



United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service



Tennessee Farm Facts

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In Cooperation with Tennessee Department of Agriculture

August Crop Production Farm Labor Chicken & Eggs

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TDA News Release Farm Computer Usage & Ownership

Tennessee's Agriculture Experiences Freezer Burn

After weathering a devastating Easter freeze, Tennessee farmers are now locked in a battle with drought conditions that have gripped the State all summer long. The prolonged dry spell has caused significant reductions in corn and hay yields, but only moderate declines in cotton, soybeans, and tobacco. These forecasted outcomes, based on an **August 1** survey of farmers conducted by the Tennessee Field Office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, showed the following: **Corn**, 95 bushels per acre, down 30 bushels from a year earlier; **Cotton**, 869 pounds per acre, down 76 pounds from last year; **Soybeans**, 33 bushels per acre, 6 bushels below the previous year; **Burley Tobacco**, 2,100 pounds per acre, down 100 pounds from last year; and **Hay, except alfalfa**, 1.5 tons per acre, down 0.8 tons from 2006. State Director Debra Kenerson explained, "The farmer based yields from the August 1 survey provide the first true picture of the impact this year's weather has had on the State's crops. These forecasts will be updated throughout the growing season to reflect any potential changes to Tennessee's crops before harvest."

Cotton Production Down More Than A Third

Tennessee's cotton production is forecast at 860,000 bales, down 37 percent from last year's record high of 1.37 million bales. Cotton yields are expected to average 869 pounds per acre, down 76 pounds from the record a year ago but, if realized, the third highest yielding crop. Producers expect to harvest 475,000 acres, down 220,000 acres from 2006. This decrease is mainly due to a shift to corn and stagnant cotton prices. Many producing areas received beneficial rains in mid-July, but conditions have deteriorated with below normal rainfall and above normal temperatures during July. As with other crops, reported yields were highly variable, depending on the area and whether they received rain from hit-and-miss thunderstorms. As of the week ending August 5, the crop was rated in mostly good condition and was setting bolls at a pace nearly one week ahead of normal.

Soybean Production Down A Fifth

Soybean production is forecast at 35.3 million bushels, down 20 percent from last year and the lowest since 2002. Soybean yields are forecast at 33 bushels per acre, 6 bushels below 2006. Acreage for harvest is estimated at 1.07 million acres, down 60,000 from a year ago. Virtually all of Tennessee's soybean crop had been planted by the end of June and the majority of the crop had emerged by the first week of July, slightly ahead of average. As of the week ending August 5, the crop was rated mostly fair-to-good. Nearly 90 percent of the crop was blooming and 72 percent of the crop was setting pods. Double crop beans have been especially hard hit by the drought.

Corn Production Up 19 Percent

Despite less than average yields, Tennessee's corn production is forecast at 74.1 million bushels, up 19 percent from a year ago. This increase is due to a historical single year increase in acreage. Farmers expect to harvest 780,000 acres for grain, 280,000 more than last year and the highest since 1985. Based on conditions as of August 1, yields are expected to average 95 bushels per acre, 30 bushels below 2006 and 32 bushels below the 5-year average. As of the week ending August 5, almost 90 percent of the state's corn crop had reached the dough stage with two-thirds of the crop in the dent stage, both on pace with normal. The continuing drought has impacted the entire crop substantially as half of the crop was rated in very poor to poor condition. After an extended period of no rainfall statewide, spotty showers have corn fields within miles of each other looking night and day different.

(continued)

Lowest Burley Production In 80 Years

As of August 1, burley production is forecast at 25.2 million pounds, 18 percent below a year ago and the lowest since 1927. Yields are forecast to average 2,100 pounds per acre, down 100 pounds from 2006. Most producers are looking at a reduced crop that is expected to be below average, but surprisingly good considering the dry conditions. Acreage for harvest is estimated at 12,000 acres, down 2,000 from 2006. Development of the crop is later than normal as a result of dry conditions earlier in the year forcing growers to delay transplanting. Although harvest has begun in some areas, many producers are still waiting for a rain which, for at least the dark-types, will be critically important. One of the problems facing growers with the ongoing drought is the lack of pond water for irrigation. However, black shank and other diseases have been reduced substantially from a year ago. Tennessee's dark-fired tobacco yields are forecast at 3,000 pounds per acre, while dark air-cured is forecast to yield 2,500 pounds per acre, both down from 2006.

