

crops review

general

Timely rains and moderate temperatures throughout the 2004 growing season provided excellent growing conditions for Maryland farmers. Yields for the major commodities were near or reached record highs as producers enjoyed one of the most bountiful seasons in several years.

corn

Favorable conditions in May allowed Maryland producers to get corn planting completed by mid to late June, slightly ahead of normal. Warm temperatures in July and August advanced kernel development and good fall conditions kept corn harvest on schedule. As a result, farmers realized an average yield of 153 bushels per acre, up 30 bushels from 2003 and just two bushels per acre less than the record yield of 2000. With 425,000 acres of corn harvested for grain, farmers produced 65 million bushels of corn statewide. Cash receipts for corn for grain were \$120.2 million, up 36 percent from 2003. Another 60,000 acres of corn was harvested for silage. This crop averaged 20 tons per acre, 4 tons per acre above 2003. Corn silage production was up 15 percent from 2003 at 1.2 million tons.

small grains

Small grains were rated in good to excellent condition for much of the growing season according to weekly crop progress reports. Winter wheat production was up significantly from the rain plagued 2003 crop. Production totaled 8.6 million bushels, 59 percent above 2003 production. Yield averaged 59 bushels per acre on the 145,000 acres harvested. Cash receipts totaled \$27.6 million dollars. Barley production in 2004 was up 39 percent from 2003, at 2.8 million bushels. This was due to an increase in acres harvested and yield. Acreage harvested was up 3,000 acres to 39,000 acres and yield showed a significant increase from 57 bushels in 2003 to 73 bushels in 2004. Cash receipts, at 3.2 million dollars were up 19 percent from the previous year.

soybeans

Soybean planting was completed significantly ahead of normal and weather conditions throughout the growing season facilitated pod development. Soybean yield averaged 43 bushels per acre, equal to the record set in 2000. Total soybean production at 21.3 million bushels was 34 percent above the 2003 crop and 97 percent above the 2002 crop. Harvested acreage was up significantly from 2003 at 495,000 acres harvested. Cash receipts from soybeans were \$112.2 million, up 30 percent from 2003.

hay

Hay production was up 6 percent from 2003 with 570,000 tons harvested in 2004. Of the total, 132,000 tons of alfalfa hay and 438,000 tons of other hay were produced. Alfalfa was harvested from 45,000 acres and yielded an average 3.3 tons per acre. Other hay was harvested from 175,000 acres with an average yield of 2.5 tons per acre. Cash receipts for hay totaled \$21.1 million, down from \$22.7 million in 2003.