



# Montana Crop & Livestock Reporter

Cooperating with the Montana Department of Agriculture

Issue: 08-07 Released: April 4, 2008

## HIGHLIGHTS

2008 Prospective Plantings  
March 1 Grain Stocks  
Ag Prices Received  
Quarterly Hogs and Pigs  
Weekly Crop Weather Report Starts

### 2008 Prospective Plantings

Montana spring wheat producers expect to seed 2.45 million acres in 2008, unchanged from last year. Producers expect to plant 630,000 acres of durum wheat this spring, up 31 percent from last year. Winter wheat seedings, at 2.7 million acres, are unchanged from the December estimate and 21 percent above last year. Winter wheat conditions at the end of February 2008 were lower than a year ago with conditions rated 3 percent very poor, 13 percent poor, 49 percent fair, 32 percent good, and 3 percent excellent. If you add the winter wheat acres seeded last fall to the intended acreage for other spring and durum wheat, all wheat planted for the 2008 crop year would total 5.8 million acres, up 12 percent from 2007.

Montana barley producers intend to plant an estimated 860,000 acres, down 4

percent from the previous year. The intended seeded acreage for oats is expected to be 55,000 acres, down 20,000 acres from 2007 and the lowest acreage planted on record. Corn growers intend to plant 78,000 acres, down 6,000 acres from last year. Acres planted to sugar beets are expected to be 35,800 acres, down 25 percent from 2007. Hay growers are intending to harvest 2.6 million acres, up 2 percent from last year.

The area planted to all dry beans is expected to be 13,000 acres, down 29 percent from last year. All garbanzo beans (chickpeas) area planted is expected to total 5,000 acres, down from 9,800 acres in 2007. Small chickpea acreage is expected to be 2,400 acres, up from 1,600 acres in 2007. Large chickpea acreage is expected to be 2,600 acres, down from 8,200 acres last year. All dry pea area planted is expected to total 220,000 acres, down from 235,000 acres in 2007. Austrian winter pea area planted is expected to be 19,000 acres, down from 20,000 acres planted last year. Lentil area planted for 2008 is expected to be 87,000 acres, unchanged from 2007.

Montana canola producers intend to plant 4,000 acres in 2008, down 50 percent from 2007. Flaxseed producers intend to plant 14,000 acres in 2008, down 7,000 acres from last year.

In the United States, other spring wheat growers intend to plant 14.3 million acres this year, up 8 percent from 2007. Of the total, about 13.6 million acres are Hard Red Spring wheat. Area seeded to durum wheat is expected to total 2.63 million acres, up 22 percent from 2007. Planted acreage is expected to be up in all producing States except Idaho where acreage is unchanged. The 2008 winter wheat planted area is estimated at 46.8 million acres, up slightly from the Winter Wheat Seedings report.

(continued on page two)

The Montana 2008 prospective plantings and grain stocks estimates in this issue are the result of surveying approximately 2,500 Montana farmers in March. SPECIAL THANKS to those operators that were interviewed and responded to the survey.

### Planted Acreage, 2006-2007 and Intended 2008, Montana and United States

	Montana				United States			
	2006	2007	2008	2008/2007	2006	2007	2008	2008/2007
	Thousand Acres			Percent	Thousand Acres			Percent
All Wheat	5,300.0	5,170.0	5,780.0	112	57,344.0	60,433.0	63,803.0	106
Winter Wheat	1,950.0	2,240.0	2,700.0	121	40,575.0	44,987.0	46,840.0	104
Durum Wheat	400.0	480.0	630.0	131	1,870.0	2,149.0	2,630.0	122
Other Spring Wheat	2,950.0	2,450.0	2,450.0	100	14,899.0	13,297.0	14,333.0	108
Barley	770.0	900.0	860.0	96	3,452.0	4,020.0	4,147.0	103
Oats	70.0	75.0	55.0	73	4,168.0	3,760.0	3,420.0	91
Corn	65.0	84.0	78.0	93	78,327.0	93,600.0	86,014.0	92
Sugar Beets	53.6	47.5	35.8	75	1,366.2	1,269.8	1,131.8	89
All Hay Harvested	2,260.0	2,550.0	2,600.0	102	60,927.0	61,625.0	60,583.0	98
All Dry Beans	19.5	18.3	13.0	71	1,629.8	1,526.9	1,398.5	92
Garbanzo Beans, sm	2.4	1.6	2.4	150	17.4	11.1	15.4	139
Garbanzo Beans, lg	6.4	8.2	2.6	32	119.4	114.4	83.1	73
All Dry Peas	210.0	235.0	220.0	94	925.5	847.5	820.0	97
Austrian Winter Peas	32.0	20.0	19.0	95	46.0	29.0	25.5	88
Lentils	142.0	87.0	87.0	100	429.0	303.0	277.0	91
Canola	10.0	8.0	4.0	50	1,044.0	1,183.0	1,010.0	85
Flaxseed	35.0	21.0	14.0	67	813.0	354.0	360.0	102