Lowest Hay Yield Since 1988

Hay production, excluding alfalfa, is forecast at 2.79 million tons, 33 percent below 2006. Yields are expected to average 1.5 tons per acre, down 0.8 tons from last year and the lowest since 1988. Acreage is estimated at 1.86 million acres, up 60,000 acres from a year earlier. The number of acres cut increased as producers were forced to harvest fields normally not cut because of the need for hay. Also, some CRP land has been released for emergency grazing and hay cutting. Prospects for a decent 2007 hay crop seem very bleak. Prolonged feeding last fall and winter depleted many farms' hay stocks. Also, first cuttings this spring were only about 50 percent of normal or less, due to the April freeze. A summer drought has led to limited to no second cuttings and dismal future cutting chances. As of the week ending August 5, nearly two-thirds of the State's pastures were rated in very poor-to-poor condition with 84 percent of the State reporting very short to short hay stocks.

Apple Production Virtually Non-Existent

Although the State's apple crop was nearly a complete loss, apple growers managed to produce an estimated 100,000 pounds, a precipitous drop from last year's 10.0 millions pounds and the lowest level on record. A severe freeze struck the State during the Easter weekend, causing significant commercial orchard damage.

Crop Forecasts: Tennessee and United States, August 1, 2007, with Comparisons

Crop	Units	Harvested Acres		Yield Per Acre		Production	
		2006	Indicated 2007	2006	Indicated 2007	2006	Indicated 2007
		Thousand		Number of Units		Thousand	
Tennessee							
Apples	Lbs	---	---	---	---	10,000	100
Corn for grain	Bu	500	780	125	95	62,500	74,100
Cotton ¹	Lbs	695	475	945	869	1,368	860
Hay, All (excluding Alfalfa)	Tons	1,800	1,860	2.30	1.50	4,140	2,790 ²
Peaches	Tons	---	---	---	---	1.9	
Soybeans	Bu	1,130	1,070	39	33	44,070	35,310
Tobacco, All	Lbs	19.80	19.05	2,482	2,416	49,135	46,025
Dark fire-cured	Lbs	5.30	6.40	3,200	3,000	16,960	19,200
Burley	Lbs	14.00	12.00	2,200	2,100	30,800	25,200
Dark air-cured	Lbs	0.50	0.65	2,750	2,500	1,375	1,625
Winter Wheat	Bu	190	300	64	39	12,160	11,700
United States							
Apples	Lbs	---	---	---	---	9,931,700	9,284,700
Corn for grain	Bu	70,648	85,418	149.1	152.8	10,534,868	13,053,617
Cotton ¹	Lbs	12,731.5	10,636	814	783	21,587.8	17,345.5
Hay, All (excluding Alfalfa)	Tons	39,423	40,338	1.78	1.87	70,000	75,347
Peaches	Tons	---	---	---	---	1,010.12	1,026.95
Soybeans	Bu	74,602	63,285	42.7	41.5	3,188,247	2,625,274
Tobacco, All	Lbs	338.9	354.07	2,144	2,189	726,644	774,950
Dark fire-cured	Lbs	11.85	13.3	3,324	3,168	39,392	42,140
Burley	Lbs	103.6	105.2	2,095	2,006	217,085	211,060
Dark air-cured	Lbs	4.3	4.65	3,059	2,758	13,155	12,825
Winter Wheat	Bu	31,117	37,188	41.7	41.3	1,298,081	1,537,262

¹ Production in 480-Lbs net weight bales. U.S. production includes American-Pima cotton. ² No significant commercial production due to freeze damage.

Hired Workers Up 1 Percent, Wage Rates Up 3 Percent From a Year Ago

There were 1,205,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of July 8-14, 2007, up 1 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 847,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 358,000 workers. Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$10.04 per hour during the July 2007 reference week, up 32 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$9.31 per hour, up 38 cents from last July, while livestock workers earned \$9.80 per hour compared with \$9.49 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$9.44 per hour, was up 37 cents from last year. The number of hours worked averaged 41.6 hours for hired workers during the survey week, up 1 percent from a year ago.

Chicken & Eggs: All layers in the U.S. on August 1, 2007 totaled 340 million, down slightly from last year. The 340 million layers consisted of 281 million layers producing table or market type eggs, 56.2 million layers producing broiler-type hatching eggs, and 2.72 million layers producing egg-type hatching eggs. Rate of lay per day on August 1, 2007, averaged 72.1 eggs per 100 layers, up 1 percent from August 1, 2006.

Layers and Eggs: Layers on Hand and Eggs Produced by Selected States and United States, During July 2006 and 2007

Selected States	Table Egg Layers in Flocks 30,000 and Above		All Layers ¹		Eggs per 100 for All Layers ¹	
	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007
	Thousands				Number	
Alabama	1,457	1,194	8,562	9,132	1,974	1,949
Arkansas	4,167	4,041	13,976	13,838	1,939	1,973
Georgia	9,399	9,387	19,101	19,121	2,073	2,061
North Carolina	3,134	4,359	10,718	12,137	2,053	2,060
All Other States ²	259,947	255,027	288,895	284,747	2,281	2,275
United States	278,104	274,008	341,252	338,975	2,240	2,234

¹Includes all layers and eggs produced in both table egg and hatching egg flocks regardless of size. ² Tennessee included in all other states total.

