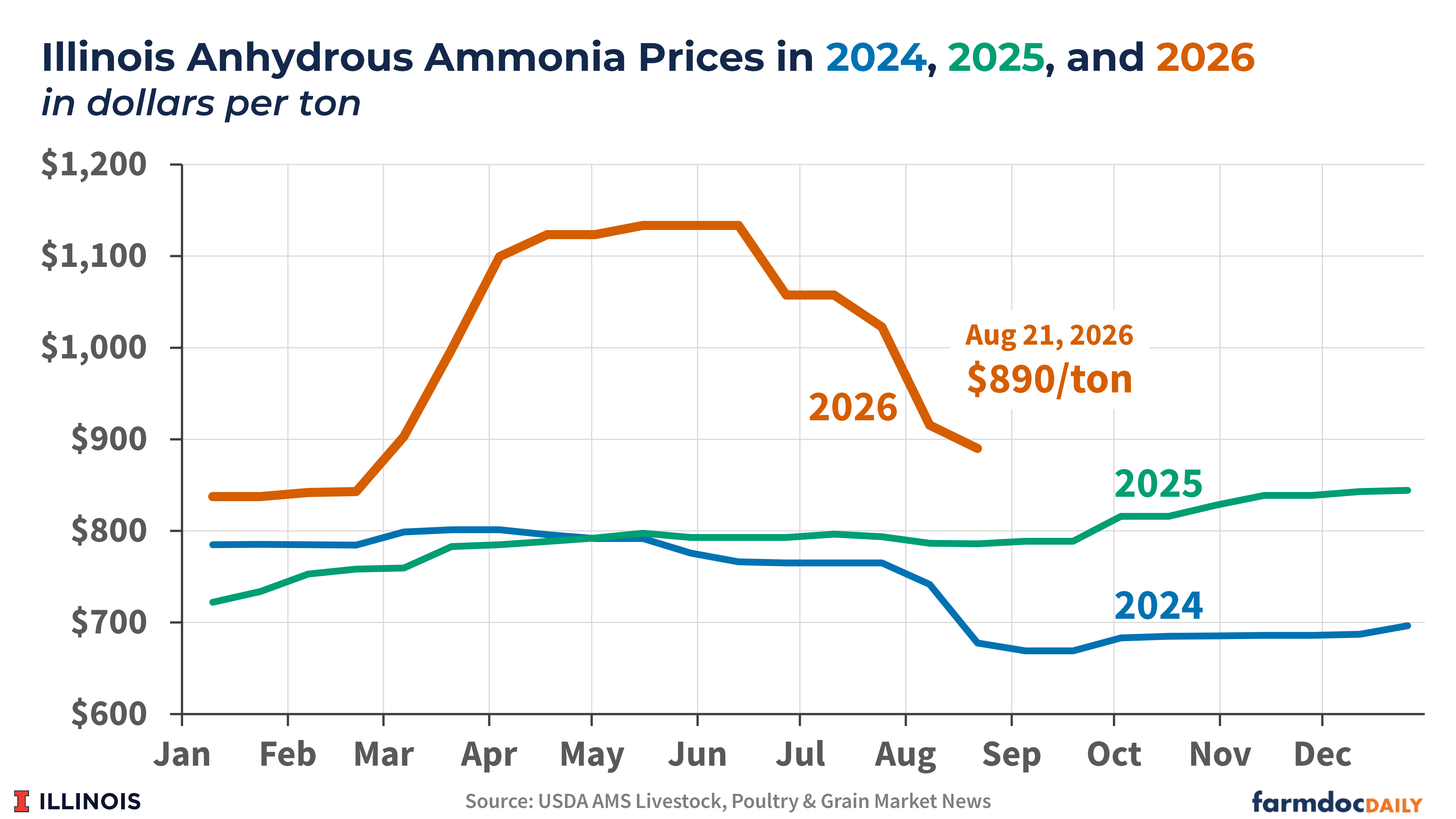
Illinois Anhydrous Ammonia Prices in 2024, 2025, and 2026
in dollars per ton
$1,200
$1,100
$1,000
$900
$800
$700
$600
Jan
Feb
Mar
Apr
May
Jun
Jul
Aug
Sep
Oct
Nov
Dec
Aug 21, 2026
$890/ton
2026
2025
2024
