



Tennessee News Release

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In Cooperation with Tennessee Department of Agriculture

TENNESSEE FARMERS MAKE ADJUSTMENTS TO EARLIER INTENTIONS

NASHVILLE, June 30, 2008 – Tennessee farmers planted more corn and wheat from intentions earlier in the year, but less soybeans and cotton. Based on a recent survey conducted by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, Tennessee Field Office, soybeans growers are still planning to plant significantly more acreage than 2007, but not quite the increase anticipated in March. Overall, corn acreage is down from last year, as favorable prices for other crops and high input costs caused farmers shift to alternative crops. Cotton acreage is expected to decline as well, down over 200,000 acres from 2007. This represents the largest single-year drop in cotton acreage since 1954. Crop acreages and expected changes from last year are as follows: **Cotton**, 300,000 acres, down 42 percent; **Soybeans**, 1.41 million acres, up 36 percent; **Corn**, 700,000 acres, down 20 percent; **All Tobacco**, 21,400 acres, up 7 percent; **Wheat**, 640,000 acres, up 52 percent; and **All Hay**, 1.82 million acres, up 6 percent.

COTTON ACREAGE LOWEST IN A QUARTER CENTURY

Cotton acreage for 2008 is estimated at 300,000 acres, down 215,000 from last year and the lowest in the State since 1983. Producers switched from cotton to other crops due to higher prices of competing grain and oilseed crops and increased input costs for cotton. Ninety-seven percent of the crop was planted with biotechnology varieties, with the largest percentage being stacked gene. Poor planting weather this spring resulted in the crop being planted 10 days behind the normal pace. Crop development is lagging two weeks behind normal with only a tenth of the acreage having reached the squaring stage. The crop is currently rated in mostly good-to-fair condition.

SOYBEAN ACREAGE HIGHEST IN 22 YEARS

Tennessee's 2008 soybean acreage is estimated at 1.41 million acres, down 40,000 acres from earlier intentions in March, but 370,000 acres more than last year. Area for harvest is estimated at 1.38 million acres, up 410,000 acres from 2007. Planting progress is slightly behind the average pace in most areas with three-fourths of the acreage in the ground by mid-June. Forty percent of the crop was planted or will be planted following another harvested crop, such as wheat. As of June 22, sixty-nine percent of the crop had emerged and was rated in mostly good-to-excellent condition.

CORN DOWN FROM LAST YEAR BUT ABOVE INTENTIONS

The State's corn acreage is estimated at 700,000 acres, down 170,000 from last year. Growers expect to harvest 640,000 acres for grain, 145,000 less than last year. Favorable prices for other crops, such as wheat and soybeans, along with crop rotation considerations and high input costs, were factors in farmers switching from corn to competing crops. Farmers, however, increased plantings 8 percent from their March intentions, as the outlook for corn prices have remained strong. Planting of this year's crop was virtually complete by the end of May. As of June 22, just under a tenth of the crop had entered the silking stage and most of the acreage was rated in good-to-excellent condition. Area planted to **sorghum** in 2008 is estimated at 25,000 acres, up 3,000 from 2007. Sorghum for grain harvest is estimated at 22,000 acres, also up 3,000 acres from last year.

BURLEY ACREAGE HOLDS STEADY; DARK TYPES TO INCREASE

For the first time in 8 years, the State's burley tobacco acreage did not decline from the previous year, as acreage is expected to remain unchanged at 13,000 acres. Total tobacco acreage, which includes burley, dark fire-cured and dark air-cured, is set at a total of 21,400 acres, up 1,420 acres from the year earlier. The dark-types are both expected to be up from a year earlier. Tobacco acreage and change from 2007 are as follows: **dark fire-cured**, 7,200 acres, up 16 percent; **dark air-cured**, 1,200 acres, up 54 percent. As of June 22, transplanting was nearing completion, slightly ahead of the five-year average.

WHEAT ACREAGE HIGHEST SINCE 1984

The 2008 winter wheat planted area is estimated at 640,000 acres, up 220,000 acres from 2007 and the highest since 1984. This large increase is particularly significant since it follows on the heels of the 140,000 acre jump from 2006 to 2007. Market prices at record high levels have been the primary catalyst for this upward trend. Grain harvest is expected to reach 550,000 acres, up more than double the 2007 total of 260,000 acres, and the largest one year increase since 1981. As of June 22, two-thirds of the crop had been harvested, slightly ahead of the normal pace.

(OVER)

HAY ACREAGE UP 6 PERCENT

Tennessee producers intend to harvest 1.82 million acres of hay in 2008, up 6 percent from a year earlier. **Alfalfa** acreage is estimated at 20,000 acres, down 5,000 acres from last year. **All other** hay is estimated at 1.80 million acres, up 100,000 acres from 2007. Tennessee's hay harvest has advanced ahead of schedule this year, as the weather turned warm and dry after a cool, wet start to spring. While quality has been a minor issue in some areas, most farmers are reporting an increase in yields from last year's dismal crop. As of June 22, the crop was rated in mostly good-to-fair condition with pastures rated similarly.

Planted and Harvested Acreage of Principal Crops: Tennessee and U.S., 2007-2008

Crop	Planted Acres		Harvested Acres		
	2007	2008	2007	2008	2008/2007
	1,000 Acres				Percent
TENNESSEE					
Corn	870	700	785	640	82
Cotton	515	300	510	¹	-
Soybeans	1,040	1,410	970	1,380	142
Winter Wheat	420	640	260	550	212
Sorghum	22	25	19	22	116
Hay, all	-	-	1,725	1,820	106
Alfalfa	-	-	25	20	80
All Other	-	-	1,700	1,800	106
Tobacco, all	-	-	19.98	21.40	107
Dark fire-cured	-	-	6.20	7.20	116
Burley	-	-	13.0	13.0	100
Dark air-cured	-	-	.78	1.20	154
UNITED STATES					
Corn	93,600	87,327	86,542	78,940	91
Cotton ²	10,827.2	9,246.0	10,489.1	¹	-
Soybeans	63,631	74,533	62,820	72,121	115
Winter Wheat	44,987	46,605	35,952	40,252	112
Sorghum	7,718	7,271	6,805	6,405	94
Hay, all	-	-	61,625	60,439	98
Alfalfa	-	-	21,670	20,778	96
All Other	-	-	39,955	39,661	99
Tobacco, all	-	-	356.00	348.04	98
Dark fire-cured	-	-	14.60	16.60	114
Burley	-	-	106.30	96.45	91
Dark air-cured	-	-	4.98	5.70	114

¹Estimate to be released August 12, 2008. ²U.S. acreage includes American Pima cotton.