

KENTUCKY PRESS RELEASE



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KENTUCKY WHEAT PRODUCTION DECREASES AS BARLEY INCREASES

Farmers in **Kentucky** planted 530,000 acres of **winter wheat** in the fall of 2003 for harvest in 2004 according to the Kentucky Agricultural Statistics Service. The acreage was up 10,000 acres from the previous estimate and 30,000 acres from the 2003 crop. Acres harvested for grain totaled 380,000 acres, an increase of 10,000 acres from the previous estimate and 30,000 acres from last year's crop. Yield was estimated at 54 bushels per acre, down eight bushels from the 2003 crop. Grain production at 20.5 million bushels was down 5 percent from the upward revised 2003 winter wheat crop of 21.7 million bushels. Quality of the wheat crop started strong in the spring but wet weather and lodging delayed harvesting of the crop. Head scab and blight combined to reduce the final yield and test weights. In some cases winter wheat for sale was refused at delivery due to the light test weight. The 150,000 acres not harvested for grain were plowed down for a cover crop prior to setting tobacco, cut as grain hay, chopped as grain silage or abandoned. **U.S. all wheat** production totaled 2.16 billion bushels in 2004, up 2 percent from the last forecast but 8 percent below 2003. Grain area was 50.2 million acres, down 5 percent from last year. The yield was 43.1 bushels per acre, down 1.1 bushels from a year ago.

Production of **barley** by **Kentucky** farmers totaled 616,000 bushels, up slightly from the 600,000 bushels in 2003. Yield was estimated at 77 bushels per acre, up two bushels from the 2003 crop. Acreage for grain at 8,000 acres was unchanged from the previous year. **U.S. barley** was estimated at 280 million bushels, up 3 percent from the August 1 forecast and 1 percent from last year. Average yield per acre, at a record high 69.5 bushels, was up 3.8 bushels from the last forecast and 10.6 bushels above 2003. The area harvested for grain was estimated at 4.03 million acres, down 3 percent from August and 15 percent below a year ago.

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