Source: USDA AMS Livestock, Poultry & Grain Market News
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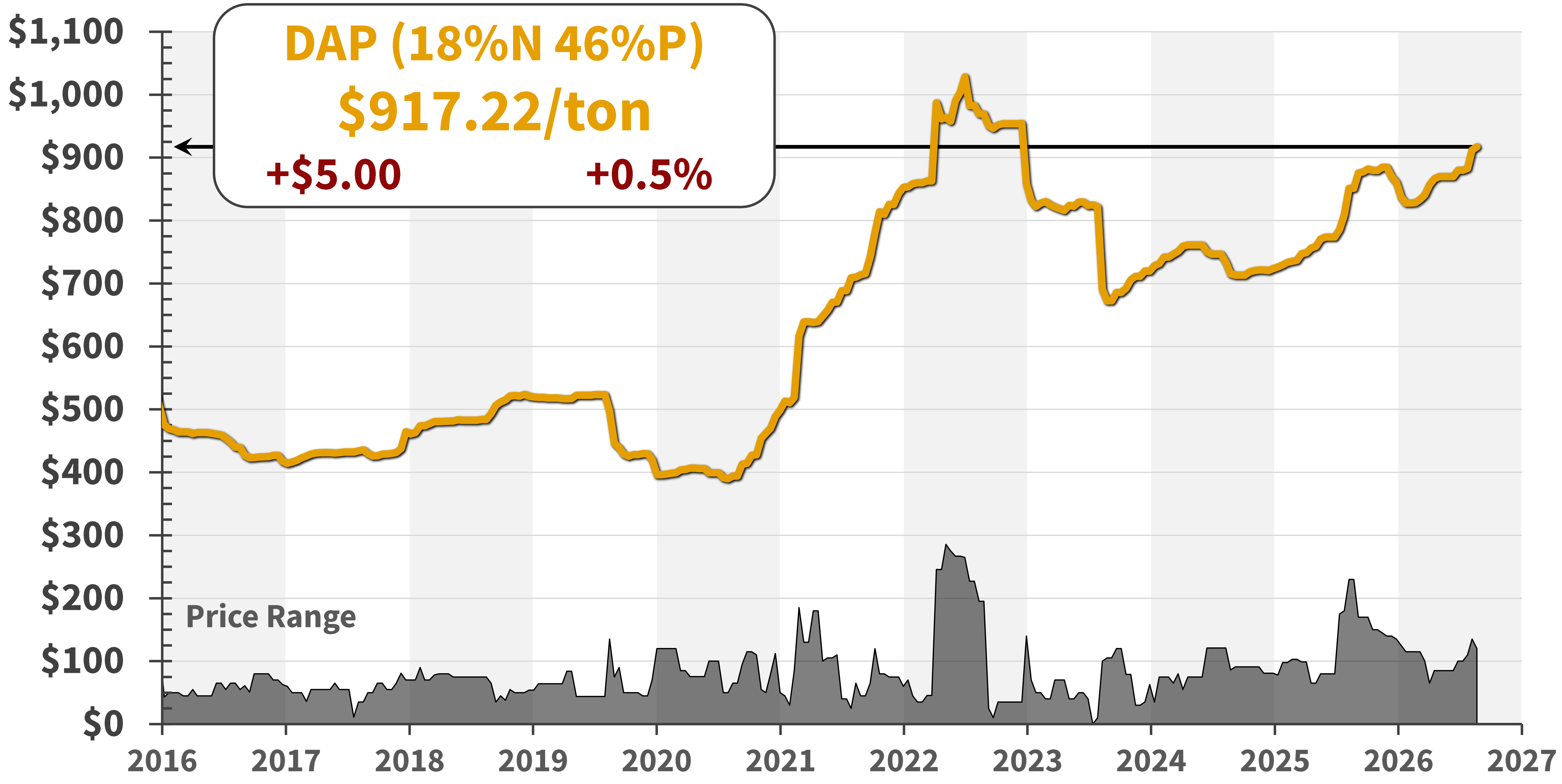
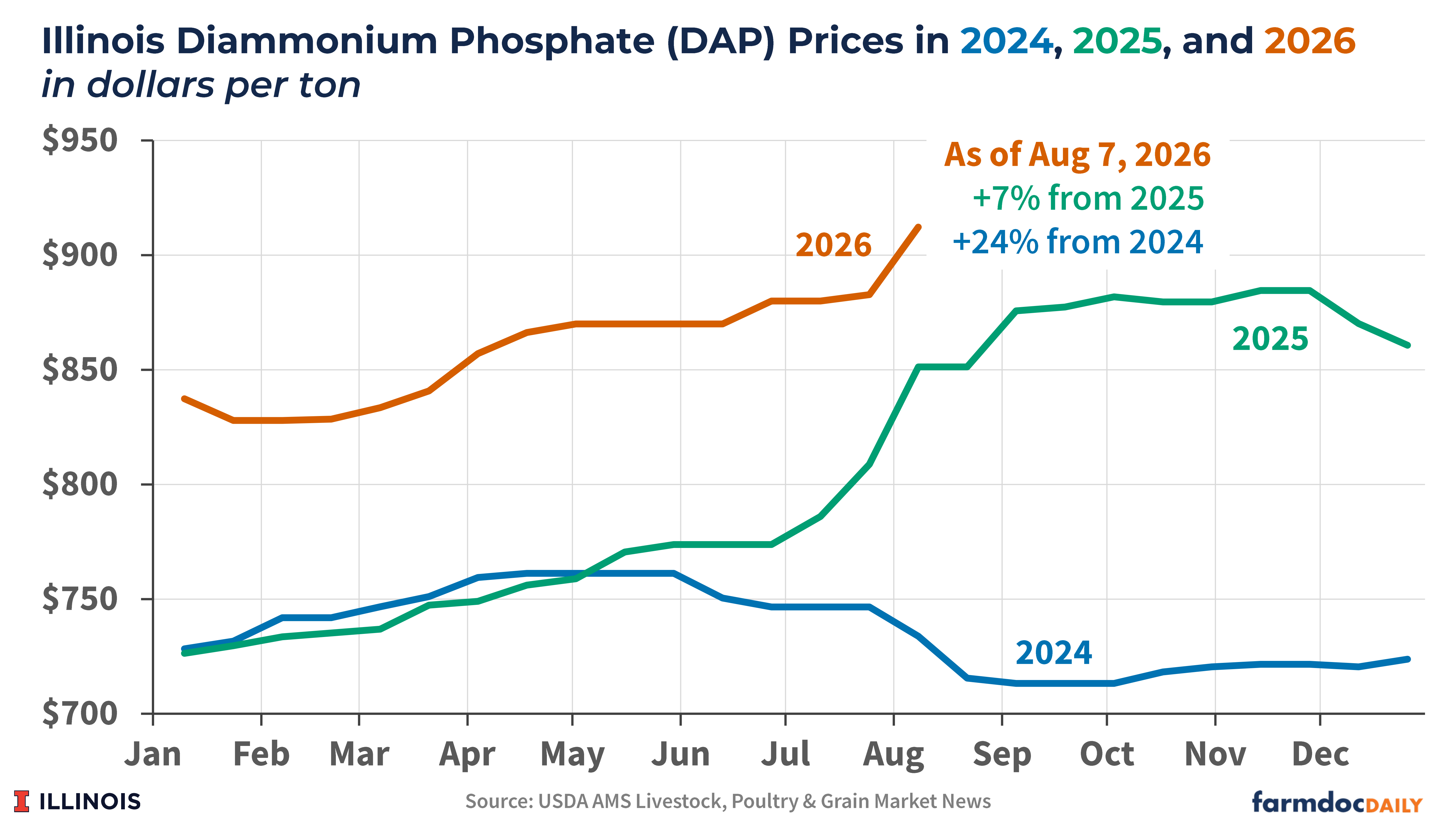
Illinois Fuel & Fertilizer Cost Report for week ending August 21, 2026




