

## Delaware Growing Season Summary: 2005

### WEATHER

The fall of 2004 was favorable for producers to complete their seeding of the winter wheat and barley crops in a timely manner. Adequate moisture was received after planting for excellent germination and early growth before the small grain crops went dormant for the winter.

The 2005 growing season was a good one for most crops. April precipitation totals were near normal and while more than normal amounts of rain came in May, there were enough dry periods for farmers to till land and get acreage planted on time. Harvest of wheat and barley occurred without major weather delays and yields were above average. Weather was generally favorable for production of vegetable crops.

The lack of precipitation in August and September resulted in low yields on non-irrigated, double-crop soybeans and excessive moisture received in October and early November caused mold problems in soybean pods at harvest time.

The weather following the harvest of the soybean and corn crops was favorable for timely plantings of the 2006 wheat and barley acreage.

**SOYBEANS** are planted to more acres in Delaware each year than any other crop (about 15 percent of the state's land area). Planting of full season/single crop soybeans started in early May. The development of the soybean crop in 2005 ran close to normal.

Acres harvested decreased 12 percent from 2004, from 210,000 to 185,000 acres. Yield was 26 bushels per acre, 16 bushels lower than in 2004. Sussex county yield at 22.5 bushels was the lowest since 1995 while Kent county yield at 27.6 bushels was the lowest since 1999. Production decreased 46 percent from 2004, to 4.7 million bushels. *(Delaware's soybean yields include production from full season plantings, plus plantings following harvest of early season vegetables, barley and wheat. Typically 40-50 percent of Delaware's soybean acreage is "double-cropped.")* The season average price for soybeans in 2005 was \$5.45 per bushel, up 5 cents from 2004. The value of production for the 2005 soybean crop was \$25,789,000, down 45 percent from 2004.