



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
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Small Grain Crops Set Record

USDA has released final production estimates for the 2008 small grain crop and exceptional yields are recorded for wheat and barley in Maryland and Delaware.

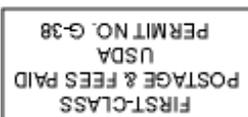
Maryland: Maryland farmers have set a new record yield for wheat, an average 73 bushels per acre, which tops the previous record of 68 bushels per acre set in 1997. Wheat was planted on 255,000 acres this year, the largest planting since 1953. However, a large amount of this acreage was enrolled in the Maryland Cover Crop Program, leaving 180,000 acres harvested for grain. This resulted in a total wheat production of 13.14 million bushels, and compares with 11.56 million bushels produced last year. Yield for barley was also a record, at 90 bushels per acre, as compared with the previous record yield of 87 bushels per acre recorded in 2006. Producers planted an estimated 45,000 acres of barley in 2008 and harvested 35,000 acres for grain, with a majority of the remaining acreage enrolled in the Maryland Cover Crop Program. Total barley production is estimated at 3.15 million bushels, up 10 percent from 2.86 million bushels produced in 2007.

Delaware: Delaware farmers report the largest wheat crop on record, topping the previous record of 5.33 million bushels set in 1997. An estimated 6.08 million bushels of wheat was produced in Delaware this year, up a whopping 63 percent from 3.74 million bushels produced in 2007. Wheat was harvested from an estimated 79,000 acres, the largest acreage harvested for grain since the 1930's. On this acreage, growers recorded an average 77 bushels per acre, topping the previous record yield set in 1997 of 73 bushels per acre. Delaware producers also harvested a respectable 80 bushels per acre of barley this year. This compares with an average 78 bushels per acre recorded in 2007 and the record high yield of 89 bushels per acre set in 1997. Barley was harvested from an estimated 22,000 acres, resulting in total production of 1.76 million bushels, up 19 percent from 1.48 million bushels harvested in 2007.

United States: All wheat production totals 2.50 billion bushels in 2008, up 2 percent from the August forecast and up 21 percent from 2007. Grain area is 55.7 million acres, up 9 percent from last year. The U.S. yield is 44.9 bushels per acre, up 1.4 bushels from the last forecast and up 4.4 bushels from last year. The levels of production and changes from last year by type are: winter wheat, 1.87 billion bushels, up 23 percent; other spring wheat, 547 million bushels, up 14 percent; Durum wheat, 84.9 million bushels, up 18 percent.

Barley production is estimated at 239 million bushels, 10 percent above the August forecast and 13 percent above 2007. Average yield per acre, at 63.6 bushels, is up 3.7 bushels from August and 3.2 bushels from last year. The area harvested for grain is estimated at 3.77 million acres, up 7 percent from a year ago.

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