Illinois Diammonium Phosphate (DAP) Prices in 2024, 2025, and 2026
in dollars per ton
As of Aug 7, 2026
+7% from 2025
+24% from 2024
2026
2025
2024
$950
$900
$850
$800
$750
$700
Jan
Feb
Mar
Apr
May
Jun
Jul
Aug
Sep
Oct
Nov
Dec
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Source: USDA AMS Livestock, Poultry & Grain Market News
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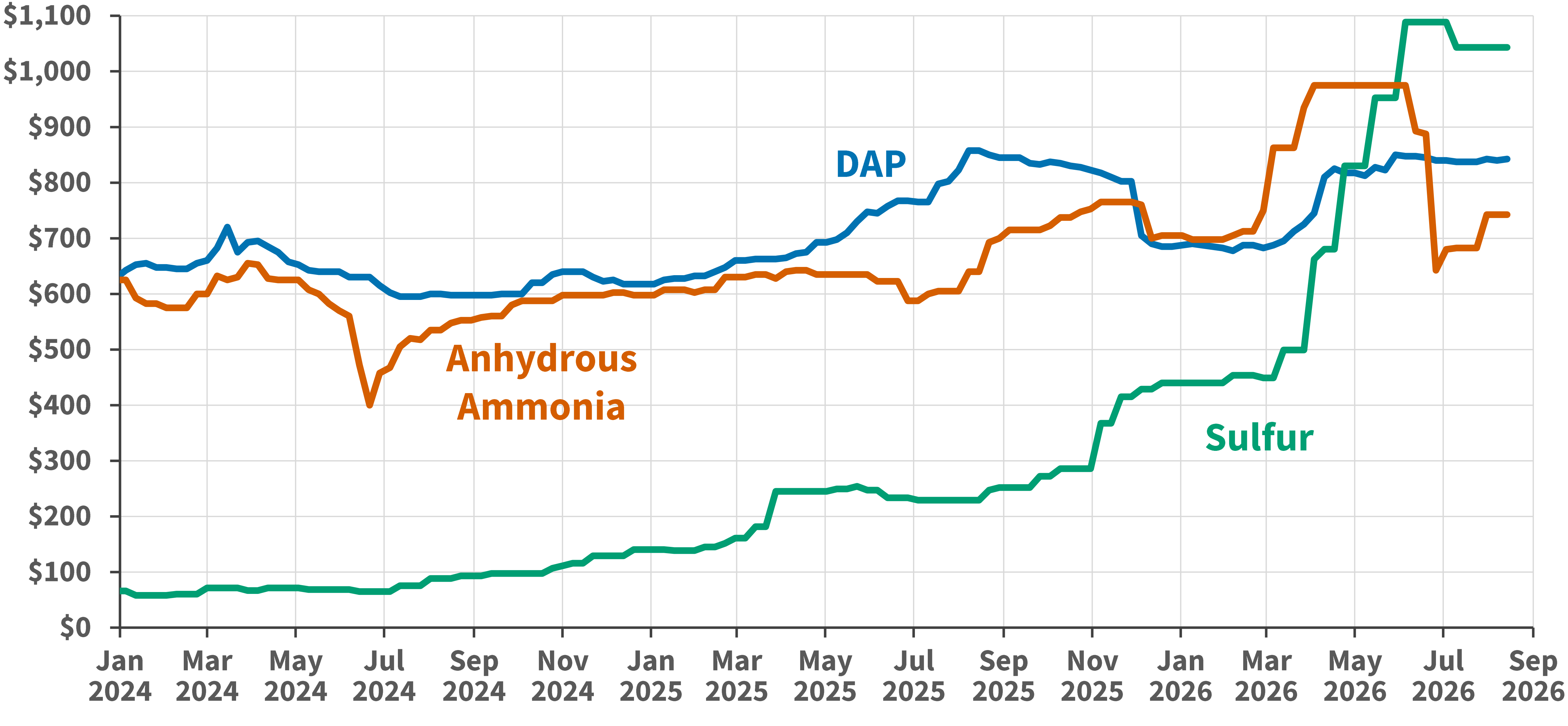
DAP, Anhydrous Ammonia, and Sulfur Prices, January 2024 to Current

