



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Farmers Withstand the Storms to Realize Bountiful Crops, USDA Reports**

**WASHINGTON, Jan. 12, 2009** – An economic downturn, floods in the Midwest, hurricanes in the South and drought-like conditions in various areas of the United States made 2008 one of the most volatile years in history for the agriculture industry. In spite of all the challenges U.S. farmers produced an abundant corn and soybean crop, according to the *2008 Crop Production Summary* released today by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service.

Following last year's record corn production, the 2008 crop was the second largest in history. Corn produced for grain was 12.1 billion bushels, down 7 percent from 2007's 13.04 billion bushels. NASS estimates the average corn yield at 153.9 bushels per acre, up 3.2 bushels from last year and the second-highest on record.

Soybean production for 2008 was up 11 percent over the previous year and the fourth largest crop on record. However, the average yield per acre is estimated at 39.6 bushels, down 2.1 bushels compared to 2007.

Total 2008 upland cotton production was 12.6 million bales, down 31 percent from 2007 and the lowest since 1989. The average yield estimate is 799 pounds per acre, down 65 pounds from a year before. Upland cotton production was affected by severe weather in major cotton-producing states, such as Texas and Louisiana, where weather forced producers in these two states to abandon 1.66 million acres planted.

U.S. peanut farmers set a new production record high in 2008 at 5.15 billion pounds, a 40 percent increase from 2007. The average yield is estimated at 3,416 pounds, 257 pounds above the previous record high, set in 2003.

NASS also released the *2008 Winter Wheat Seedings* report today. The planted area for harvest in 2009 is estimated at 42.1 million acres, down 9 percent from 2008. Wet weather and delayed row crop harvest posed challenges and caused delays in planting.

The entire *2008 Crop Production Summary* and all NASS reports are available online at [www.nass.usda.gov](http://www.nass.usda.gov).

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