Funding Still Available for Hay Storage as Deadline Nears Drought makes program a smart choice for farmers

Despite drought conditions that have devastated pastures and hay production in Tennessee, demand by farmers is strong for cost share assistance to build hay storage structures according to the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. Since July 2, more than 1,140 Tennessee farmers have been approved for \$3.7 million in Hay Storage Facility cost share assistance through the Tennessee Agricultural Enhancement Program (TAEP). Oct. 1 is the deadline for cattle and hay producers to apply for funding of 35 percent up to \$3,500 toward the cost of building a new hay storage structure or an addition to an existing structure.

According to state Agriculture Commissioner Ken Givens, the response from farmers is an indication the program is working and that farmers understand the value of protecting their forage resources. "The response has been overwhelming which really shows that despite the disastrous growing season, Tennessee farmers are optimistic about the future and understand the importance of protecting their forage resources. The program is working to help farmers weather harsh conditions in the future, and funding is still available for anyone who wants to build now or in time for the spring hay crop."

According to University of Tennessee Extension forage experts, at least 30 percent of hay stored outside, unprotected can be lost in the first year, and it can continue to lose value as livestock feed over time. Higher production costs and limited hay availability this year makes protecting this resource even more important. To be eligible for hay storage cost share assistance, farmers must be a Tennessee resident and operate a farm or agribusiness located in the state with at least 10 head of cattle or 50 acres of hay production. Applications must include a project budget with cost quotes.

Producers with livestock must also register their premises with the National Animal Identification System. Livestock premises can be registered at most Farm Service Agency, UT Extension, Farm Bureau or Co-op locations, or online at www.tennessee.gov/agriculture/tpis. Only hay storage projects that are approved in advance by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture will be eligible for cost share assistance, and farmers will be limited to one application per fiscal year. Once approved, farmers will have until May 1, 2008 to complete approved activities and reimbursement requirements. Applications for hay storage cost share are on the department's Web site and at most local farm service centers and farm suppliers. For more information about the TAEP Hay Storage Facility cost share program call (615) 837-5323, email Hay.Storage@state.tn.us or visit online at www.picktnproducts.org.

Farm Computer Usage and Ownership

Tennessee: During the June 2007 Agricultural Survey conducted by the National Agricultural Statistics Service, Tennessee Field Office, 60 percent of farms reported having computer access. This is 5 percent above 2005, but still a significant increase from when this question was first asked nearly a decade ago. Additionally, 48 percent of Tennessee farms owned or leased a computer, with 24 percent using computers for their farm business. This compared to only 45 percent of farms owning or leasing a computer in 2005, and only 20 percent of farms using a computer for farm business. Since 1999, we have also seen an increase in farms with available Internet access. In 2007, 52 percent of Tennessee farms reported having Internet access, compared with only 45 percent of farms having Internet access in 2005.

U.S. High-speed Internet access methods, such as DSL, cable, satellite, and wireless, have become much more available to Internet users in the farm sector since 2005. The proportion of operators using DSL doubled in 2007, at 27 percent, compared with the 2005 level of 13 percent. Cable, satellite, and wireless were each reported as the primary access methods on 7 percent of those U.S. farms with Internet access; with satellite and wireless methods both at virtually double their 2005 levels. Dialup was again the most common method of accessing the Internet, with nearly half (47 percent) of U.S. farms still using it, down from 69 percent in 2005. A total of 55 percent of U.S. farms now have Internet access, compared with 51 percent in 2005. Sixty-three percent of farms have access to a computer in 2007, compared with the 2005 level of 59 percent. The proportion of U.S. farms owning or leasing a computer in 2007, at 59 percent, is up slightly from 55 percent in 2005. Farms using computers for their farm business increased 3 percentage points from 2005 to 35 percent in 2007. In 2007, 80 percent of U.S. farms with sales and government payments of \$250,000 or more have access to a computer, 78 percent own or lease a computer, 66 percent are using a computer for their farm business, and 75 percent have Internet access.

Farm Computer Usage: Tennessee and United States, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, and 2007

Year	Tennessee Farms				United States Farms			
	With Computer Access	That Own or Lease Computers	Using Computers For Farm Business	With Internet Access	With Computer Access	That Own or Lease Computers	Using Computers For Farm Business	With Internet Access
	<i>Percent</i>							
1999	35	28	13	24	47	40	24	29
2001	42	36	16	34	55	50	29	43
2003	50	41	18	41	58	54	30	48
2005	55	45	20	45	59	55	32	51
2007	60	48	24	52	63	59	35	55