DAP and Anhydrous – US Corn Belt; Sulfur – Vancouver in US Dollars per ton



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Source: Greenmarkets via Bloomberg; prices converted to $/ton by authors

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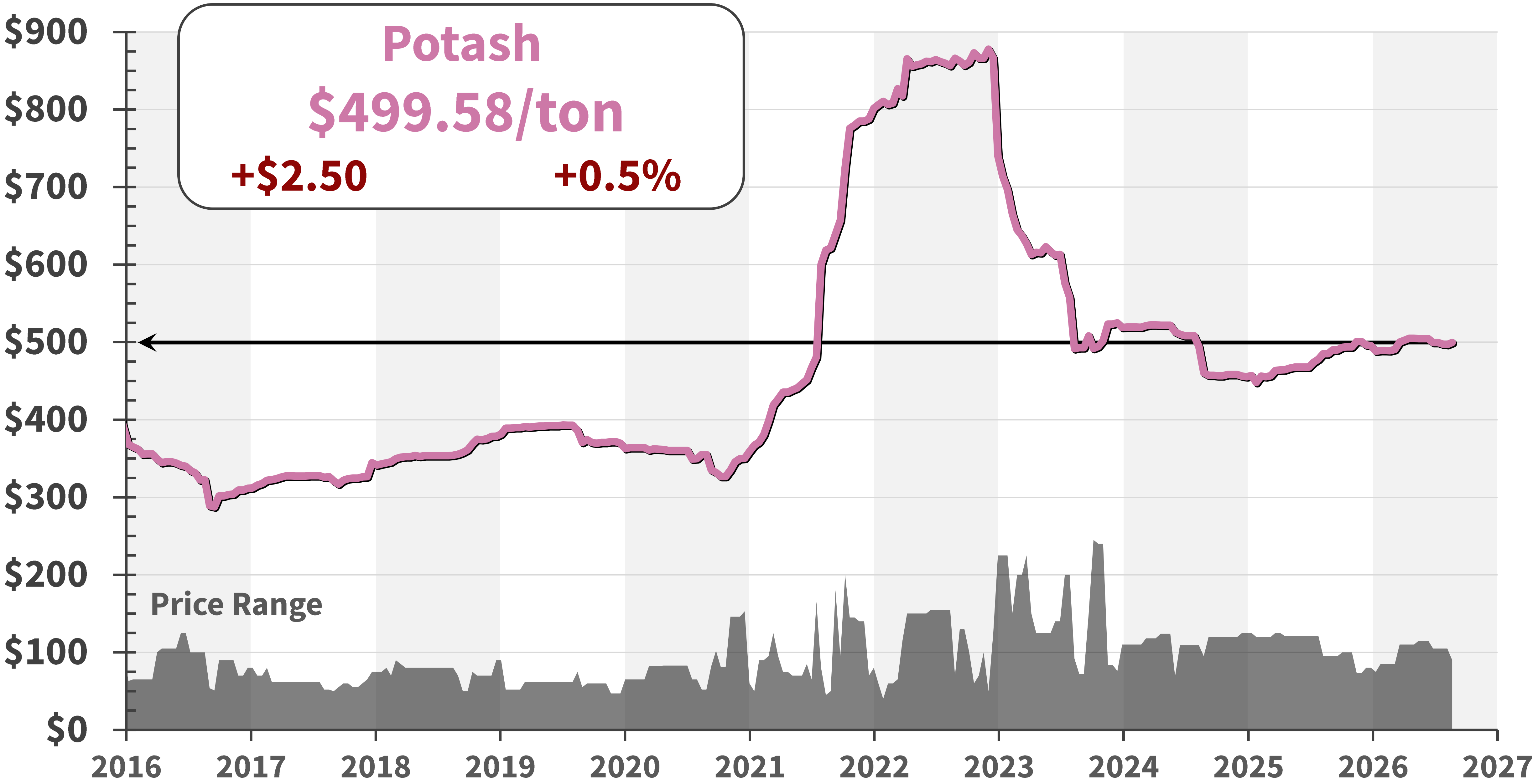
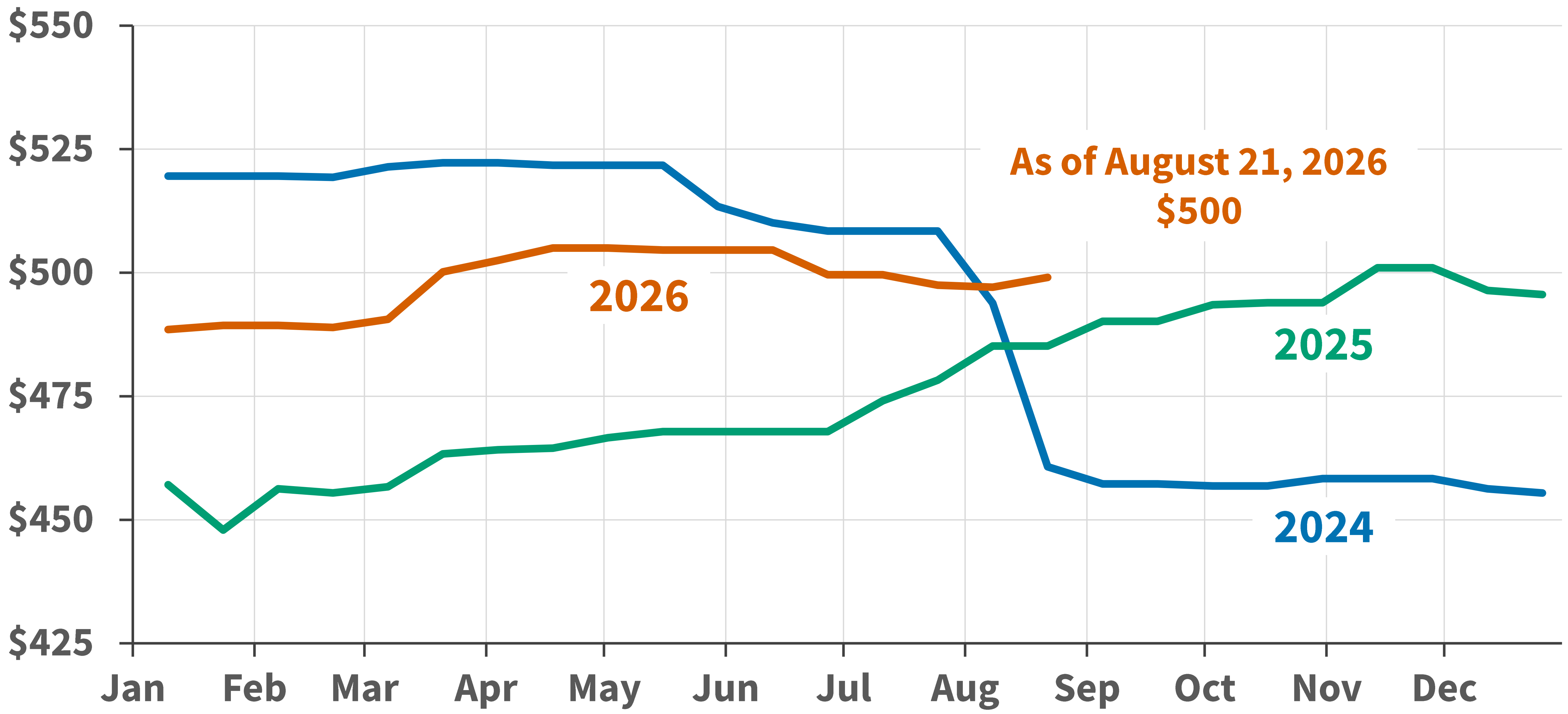
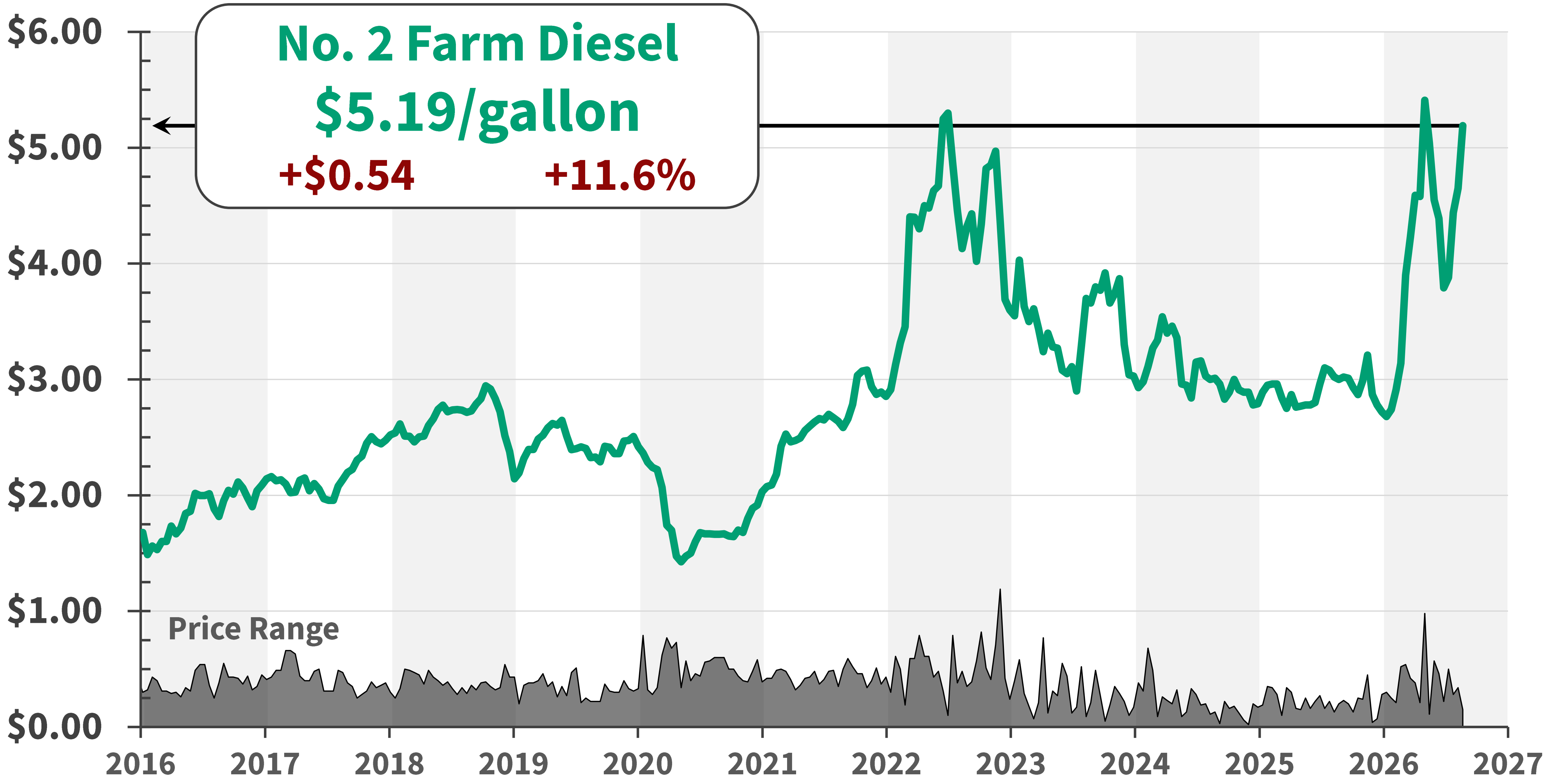