**2008 Prospective Plantings** (continued from page one)

U.S. corn growers intend to plant 86.0 million acres for all purposes in 2008, down 8 percent from last year when corn planted area was the highest since 1944. U.S. area planted to sugar beets for the 2008 crop year is expected to total 1.13 million acres, 11 percent lower than the 2007 planted acreage. If realized, expected planted acreage will be the lowest since 1985.

Dry bean growers intend to plant 1.40 million acres in 2008, down 8 percent from last year and 14 percent below 2006. Expected area planted for all chickpeas is 98,500 acres, down 22 percent from last year and 28 percent lower than 2006. Small chickpea area, at 15,400 acres, is 39 percent higher than 2007 but 11 percent lower than 2006. Acreage declines are expected in 12 of the 18 dry bean estimating States.

Dry edible pea growers in the United States intend to plant 820,000 acres in 2008, down 3 percent from 2007 and 11 percent below two years ago. Area

planted to Austrian winter peas for the 2008 crop year is expected to be 25,500 acres, down 12 percent from 2007 and 45 percent below two years ago. If realized, this would be the lowest planted acreage since the 2003 crop year. Lentils area planted for the 2008 crop year is expected to total 277,000 acres, down 9 percent from 2007 and 35 percent below two years ago.

Flaxseed producers in the U.S. expect to plant 360,000 acres in 2008, up 2 percent from last year but 56 percent below 2006.

U.S. producers expect to harvest 60.6 million acres of all hay in 2008, down 2 percent from 2007. Harvested area is expected to decrease from last year throughout most of the Great Plains, Southeast, and Southwest.

**March 1, 2008 Grain Stocks**

All wheat stocks in Montana on March 1, 2008 were 43.1 million bushels, down 38 percent from March 1, 2007. All wheat stocks stored on farms amounted to 23.0 million bushels, down 52 percent from a year ago. All wheat stored off farms

amounted to 20.1 million bushels, down 4 percent from a year ago. All wheat disappearance for the December 2007-February 2008 quarter was down 1 percent from the same quarter last year to 50.8 million bushels, compared with 51.5 million bushels a year ago.

Montana barley stocks in all positions on March 1, 2008 were 16.7 million bushels, down 26 percent from a year ago. Barley stored on farms was 6.0 million bushels, down 43 percent from last year. Off-farm barley storage was down 12 percent from a year ago to 10.7 million bushels. All barley disappearance during the December 2007-February 2008 quarter was down 14 percent from the same quarter a year ago to 7.5 million bushels, compared with 8.7 million bushels a year ago. Oat stocks in all positions were estimated at 960,000 bushels, down 12 percent from last year. On-farm oat stocks were 900,000 bushels, down 10 percent from 1.0 million bushels stored a year ago. Oats stored off-farm were down 33 percent from last year to 60,000 bushels. (continued on back page)

