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WINTER WHEAT SEEDINGS UP 23 PERCENT FROM LAST YEAR

WINTER WHEAT seeded in SOUTH CAROLINA during the fall of 2006 for the 2007 crop is estimated at 160,000 acres, the USDA NASS South Carolina Field Office announced today. This is 23 percent above the crop of 2006, planted during the fall of 2005, but down 6 percent from the 2005 crop year. Seeding of the 2007 crop was slowed by dry conditions as a result of little rainfall during October and November.

WINTER WHEAT: Planted area for harvest in the UNITED STATES in 2007 is estimated at 44.1 million acres, up 9 percent from 2006. Seeding began last August and was slightly behind the 5-year average pace because of a lack of moisture in the southern Great Plains during September and much of October. Precipitation during mid-October relieved moisture concerns somewhat in major producing areas. Warm dry conditions in November allowed seeding to advance at normal pace during the month. Nearly all of the U.S. acreage was seeded by December 1 with the exception of some intended acres in the Southeast and California. Seeding should be completed this month in California. The winter wheat crop condition at the end of November was rated at 53 percent good to excellent compared with 52 percent last year. Approximate class acreage breakdowns are: **Hard Red Winter**, 31.9 million; **Soft Red Winter**, 8.33 million; and **White Winter**, 3.91 million acres.