Potash
$499.58/ton
+$2.50
+0.5%
$900
$800
$700
$600
$500
$400
$300
$200
$100
$0
Price Range
2016
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
2025
2026
2027

Illinois Potash Prices in 2024, 2025, and 2026

in dollars per ton

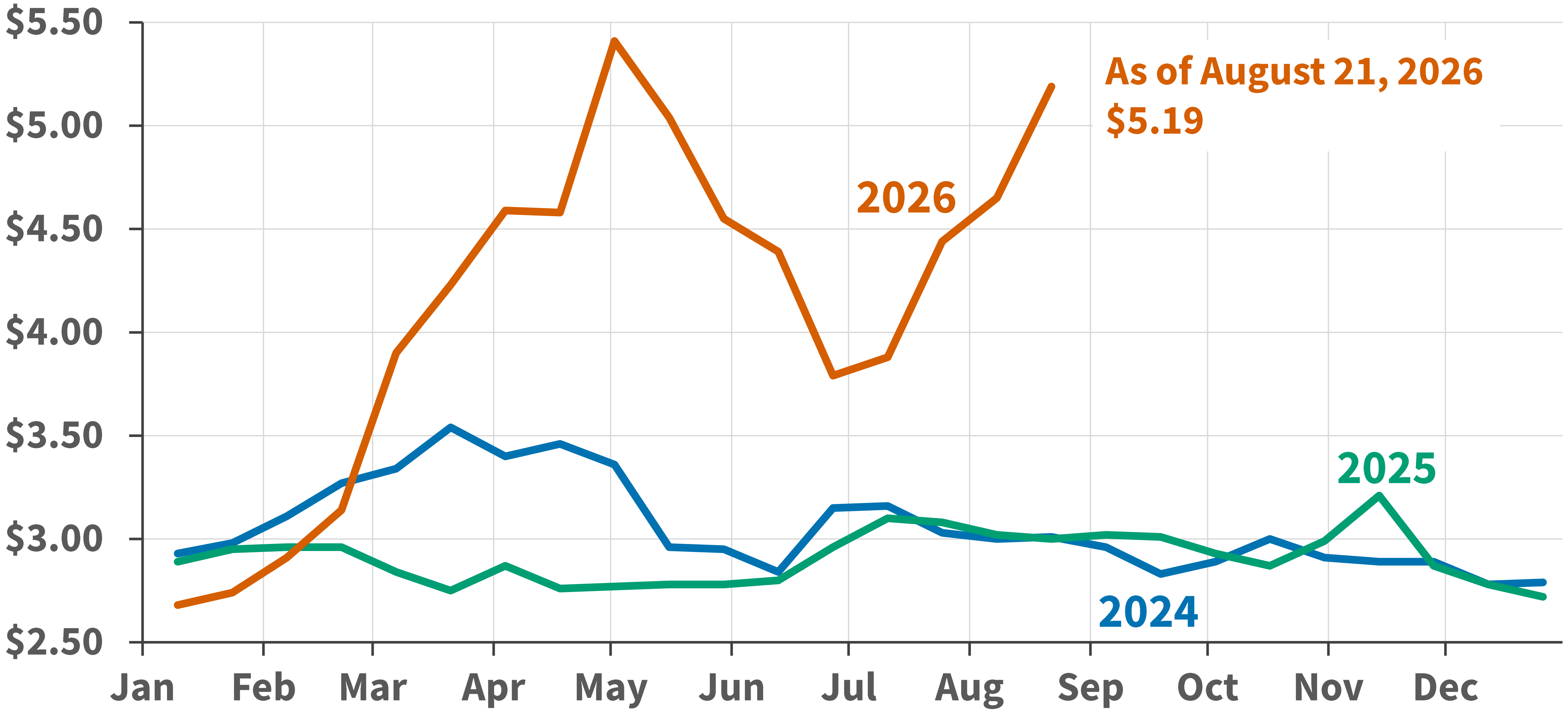


Source: USDA AMS Livestock, Poultry & Grain Market News


No. 2 Farm Diesel
$5.19/gallon
+$0.54
+11.6%
$6.00
$5.00
$4.00
$3.00
$2.00
$1.00
$0.00
Price Range
2016
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
2025
2026
2027

Illinois Diesel Fuel Prices in 2024, 2025, and 2026

in dollars per gallon



Source: USDA AMS Livestock, Poultry & Grain Market News

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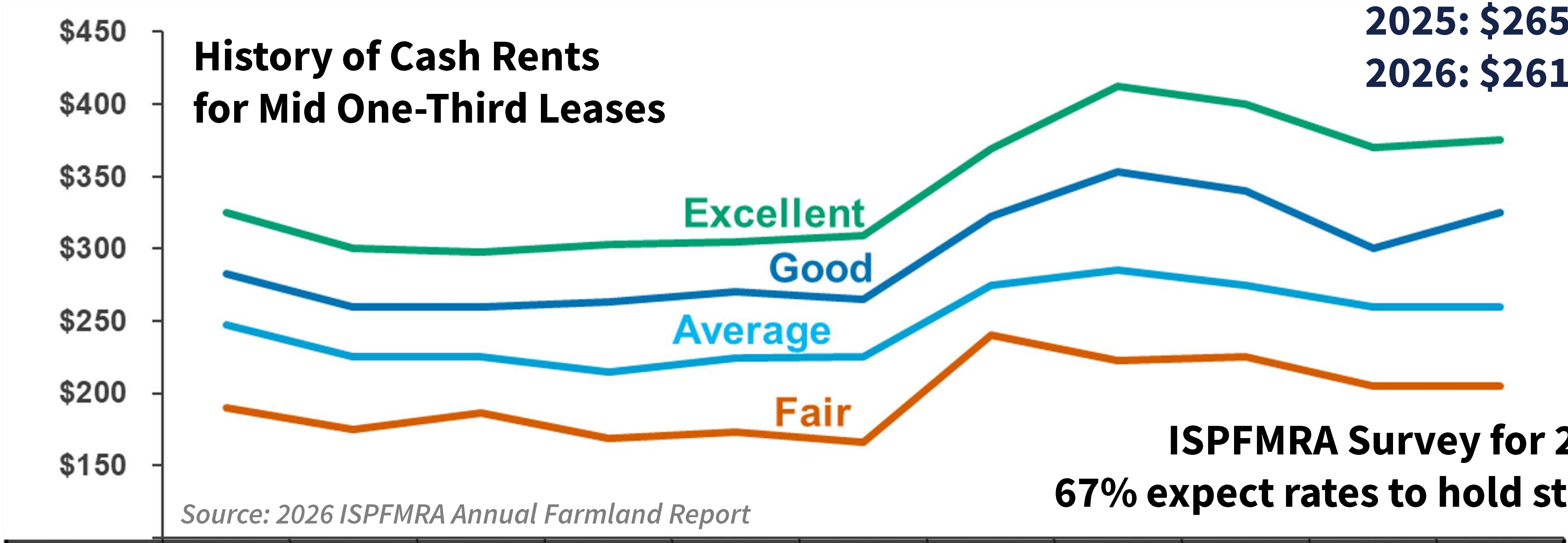
Illinois Cash Rents

