



NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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2006 CROP PLANTED ACREAGES SHOW RECORD LEVELS

NASHVILLE, June 30, 2006 – Based on a survey recently conducted by USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service, Tennessee Field Office, farmers increased acreage planted to cotton this year while devoting less ground to all other major row crops. A cool, wet weather pattern, coupled with some localized flooding during the prime spring planting window of late April through mid-May, led to some delays and more than the usual re-planting rate. Soon after, however, the weather pattern turned dry, allowing ample opportunity to bring recently emerged row crops into mostly good condition. State Director Debra Kenerson commented on the spring in general, saying “Despite early season weather challenges and setbacks, farmers were able to persevere and get their crops in the ground.” Crop acreages and expected changes from last year are as follows: **Cotton, 700,000 acres, up 9 percent; Soybeans, 1.12 million acres, down 10,000; Corn, 600,000 acres, down 50,000; Tobacco, 20,000 acres, down 13 percent; and Hay, 1.84 million acres, down 3 percent.**

COTTON ACREAGE AT HIGHEST LEVEL IN A DECADE

For the second consecutive year, farmers favored cotton and planted significantly more in their acreage mix. Planted acreage for 2006 is estimated at 700,000 acres, up 60,000 from last year and the highest level in the State since 1995. The cotton season began with a nagging slow start due to cool soil temperatures followed by heavy rainfall. Producers commented that a remarkably large amount of acreage had to be re-planted. Fortunately, sunshine, warm temperatures and more timely rainfall dominated, especially during the first half of June. Now, nearly 60 percent of the acreage is squaring and the crop is rated in mostly good-to-excellent condition.

SOYBEAN ACREAGE DOWN SLIGHTLY FROM LAST YEAR

Tennessee’s 2006 soybean acreage is estimated at 1.12 million acres, down 10,000 acres from last year’s 1.13 million. Area for harvest is estimated at 1.09 million acres, also down 10,000 acres from 2005. Producers were able to plant their soybean acreage at a record pace, with 95 percent of the crop planted by June 18. Growers continue to adopt earlier-planted, quicker maturing varieties, in hopes of lessening the threat of soybean rust and trying to beat the effects the late summer dry, hot patterns. The crop is currently rated in mostly good condition.

CORN AND SORGHUM ACREAGES DIP TO RECORD LOWS

The State’s corn acreage is estimated at 600,000 acres, down 50,000 acres from last year, and the lowest level since records began in 1926. Growers expect to harvest 540,000 acres for grain, 55,000 acres less than last year and the lowest since 1995. Planting was virtually completed by mid-May. High input costs combined with a shift to cotton by many farmers contributed to this decline. Currently, over half of the crop has entered the silking stage and is rated in mostly good condition. Area planted to sorghum in 2006 is estimated at 15,000 acres, down 7,000 from 2005 and, if realized, the lowest acreage on record. Area for sorghum grain harvest is estimated at 13,000 acres, also down 7,000 acres from last year.

TENNESSEE’S TOBACCO ACREAGE CONTINUES STEADY DECLINE

The State’s 2006 burley tobacco acreage continues its seven year downward nosedive as acreage dropped 18 percent to 14,000 acres. Total tobacco acreage intended for harvest, which includes burley, dark fire-cured and dark air-cured, is set at a total of 20,000 acres, down almost 3,000 acres from a year ago. The dark types, and change from 2005, are as follows: dark fire-cured, 5,600 acres, up slightly from last year; dark air-cured, 400 acres, down slightly from 2005. Transplanting is virtually completed.

WHEAT ACREAGE REBOUNDS; FIRST INCREASE IN 7 YEARS

The 2006 winter wheat planted area is estimated at 280,000 acres, up 40,000 acres from the previous year, and the first increase in acreage since 1999. Area for harvest as grain is 190,000 acres, also up 40,000 acres from the 2005 total. Winter wheat planting was underway by the last week of September with 5 percent of the crop seeded by October 2. By October 16, 27 percent of the expected acreage was sown, with farmers waiting on rain to help germination. By the end of the month, rain remained scarce, but farmers proceeded and had two-thirds of the acreage seeded. Through November 27, virtually all the winter wheat was finally sown. The crop weathered the winter in good shape and harvest in June was highly successful.

HAY ACREAGE DOWN FROM 3 PERCENT

Tennessee producers intend to harvest 1.84 million acres of hay in 2006, down 3 percent from a year earlier. Alfalfa acreage is estimated at 35,000 acres, unchanged from last year. All other hay is estimated at 1.80 million acres, down 3 percent from 2005. Hay harvest was delayed this year due to cool, wet weather during early to mid-May.

Planted and Harvested Acreage of Principal Crops: Tennessee and U.S., 2005-2006

Crop	Planted Acres		Harvested Acres		
	2005	2006	2005	2006	2006/2005
	1,000 Acres				Percent
TENNESSEE					
Corn	650	600	595	540	91
Cotton	640	700	635	¹	-
Soybeans	1,130	1,120	1,100	1,090	99
Winter Wheat	240	280	150	190	127
Sorghum	22	15	20	13	65
Hay, all	-	-	1,885	1,835	97
Alfalfa	-	-	35	35	100
All Other	-	-	1,850	1,800	97
Tobacco, all	-	-	22.95	20.00	87
Dark fire-cured	-	-	5.50	5.60	102
Burley	-	-	17.0	14.0	82
Dark air-cured	-	-	0.45	0.40	89
UNITED STATES					
Corn	81,759	79,366	75,107	72,091	96
Cotton	14,245.4	15,276.0	13,802.6	¹	-
Soybeans	72,142	74,930	71,361	73,935	104
Winter Wheat	40,433	41,393	33,794	31,108	92
Sorghum	6,454	6,282	5,736	5,317	93
Hay, all	-	-	61,649	62,697	102
Alfalfa	-	-	22,389	22,407	100
All Other	-	-	39,260	40,290	103
Tobacco, all	-	-	298.08	336.43	113
Dark fire-cured	-	-	11.84	11.28	95
Burley	-	-	101.15	104.00	103
Dark air-cured	-	-	4.15	5.10	123

¹Estimate to be released August 11, 2006. ²U.S. acreage includes American Pima cotton.

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