
GEORGIA PRESS RELEASE



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COTTON YIELDS UP

Rainfall during October was well below normal over most of the State, according to the Georgia Agricultural Statistics Service. Temperatures were generally above normal to near normal during the month. The drier than normal weather has provided excellent harvest conditions for the fall harvested crops. Based on a survey of growers contacted around November 1, crop yields remained the same as last month for corn, peanuts and soybeans, while cotton showed a slight increase.

Georgia's **cotton** production for 2004 is expected to total 1.80 million bales (480 lbs.), 50,000 bales above the October 1 forecast, but 310,000 bales below the 2003 production. Harvesting conditions have been good during October, except for a few short delays due to showers. Acreage for harvest, at 1,260,000 acres, remains unchanged from last month. The yield calculates to 686 pounds per harvested acre, up 19 pounds per acre from last month. By the end of the first week of November, about seventy percent of the crop had been harvested.

Peanut production for Georgia is forecast at 1.83 billion pounds, the same as the October 1 forecast, but 2 percent less than in 2003. Yield per harvested acre is forecast at 3,000 pounds, the same as last month, but 450 pounds less than last year. Disease problems became more severe during the latter part of the season. By the end of October, the majority of the crop had been harvested, and overall harvesting conditions were good.

Corn yield for 2004 is expected to average 130 bushels per harvested acre, the same as last month, but one bushel per acre more than in 2003. If this yield is realized it will be the second highest on record, behind the 134 bushels per acre set in 2001. June rains and irrigation provided growers with an excellent crop. Total corn production is expected to total 36.4 million bushels from 280,000 acres harvested for grain. Production of this size would be 1 percent less than last year. Harvest was virtually complete by the end of October.

Soybean production is expected to total 7.80 million bushels, the same as last month, but 31 percent more than 2003. Acreage expected for harvest is at 260,000 acres, 80,000 acres more than in 2003. Yields are expected to average 30 bushels per acre, unchanged from last month, but three bushels per acre less than last year's record yield of 33 bushels per acre. By the end of the first week of November, about 40 percent of the crop had been harvested.

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U.S. HIGHLIGHTS
CORN PRODUCTION UP 1 PERCENT FROM OCTOBER FORECAST
SOYBEAN PRODUCTION UP 1 PERCENT
COTTON PRODUCTION UP 5 PERCENT

Corn production is forecast at 11.7 billion bushels, up 1 percent from last month and 16 percent above 2003. Based on conditions as of November 1, the yield is expected to average 160.2 bushels per acre, up 1.8 bushels from October and 18.0 bushels above last year. If realized, both production and yield would be the largest on record. The previous records for both were set last year when production was estimated at 10.1 billion bushels and yield was 142.2 bushels per acre. Across the U.S., yields are forecast at record high levels in 19 of the 33 published corn States. With the exception of Wisconsin, yields in the Corn Belt States are forecast at record highs as weather conditions have been mostly favorable throughout the growing season.

Soybean production is forecast at 3.15 billion bushels, up 1 percent from October and 28 percent above 2003. If realized, this would be the largest U.S. soybean crop on record. Based on November 1 conditions, yields are expected to average a record high 42.6 bushels per acre, up 0.6 bushel from October and 8.7 bushels above last year. Producers in the Corn Belt, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and the Carolinas are realizing higher yields than expected last month, while yield prospects decreased as harvest progressed in North Dakota and Minnesota. Area for harvest in the U.S. is forecast at 74.0 million acres, unchanged from last month but up 2 percent from 2003.

Upland cotton harvested area, at 13.0 million acres, is unchanged from the October estimate but 10 percent more than last year. Harvest progress continues to lag well behind the 5-year average in most States. American-Pima harvested area, at 253,000 acres, is unchanged from October but up 43 percent from 2003. In the Southeastern States, ideal weather conditions in early October allowed defoliation and harvesting to progress rapidly. Scattered showers toward the end of the month in north Alabama, the Carolinas, and Virginia delayed harvesting. Lingering fog and misty mornings delayed picking in Georgia until mid-day. Objective yield data continue to show above average boll counts in North Carolina, with average boll weight at the highest level of the previous five years. Cotton producers in the Delta region made excellent progress harvesting their crop under warm, sunny conditions during early October. Heavy showers returned during mid-October and continued during the rest of the month. In parts of Louisiana and Mississippi, harvest was interrupted for several days as a result of saturated fields. Despite the weather conditions, harvest in the lower Delta remained at the 5-year average or only slightly behind. Boll counts and average boll weights in Mississippi and Louisiana are above the 15-year average. Boll counts in Arkansas are slightly above the 15-year average and boll weights are the highest on record. At the beginning of the month, cooler than normal temperatures delayed maturity and muddy conditions hindered equipment from entering fields around Lubbock, Texas. Harvesting gained momentum later in the month even though producers encountered snow and heavy thunderstorms. In southern Texas, harvest was almost complete. Oklahoma and Kansas cotton crops were progressing slightly behind the 5-year average due to storms and cooler weather earlier in the season. Objective yield measurements show Texas boll counts and average boll weights are the highest in the 15-year data series.

Peanut production is forecast at 4.20 billion pounds, up 2 percent from last month and up 1 percent from 2003. Area for harvest is expected to total 1.39 million acres, unchanged from October but up 6 percent from last year. Yields are expected to average 3,027 pounds per acre, up 55 pounds from October but down 132 pounds from 2003.