

HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS REPORT
December 1 Cotton & Sugarcane Crop Prospects
Pecan Production

Cotton & Sugarcane Crop Prospects

Louisiana cotton production is forecast at 1,020,000 bales, up 5 percent from last month and up 38 percent from 2002. An estimated 520,000 acres are expected to be harvested, 25,000 more than last year. The 942 pounds per acre yield will be the highest yield on record.

U.S. cotton production is forecast at 18.2 million bales, unchanged from November 1 but up 6 percent from last year's production. Yield is expected to average a record high 722 pounds per harvested acre, surpassing the previous record of 708 pounds set in 1994. Record high yields are expected in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee. Harvested area, at 12.1 million acres, is unchanged from November 1 but 3 percent below 2002.

The Delta Region cotton harvest continued under optimal conditions. Lower Delta growers were virtually done with the harvest by the middle of the month, and north Delta producers made significant progress. Boll counts and average boll weights in Mississippi remain the highest in the 15-year data series. Louisiana's boll counts are the highest since 1992. Average weight per boll is above average. Boll counts in Arkansas continue slightly below the 15-year average and the lowest since 1999. However, Arkansas boll weights are the highest since 1994.

Louisiana sugarcane production is estimated at 14.7 million net tons, unchanged from last month, but up 18 percent from a year ago. Yield is estimated at 30 net tons per acre, up 1.7 net tons from last year. Acreage expected for harvest (sugar and seed) is 490,000 acres, down 5,000 acres from 2002.

U. S. sugarcane production for sugar and seed is forecast at 35.8 million tons, 1 percent below the November forecast but 1 percent above last year. Sugarcane growers intend to harvest 996,800 acres for sugar and seed during the 2003 crop year. This is 200 acres fewer than the previous month and 3 percent fewer than last year. Yield is forecast at 36.0 tons per acre, down 0.2 ton from the November forecast but up 1.3 tons from last year's estimate.

Sugarcane: Area Harvested, Yield and Production by State and United States

State	Area Harvested 2003 ¹	Yield 2003	Production	
			Final 2002	Ind 2003
	1,000 Acres	Net Tons	1,000 Net Tons	
Florida	441.0	39.5	17,653	17,430
Hawaii	22.0	95.0	2,159	2,090
Louisiana	490.0	30.0	14,009	14,700
Texas	43.8	36.9	1,732	1,618
United States	996.8	36.0	35,553	35,838

¹For sugar and seed.

All Cotton: Area Harvested, Yield and Production by State and United States

State	Area Harvested		Yield		Production ¹	
	Final 2002	Ind 2003	Final 2002	Ind 2003	Final 2002	Ind 2003
	-----1,000 Acres-----		-----Pounds-----		-----1,000 Bales ² -----	
Alabama	540.0	510.0	507	772	570.0	820.0
Arizona	221.2	211.9	1,368	1,289	630.3	569.0
Arkansas	920.0	940.0	871	909	1,669.0	1,780.0
California	686.0	694.0	1,444	1,293	2,063.3	1,870.0
Georgia	1,360.0	1,290.0	557	800	1,578.0	2,150.0
Louisiana	495.0	520.0	717	942	739.0	1,020.0
Mississippi	1,150.0	1,100.0	808	916	1,935.0	2,100.0
Missouri	368.0	390.0	796	849	610.0	690.0
New Mexico	57.1	48.0	844	880	100.4	88.0
North Carolina	920.0	770.0	421	686	806.0	1,100.0
Oklahoma	180.0	170.0	557	536	209.0	190.0
South Carolina	200.0	217.0	314	730	131.0	330.0
Tennessee	530.0	535.0	741	772	818.0	860.0
Texas	4,518.3	4,419.5	540	461	5,082.3	4,240.0
Virginia	98.0	85.0	465	734	95.0	130.0
Other States ³	183.0	207.0	452	645	172.3	278.0
US, All	12,426.6	12,107.4	665	722	17,208.6	18,215.0

¹Production ginned and to be ginned.

²480-pound net weight bales.

³Other states include Florida and Kansas.

All Pecan Production

State	Utilized		Ind 2003
	Final 2001	Final 2002	
	-----1,000 Pounds-----		
Alabama	15,000	5,000	8,000
Arizona	21,000	16,000	23,500
Arkansas ¹	2,600	1,700	3,300
California ¹	3,700	3,800	3,700
Florida ¹	3,300	1,400	2,100
Georgia	110,000	45,000	60,000
Kansas ¹	2,200	2,900	2,300
Louisiana	14,000	6,000	15,000
Mississippi ¹	4,500	3,000	5,000
New Mexico	60,000	36,000	55,000
North Carolina ¹	3,200	1,900	2,500
Oklahoma	20,000	10,000	12,000
South Carolina ¹	4,000	200	1,500
Texas	75,000	40,000	70,000
United States	338,500	172,900	263,900

¹Estimates for current year carried forward from earlier forecast.

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U.S. Pecan Production

Louisiana pecan production is forecast at 15.0 million pounds compared to 6.0 million pounds last year.

U.S. pecan production is forecast at 264 million pounds for December 1, down 6 percent from the October 1 forecast but 53 percent above last year's crop. Frequent rains throughout the summer in Georgia produced extensive disease and insect pressures. Scab disease was widespread and shuck decline added to poor nut quality. Oklahoma had dry weather during the summer and significant wildlife damage later in the season. These two states are the contributors to the 6 percent reduction from the October 1 forecast. The large increase from last season is related to the high year of the alternate bearing cycle. Improved varieties are expected to make up 2.04 million pounds, or 77 percent of the total, while the native and seedling varieties make up the balance.

The Georgia forecast, at 60.0 million pounds, is 14 percent below the October 1 forecast but 33 percent above last year's crop. As harvest progressed, grower expectations of quantity and quality were reduced from earlier in the season. Improved varieties account for all of the reduction from the October 1 forecast. The Texas production forecast is 70.0 million pounds, equal to the previous forecast but 75 percent above last year's production. Growers expect good to excellent quality nuts. Fall conditions were good for pecan maturing and harvest. New Mexico's forecast, at 55.0 million pounds, is unchanged from the October forecast but up 53 percent from last year. Harvest began around the first of December.

Arizona forecasts a 23.5 million pound pecan crop, unchanged from October but 47 percent above last year. Harvest is expected to begin the second half of December. Oklahoma's forecast of 12.0 million pounds is 40 percent below the October forecast but 20 percent above the production of last year. Native varieties account for all of the reduction from October. The Louisiana forecast of 15.0 million pounds is unchanged from October but 2.5 times the 2002 crop. A large crop was anticipated due to adequate soil moisture and the high year of the alternate bearing cycle. Alabama pecan production, at 8.00 million pounds, remains unchanged from the previous forecast but up 60 percent from 2002.

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