USDA-NASS:
2024: $269/acre
2025: $265/acre
2026: $261/acre



ISPFMRA Survey for 2027:
67% expect rates to hold steady

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Excellent	$325	$300	$298	$303	$305	$309	$369	$412	$400	$370	$375
Good	$283	$260	$260	$263	$270	$265	$322	$353	$340	$300	$325
Average	$247	$225	$225	$215	$224	$225	$275	$285	$275	$260	$273
Fair	$190	$175	$186	$169	$173	$166	$240	$223	$225	$205	$200

USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Illinois Society of Professional Farm Managers & Rural Appraisers

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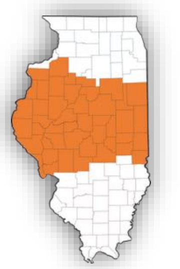
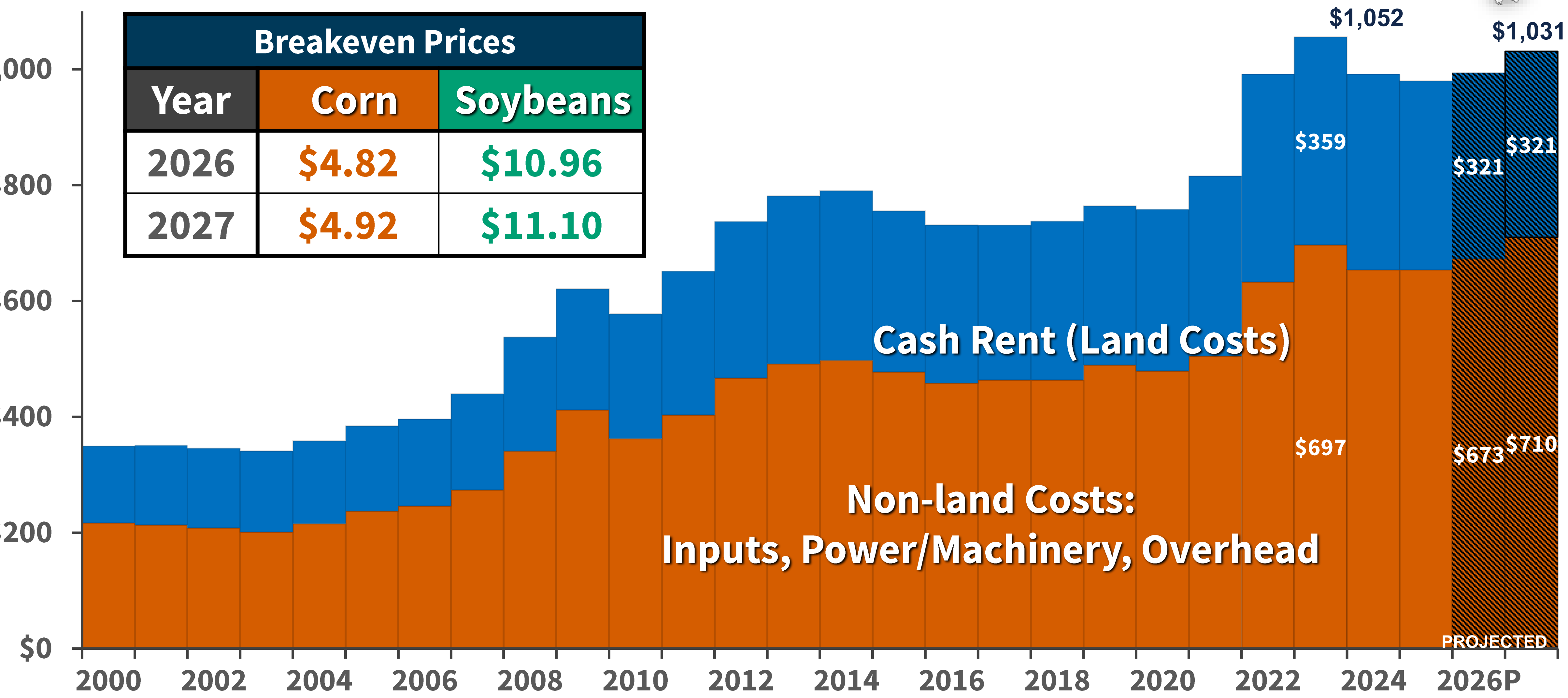
Production Costs for Central Illinois in $ per acre

