

PRESS RELEASE

On: March 1 Crop Report

For Immediate Release: March 31, 2003

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LOUISIANA COTTON ACREAGE EXPECTED TO RISE BY 2 PERCENT

As of March 1, 2003, Louisiana's farmers intended to plant more acreage to cotton, soybeans, and sorghum this year compared to last year. Corn, rice, wheat, and sweet potatoes are expected to decrease from the previous year, according to Dave Frank, State Statistician for the Louisiana Agricultural Statistics Service.

These prospective planting intentions reflect the prevailing economic and weather conditions as of March 1, 2003. Actual plantings could shift upward or downward based on conditions for the rest of the planting season. Planted acreage estimates will be updated by a June 1 survey and released by NASS on June 30, 2003.

Cotton growers intended to plant 530,000 acres. This total is up 10,000 acres, or 2 percent from a year ago.

Rice planted acreage is expected to decrease to 470,000, down 13 percent from last year. Long grain varieties are expected to account for 460,000 acres. Growers intended to plant 10,000 acres of medium grain varieties, unchanged from 2002.

Soybean planted acreage is expected to increase 8 percent from last year, to 850,000 acres.

Corn planted acreage is expected to total 520,000 acres, down 10 percent from a year ago.

Grain sorghum intentions indicate acreage will total 240,000, up 60,000 acres from a year ago.

Sweet potato planted acreage, at 18,000, is down 14 percent from a year ago. This will be the fewest acres planted to sweet potatoes since 1993.

Winter wheat seeded last fall is estimated at 200,000 acres, down 30,000 acres from 2002.

An estimated 460,000 acres of hay will be harvested, up 2 percent from last year.

An estimate of sugarcane acreage for harvest will not be available until June 30, 2003.

MARCH 1, 2003 - PLANTING INTENTIONS

CROP	LOUISIANA			UNITED STATES		
	2002	2003	% CHANGE	2002	2003	% CHANGE
	-----Thousand Acres-----			-----Thousand Acres-----		
Corn	580	520	-10	79,054	79,022	---
Upland Cotton	520	530	+2	13,719	14,053	+2
Rice	540	470	-13	3,240	3,038	-6
Sorghum	180	240	+33	9,580	9,451	-1
Soybeans	790	850	+8	73,758	73,182	-1
Sweet Potatoes	21	18	-14	97.2	93.5	-4
All Wheat	230	200	-13	60,358	61,697	+2
Hay ¹	450	460	+2	64,497	63,552	-1

¹Harvesting intentions.

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