



# NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture  
**NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE**  
**VIRGINIA FIELD OFFICE**

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## **COTTON, CORN, AND TOBACCO ACREAGE INCREASES, AS PEANUT AND HAY ACREAGES DECREASE**

According to a survey conducted in early June by the USDA/NASS Virginia Field Office, Virginia's farmers planted more acres to cotton, corn, and tobacco crops in 2006. Cotton acreage was up 8 percent and tobacco acreage increased by 29 percent. Soybean acreage, the largest row crop acreage in the Commonwealth, was unchanged from 2005.

Virginia farmers planted 100,000 acres of cotton this year, which is an 8 percent increase from last year. Barley seeded acreage decreased by 7 percent from last year and is estimated at 56,000 acres. Barley producers anticipate harvesting 42,000 acres, which is 3,000 acres less than a year ago.

Soybean producers in Virginia planted 530,000 acres of soybeans in 2006, unchanged from last year. As of June 26, 2006, 69 percent of the crop was rated good to excellent.

Corn producers in the Commonwealth reported that planting was completed at 510,000 acres, 4 percent more than a year ago. Corn producers expect to harvest 370,000 acres for grain in 2006, which is 10,000 more acres than last year.

Other hay acreage decreased by 60,000 acres this year to 1,150,000 acres, down 5 percent from last year. Alfalfa hay increased from 110,000 acres in 2005 to 120,000 acres in 2006.

Peanut producers in Virginia planted 13,000 acres this year, which is 10,000 acres less than last year. Acreage continued to decline in response to the ending of the peanut program.

Burley producers plan to harvest 2,800 acres which is unchanged from last year. Acres of flue-cured tobacco are up 5,000 acres to 19,000 acres in 2006. Acres of dark fire cured tobacco are up 40 acres to 380 acres in 2006.

Winter wheat acres seeded last fall for this season were 210,000 acres, which is a 17 percent increase from 2005. Wheat producers are expecting to harvest 170,000 acres, which is 10,000 more than last year.

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Cooperating with Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

## Corn Planted Acreage Down 3 Percent from 2005

Soybean Acreage Up 4 Percent

All Wheat Acreage Up 1 Percent

All Cotton Acreage Up 7 Percent

Corn planted area for all purposes is estimated at 79.4 million acres, down 3 percent from 2005 and 2 percent below 2004. Farmers increased corn plantings 2 percent from their March intentions. With the exception of Minnesota, North Dakota, and Oklahoma, corn acreage is down from last year across the Corn Belt, Great Plains, Ohio Valley, and Delta. Planting began slowly in the Corn Belt and northern Great Plains as precipitation hampered progress. Progress accelerated rapidly during April despite periods of heavy rainfall, as warm temperatures helped fields dry quickly. By the end of April, planting was ahead of normal in all States, except Indiana and the Dakotas. Mostly hot, dry conditions in the western Corn Belt and Great Plains during May and June favored planting activities and crop emergence but contributed to soil moisture shortages and lower crop conditions. Persistent rainfall and below normal temperatures across the eastern Corn Belt and Ohio Valley during May hindered planting and limited crop development, but helped maintain adequate soil moisture. Warmer temperatures during June helped spur development in these areas. Farmers responding to the survey indicated that 99 percent of the corn acreage had been planted at the time of the interview, compared with the average of 98 percent for the past 10 years.

The 2006 soybean planted area is estimated at 74.9 million acres, up 4 percent from last year. Area for harvest, at 73.9 million acres, is also up 4 percent from 2005. The planted area is down 3 percent from the March Prospective Plantings report. With the exception of Ohio and South Dakota, planted acreage increased or was unchanged from last year throughout the Corn Belt and adjacent areas of the Great Plains and Mississippi Delta. States with new record-high soybean planted areas include Kansas, North Dakota, and Pennsylvania. Growers in North Dakota and Illinois showed the largest increase in soybean acreage from last year, up 850,000 and 600,000 acres, respectively. Record high soybean yields in 2005 and high input costs this year have North Dakota farmers shifting to soybeans from more input intensive crops. Illinois growers are shifting to soybeans from a record high corn planted area and below normal corn yields in 2005. Nationally, farmers reported that 91 percent of the intended soybean acreage had been planted at the time of the survey interview, compared with the average of 82 percent for the past 10 years.

All wheat planted area is estimated at 57.9 million acres, up 1 percent from 2005. The 2006 winter wheat planted area, at 41.4 million acres, is 2 percent above last year but virtually unchanged from the previous estimates. Of this total, about 29.7 million acres are Hard Red Winter, 7.45 million acres are Soft Red Winter, and 4.21 million acres are White Winter. Area planted to other spring wheat for 2006 is estimated at 14.6 million acres, up 4 percent from 2005. Of this total, about 13.9 million acres are Hard Red Spring wheat. The Durum planted area for 2006 is estimated at 1.89 million acres, down 32 percent from the previous year. This is the lowest Durum wheat acreage since 1961.

All cotton plantings for 2006 are expected to total 15.3 million acres, 7 percent above last year. Upland acreage is expected to total 14.9 million acres, also up 7 percent. Producers increased their acreages in all States except Mississippi, New Mexico, Arizona, and California. American-Pima cotton growers planted 336,000 acres, up 24 percent from 2005. California producers planted a record high 290,000 acres, an increase of 60,000 acres from last year.

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