50-50 Corn-Soy Rotation, 2000 to 2027P

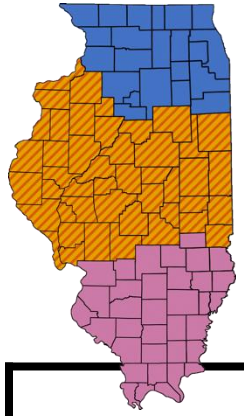


Breakeven Prices		
Year	Corn	Soybeans
2026	$4.82	$10.96
2027	$4.92	$11.10



Source: Illinois Farm Business Farm Management and *farmdoc* projections

Return and Income Outlook



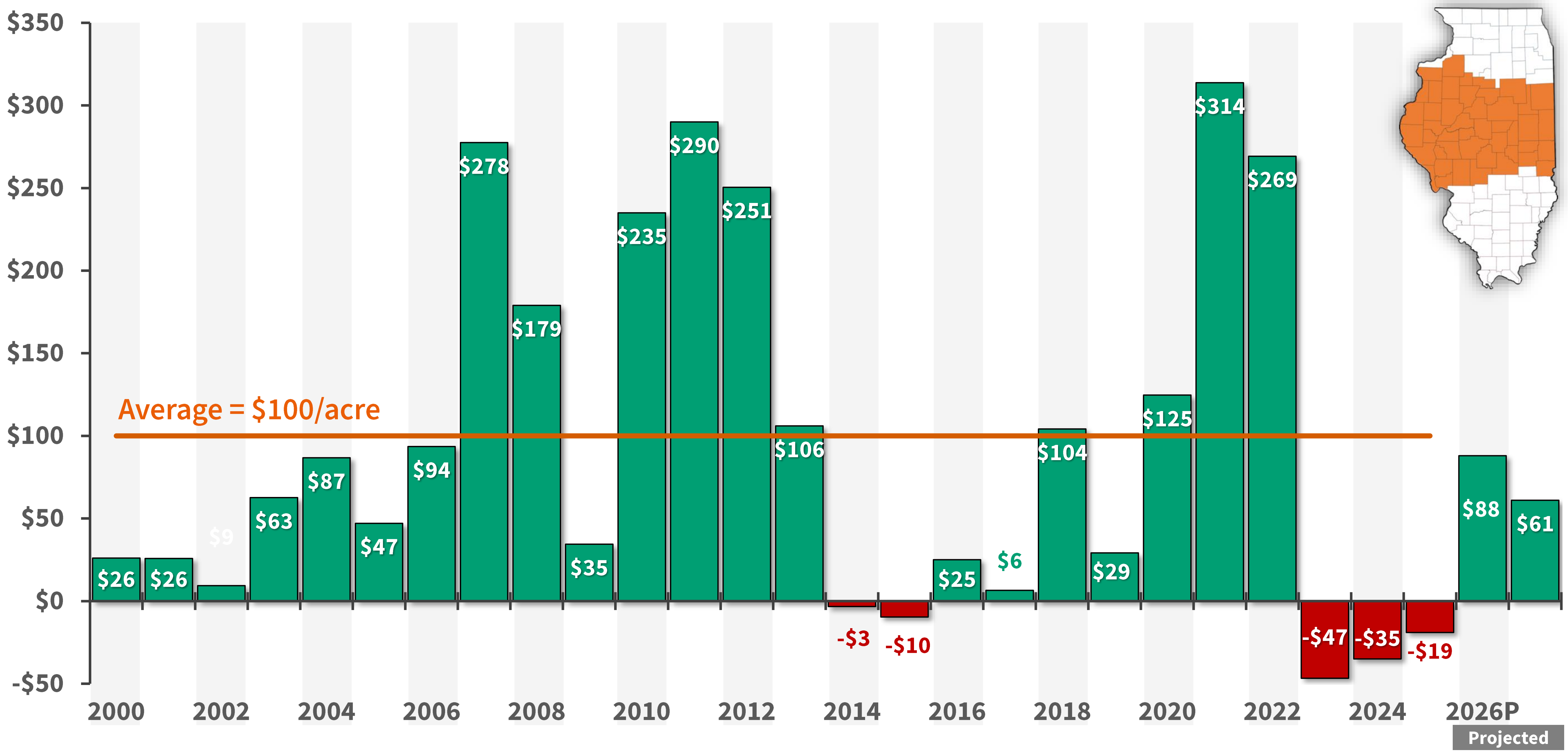
Revenue, Costs, and Returns, 2027 Crop Budgets

	Northern		Central-High		Central-Low		Southern	
	Corn	Beans	Corn	Beans	Corn	Beans	Corn	Beans
Gross revenue	$1,202	$869	$1,242	$941	$1,181	$868	$1,001	$736
Total non-land costs	$881	$508	$885	$534	$873	$515	$876	$532
Operator and land return	$321	$361	$357	$407	$308	$353	$125	$204
Land costs (cash rent)	*$293*		*$321*		*$279*		*$186*	
Farmer return	*$28*	*$68*	*$36*	*$86*	*$29*	*$74*	*-$61*	*$18*
Breakeven price to cover:								
Non-land costs	$3.72	$7.15	$3.61	$6.94	$3.75	$7.25	$4.45	$8.87
Total costs[1]	$4.95	$11.28	$4.92	$11.10	$4.94	$11.18	$5.39	$11.97
Corn - Soybean Returns	-$40		-$50		-$45		-$79	

[1] *Equals non-land costs plus land costs.*

Farmer Returns to a 50% Corn – 50% Soybean Rotation ($ per acre)

Central Illinois, Cash Rented Farmland, 2000 to 2027P



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Source: Illinois FBFM and *farmdoc* projections in August 2026

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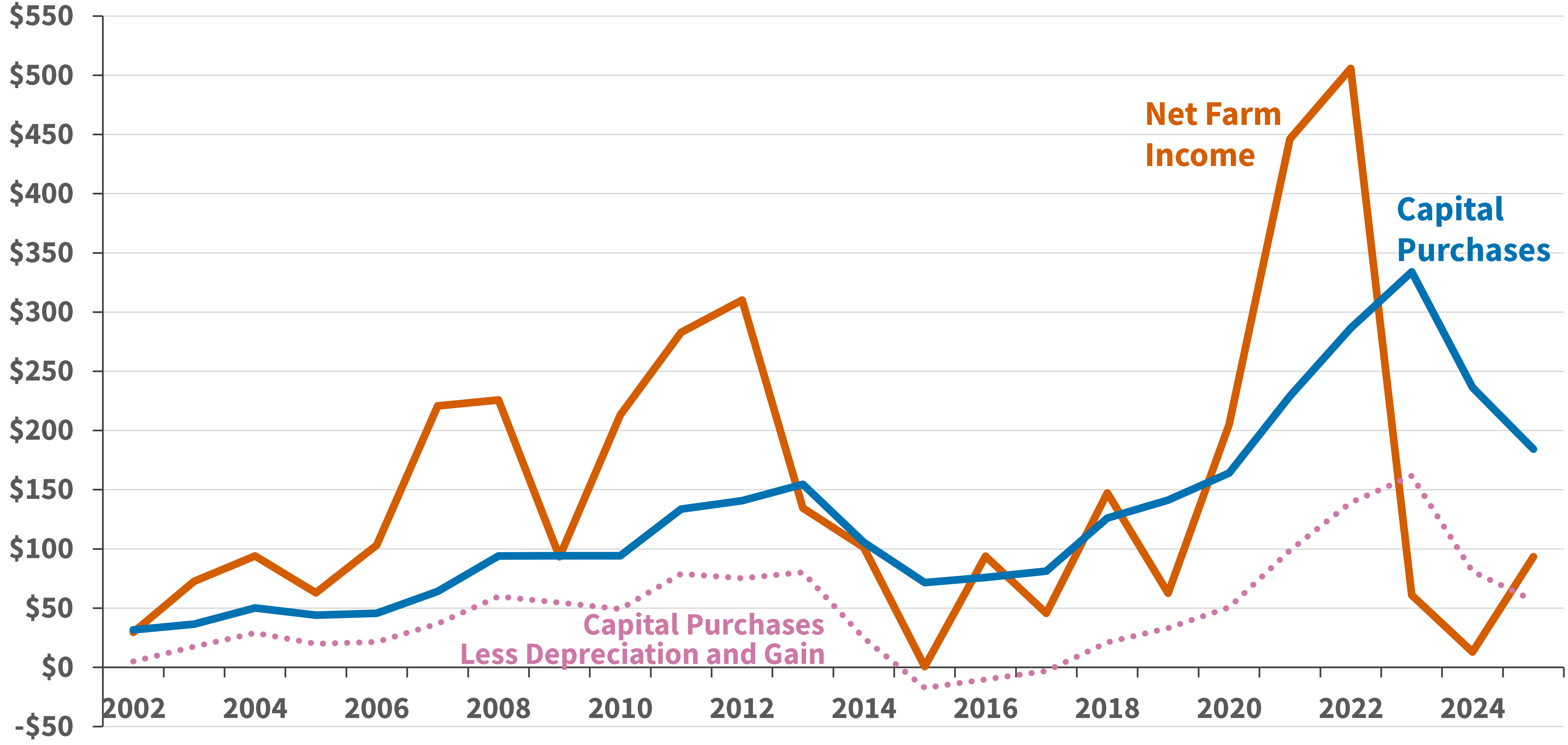
Average Net Farm Income in Illinois

Grain Farms enrolled in Illinois Farm Business Farm Management ($1,000)

FBFM



Source: Illinois FBFM and *farmdoc* projections.