**March 1, 2008 Grain Stocks**

GRAIN and POSITION	MONTANA				UNITED STATES		
	Mar. 1, 2007	Dec. 1, 2007	Mar. 1, 2008	'08/'07	Mar. 1, 2007	Dec. 1, 2007	Mar. 1, 2008
	Thousand Bushels		Percent		Thousand Bushels		
<b>ALL WHEAT</b>							
On Farms	48,000	71,000	23,000	48%	192,450	289,540	91,990
Off Farms 1/	20,970	22,890	20,100	96%	664,278	842,398	617,650
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>68,970</b>	<b>93,890</b>	<b>43,100</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>856,728</b>	<b>1,131,938</b>	<b>709,640</b>
<b>DURUM WHEAT 2/</b>							
On Farms 3/	--	--	--	--	17,100	17,600	8,100
Off Farms 1/, 3/	--	--	--	--	21,736	22,170	17,058
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>38,836</b>	<b>39,770</b>	<b>25,158</b>
<b>BARLEY</b>							
On Farms	10,500	14,000	6,000	57%	38,310	62,050	28,270
Off Farms 1/	12,160	10,180	10,720	88%	78,756	73,728	76,540
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22,660</b>	<b>24,180</b>	<b>16,720</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>117,066</b>	<b>135,778</b>	<b>104,810</b>
<b>OATS</b>							
On Farms	1,000	1,600	900	90%	33,900	43,100	31,000
Off Farms 1/	90	75	60	67%	37,158	51,331	48,038
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,090</b>	<b>1,675</b>	<b>960</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>71,058</b>	<b>94,431</b>	<b>79,038</b>
<b>CORN</b>							
On Farms	--	--	--	--	3,330,000	6,530,000	3,780,000
Off Farms 1/	--	--	--	--	2,738,250	3,748,085	3,078,895
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>6,068,250</b>	<b>10,278,085</b>	<b>6,858,895</b>

1/ Terminals, mills, interior elevators. 2/ Included in all wheat. 3/ Not published in order to avoid disclosing individual operations.

## February 2008 Ag Prices Received

February 2008 full month crop prices were mixed when compared with January 2008. Montana wheat prices set new record highs for all classes. Montana's winter wheat price was \$7.31 per bushel, up \$1.06 from the previous month, spring wheat prices increased \$0.66 to \$8.66 per bushel, durum wheat prices rose \$1.10 to \$11.20 per bushel. Feed barley prices decreased \$0.05 from the previous month to \$4.72 per bushel, but malt barley prices increased \$0.04 to \$4.26 per bushel.

The mid-March price for alfalfa hay rose \$11.00 to \$89.00 per ton, but all other hay decreased \$3.00 to \$79.00 per ton. Mid-March grain prices were mostly higher than the previous month with winter wheat at \$11.00 per bushel, spring wheat was \$13.00 per bushel, durum wheat was \$12.20 per bushel, malt barley was \$5.08 per bushel, and feed barley was \$4.35 per bushel.

Livestock prices for the full month of February were mostly higher when compared with January 2008. Steer and

heifers increased \$3.20 to \$102.00 per cwt, cows increased \$7.20 to \$52.70 per cwt. The price for calves was up \$4.00 to \$120.00 per cwt. Sheep prices dropped \$7.90 to \$20.80 per cwt, but lamb prices increased \$7.00 to \$110.00 per cwt. Milk prices increased \$0.30 per cwt from last month to \$21.00 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-March were \$95.60 per cwt, cows were \$51.10 per cwt, beef cattle were \$93.40 per cwt, calves were \$121.00 per cwt, and milk prices were \$20.20 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for February and changes from January were as follows: winter wheat was \$8.97 per bushel, up \$1.19, spring wheat was \$11.10 per bushel, up \$3.11, durum wheat was \$13.50 per bushel, up \$0.30, the all barley price was \$4.39 per bushel, up \$0.05, steer and heifer prices were \$94.20 per cwt, up \$0.80, cows were \$51.40 per cwt, up \$5.10; calves were \$120.00 per cwt, up \$3.00; sheep were \$29.90 per cwt, down \$2.00, and lambs were \$96.80 per cwt, down \$0.70.

The U.S. mid-March winter wheat price was \$11.00 per bushel, spring wheat was \$12.50 per bushel, durum wheat was \$14.50 per bushel, all wheat was \$11.70 per bushel, malt barley was \$4.89 per bushel, feed barley was \$4.41 per bushel, and all barley was \$4.75 per bushel. Steer and heifer prices were \$93.80 per cwt, cows were \$52.20 per cwt, calves were \$120.00 per cwt, all hogs were \$41.20 per cwt, and all eggs were \$1.38 per dozen.

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in March, at 150 percent, based on 1990-92=100, increased 3 points (2.0 percent) from February. The Crop Index is up 8 points (4.9 percent) but the Livestock Index was unchanged. Producers received higher commodity prices for wheat, corn, lettuce, and eggs and lower prices for milk, snap beans, strawberries, and hogs. In addition to prices, the overall index is affected by the seasonal change based on a 3-year average mix of commodities producers sell. Increased monthly marketings of strawberries, soybeans, milk, and broilers offset decreased marketings of cattle, corn, cotton, and oranges.

## United States Index Summary

INDEX (1990-92=100)	February 2007	March 2007	February 2008	March 2008
Prices Received	128	133	147	150
Prices Paid, Interest, Taxes, & Farm Wage Rates 1/	156	159	173	176
Ratio 2/	82	84	85	85

1/ Prices paid indexes (1990-92=100) published monthly. 2/ Ratio of index of prices received by farmers to index of prices paid.

## Montana Average Farm Prices Received

Commodity	U N I T	Monthly Average				Change from Previous			Mid-Month Avg	
		Montana			U.S.	Month	Year	Montana	U.S.	
		Feb 2007	Jan 2008	Feb 2008	Feb 2008	Jan 2008	Feb 2007	15-Mar-08	15-Mar-08	
Dollars										
Winter Wheat	Bu	4.65	6.25	7.31	8.97	1.06	2.66	11.00	11.00	
Durum Wheat	Bu	5.12	10.10	11.20	13.50	1.10	6.08	12.20	14.50	
Spring Wheat	Bu	4.78	8.00	8.66	11.10	0.66	3.88	13.00	12.50	
All Wheat	Bu	4.74	7.20	8.01	9.98	0.81	3.27	11.80	11.70	
All Barley	Bu	3.17	4.50	4.39	4.39	-0.11	1.22	4.87	4.75	
Feed Barley	Bu	3.00	4.77	4.72	4.67	-0.05	1.72	4.35	4.41	
Malt Barley	Bu	3.20	4.22	4.26	4.31	0.04	1.06	5.08	4.89	
Oats	Bu	na	3.06	na	3.20	na	na	na	3.38	
Alfalfa Hay	Ton	80.00	77.00	78.00	138.00	1.00	-2.00	89.00	143.00	
All Other Hay	Ton	71.00	70.00	82.00	122.00	12.00	11.00	79.00	128.00	
All Hay Baled	Ton	79.00	76.00	78.00	133.00	2.00	-1.00	88.00	139.00	
Steers & Heifers	Cwt	94.70	98.80	102.00	94.20	3.20	7.30	95.60	93.80	
Cows	Cwt	47.70	45.50	52.70	51.40	7.20	5.00	51.10	52.20	
Beef Cattle 1/	Cwt	83.90	89.20	93.60	89.00	4.40	9.70	93.40	88.70	
Calves	Cwt	113.00	116.00	120.00	120.00	4.00	7.00	121.00	120.00	
Sheep	Cwt	30.30	28.70	20.80	29.90	-7.90	-9.50	na	na	
Lambs	Cwt	99.60	103.00	110.00	96.80	7.00	10.40	na	na	
All Milk	Cwt	14.80	20.70	21.00	19.10	0.30	6.20	20.20	18.30	

1/ Composite of steers, heifers, and cows. na-not available.

**March 1, 2008 Grain Stocks** (continued from page two)

In the U.S., all wheat stored in all positions on March 1, 2008 totaled 710 million bushels, down 17 percent from a year ago. On-farm stocks are estimated at 92.0 million bushels, down 52 percent from last March. Off-farm stocks, at 618 million bushels, are down 7 percent from a year ago. The December 2007 - February 2008 indicated disappearance is 422 million bushels, down 8 percent from the same period a year earlier.