CASH IS KING
Don't spend it
DO A CASH FLOW
Know your numbers
CONSIDER NON-COMMODITY CROPS
Opportunities will vary
RE-EVALUATE YOUR PRODUCTION PLAN
Adjust and stay flexible
MAXIMIZE RETURNS, NOT YIELDS
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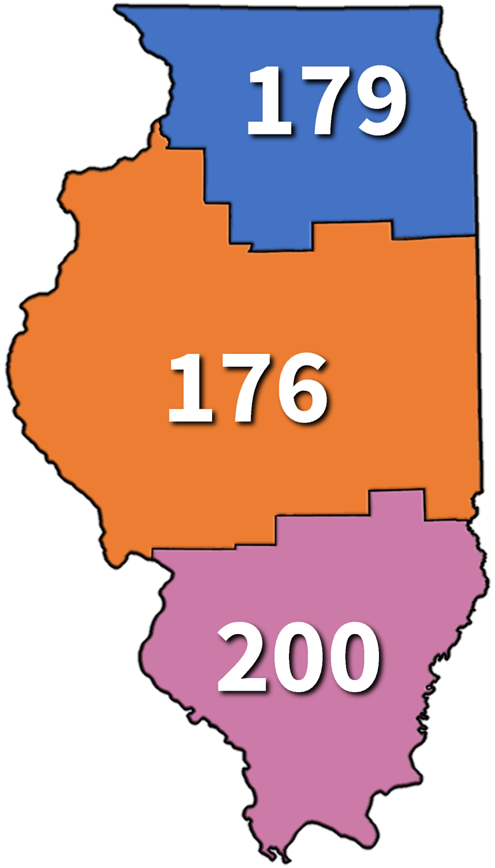
Maximize Returns, Not Yields

University of Illinois Nitrogen Rates (MRTN) for 2026

Pounds of actual N per acre



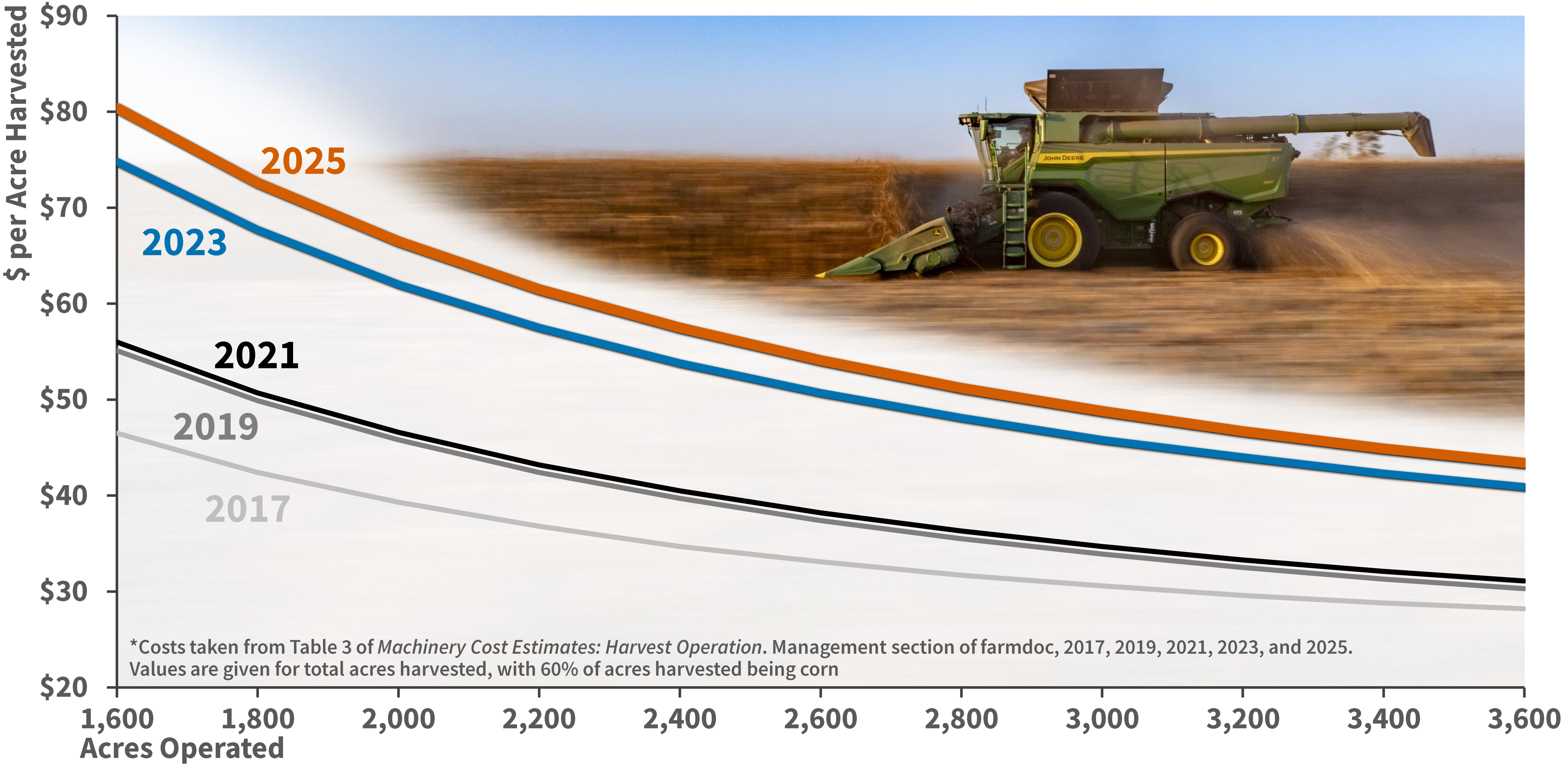
Many farms have P and K soil levels above maintenance levels

Lower application rates justified in most cases

Carefully Evaluate Machinery Decisions

When is re-investment needed and justified?

Corn Combining Costs for Different Acres Harvested*



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Summary

- Cautiously optimistic that returns will be higher in 2026 and in 2027

- Still in a period of below-average returns

- Advice is to:
  - Preserve cash flow
  - Maximize returns, not yields
  - Carefully evaluate capital purchases

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