Durum wheat stocks in all positions on March 1, 2008 totaled 25.2 million bushels, down 35 percent from a year ago. On-farm stocks, at 8.10 million bushels, are down 53 percent from March 1, 2007. Off-farm stocks totaled 17.1 million bushels, down 22 percent from a year ago. The December 2007 - February 2008 indicated disappearance of 14.6 million bushels is up 17 percent from the same period a year earlier.

U.S. barley stocks in all positions on March 1, 2008 totaled 105 million bushels, down 10 percent from March 1, 2007. On-farm stocks are estimated at 28.3 million bushels, 26 percent below a year ago. Off-farm stocks, at 76.5 million bushels, are 3 percent below March 2007. The December 2007 - February 2008 indicated disappearance totaled 31.0 million bushels, 44 percent below the same period a year earlier.

Oats stored in all positions on March 1, 2008 totaled 79.0 million bushels, 11 percent above the stocks on March 1, 2007. Of the total stocks on hand, 31.0 million bushels are stored on farms, down 9 percent from a year ago. Off-farm stocks totaled 48.0 million bushels, up 29 percent from the previous year. Indicated disappearance during December 2007 - February 2008 totaled 15.4 million bushels, down 45 percent from the same period a year ago.

Corn stocks in all positions on March 1, 2008 totaled 6.86 billion bushels, up 13 percent from March 1, 2007. Of the total stocks, 3.78 billion bushels are stored on

farms, up 14 percent from a year earlier. Off-farm stocks, at 3.08 billion bushels, are up 12 percent from a year ago. The December 2007 - February 2008 indicated disappearance is 3.42 billion bushels, compared with 2.86 billion bushels during the same period last year.

**U.S. Hog Inventory up 7 Percent**

U.S. inventory of all hogs and pigs on March 1, 2008 was 65.9 million head. This was up 7 percent from March 1, 2007, but down 2 percent from December 1, 2007.

Breeding inventory, at 6.14 million head, was up less than 1 percent from last year, but down slightly from the previous quarter. Market hog inventory, at 59.8 million head, was up 7 percent from last year, but down 2 percent from last quarter.

The December 2007-February 2008 pig crop, at 28.1 million head, was up 6 percent from 2007 and up 9 percent from 2006. Sows farrowing during this period totaled 3.05 million head, up 5 percent from 2007 and up 7 percent from 2006. The sows farrowed during this quarter represented 50 percent of the breeding herd. The average pigs saved per litter was 9.21 for the December 2007-February 2008 period, compared to 9.09 last year. Pigs saved per litter by size of operation ranged from 7.50 for operations with 1-99 hogs and pigs to 9.30 for operations with more than 5,000 hogs and pigs.

U.S. hog producers intend to have 3.05 million sows farrow during the March-May 2008 quarter, up slightly from the actual farrowings during the same period in 2007, and up 4 percent from 2006. Intended farrowings for June-August 2008, at 3.04 million sows, are down 2 percent from 2007 but up 4 percent from 2006.

The total number of hogs under contract, owned by operations with over 5,000 head, but raised by contractees, accounted for 40 percent of the total U.S. hog inventory, up from 39 percent last year.

**Weekly Crop-Weather Reports Begin**

The 2008 growing season is approaching, and we will begin releasing the weekly Crop-Weather Report. This report is one of the most useful reports for producers, agribusinesses, and market analysts. The report provides up-to-date information on crop progress and conditions, soil moisture, and range and pasture feed conditions, as well as weather information.

Weekly publications will resume on April 7, 2008, and will continue through October 27 when the last weekly report will be released. The first monthly report will be issued December 1, and the monthly reports will continue through March 2009.

A couple of options are available for accessing our Crop-Weather Report. Reports are available each release date after 2:00 p.m. on our website at <http://www.nass.usda.gov/mt>. Under the heading Montana Publications, select Crop Progress and Condition under the drop-down menu, and hit Go. Here you will be able to select which report you are interested in by the week ending date.

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**COMING IN THE NEXT REPORTER**

Montana's Rank	Specialty Crops County
Potato Stocks	Estimates
Quarterly Milk Production	Red Meat Production
Cattle on Feed	Egg Production

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