



# Montana Crop & Livestock Reporter

survey results summary issued twice monthly by the  
**Montana Agricultural Statistics Service**

Issue: 03-21 (0279-0394) Released: November 12, 2003

**USDA-NASS**

## HIGHLIGHTS:

Dry Edible Pea Production  
Austrian Winter Pea Production  
Lentil Production  
Sugar Beet Production  
Fall Potato Production  
2003 Montana Crop Year Summary  
Ag Prices Received

## November 1 Crop Production Forecast

Montana **dry edible pea** production is forecast to be 381,000 cwt, up 86 percent from last year's revised estimate. Planted acreage for 2003 is estimated at 32,000 acres, the same as last year. Harvested acreage is estimated at 30,000 acres, up 3,000 acres from last year. The yield is forecast at 1,270 pounds per acre, 510 acres more than last year.

**Austrian winter pea** production in Montana is forecasted to be 26,000 cwt, up 6,000 cwt from last year. Harvested acreage, at 3,000 acres, is expected to be down 500 acres from last year. Planted acreage for 2003 is estimated to be 9,500 acres, unchanged from last year. The average yield is forecast to be 850 lbs per acre, up 270 lbs per acre from last year.

**Lentil** production in Montana is forecast to be 140,000 cwt for 2003, down 6 percent from last year. Planted acreage at 29,000 acres, is up 4,000 acres from last year. Harvested acres, at 18,000 acres, is down 3,000 acres from last year. Average yield is expected to be 780 lbs per acre, up 70 lbs from last year.

Montana **sugar beets** production was forecast at 1.305 million tons, up 19 percent from last year. Forecasted yield, of 25.0 tons per acre, is up 5.4 tons per acre from 2002. Harvested acreage is down 3,700 acres from last year to 52,200 acres.

**Fall potato** production in Montana is forecast to be 3.392 million cwt, up 5 percent from last year. Harvested acres are estimated at 10,600 acres, up 200 acres from last year. The yield is forecast at 320 cwt per acre, up 10 cwt per acre from the previous year.

**U.S. dry edible peas** production is estimated at 5.01 million cwt, up 18 percent from the 2002 estimate. Area for harvest, at 321,000 acres, is 15 percent

above a year ago. Average yield is forecast at 1,560 pounds per acre, up 43 pounds from last season.

**U.S. production of austrian winter peas** for Idaho, Montana, and Oregon in 2003 is forecast at 144,000 cwt, down 12 percent from 2002. Area harvested is forecast at 11,600 acres, unchanged from last year. Average yield is expected to be 1,241 pounds per acre, down 173 pounds per acre from last season.

**U.S. lentils** production is forecast at 2.29 million cwt, down 9 percent from last year. Area for harvest is forecast at 226,000 acres, up 8 percent from the previous year. Average yield is expected to be 1,011 pounds per acre, down 189 pounds per acre from 2002.

**U.S. sugar beets** production is forecast at 30.6 million tons, 2 percent above the October forecast and 10 percent above last year's production. Growers in the 12 sugar beet-producing States expect to harvest 1.35 million acres. This is virtually unchanged from October but 1 percent below last year. The yield is forecast at 22.8 tons per acre, 0.6 ton above last month and 2.4 tons above 2002.

**U.S. fall potato production** for 2003 is forecast at 414 million cwt, virtually unchanged from last year but 5 percent greater than the 2001 crop. Area harvested, at 1.09 million acres, is virtually unchanged from the July estimate but down 1 percent from last year. The average yield is forecast at 378 cwt per acre, 5 cwt above last year and 11 cwt greater than the 2001 season.

## Montana Crop Year Summary 2003

November 2002 was warm and dry in Montana, with a few exceptions in localized areas. The southwest corner was the driest region of the state, followed by the south-central region. By the end of November, topsoil moisture conditions were rated 24% very short, 42% short, 34% adequate, and 0% surplus. Subsoil moisture was rated 26% very short, 48% short, 26% adequate, and 0% surplus.

Seeding of the 2003 winter wheat crop finished up by the end of October. An estimated 1.80 million acres were seeded, well ahead of the previous year's seedings of 1.45 million acres. The crop's emergence

was at 95% by the end of November. Crop condition was rated 2% very poor, 2% poor, 35% fair, 58% good, and 3% excellent. That was significantly better than the previous year's crop, which was rated 11% very poor, 33% poor, 48% fair, 7% good, and 1% excellent. By the end of November, wind damage to the winter wheat crop was minimal; rated 27% with no damage, 47% light, 24% moderate, and 2% heavy. Freeze and drought damage for the crop was rated 66% none, 27% light, 5% moderate, and 2% heavy. Snow cover for winter wheat was rated 95% very poor, 3% poor, 1% fair, 1% good, and 0% excellent.

December was similar to November, exhibiting above normal temperatures and extreme dryness in most parts of the state. By the end of the month, the winter wheat crop was rated 1% very poor, 25% poor, 55% fair, 18% good, and 1% excellent. This was a decline from the previous month's rating.

January remained drier than normal. The condition of the winter wheat crop was rated 3% very poor, 25% poor, 42% fair, 28% good, and 2% excellent, better than both the previous month's and year's ratings. Wind damage to the winter wheat crop was rated 27% no damage, 23% light, 49% moderate, and 1% heavy. Freeze and drought damage to the crop was rated 11% none, 36% light, 51% moderate, and 2% heavy. Snow cover for winter wheat was rated 83% very poor, 9% poor, 8% fair, 0% good, and 0% excellent.

During the month of February, precipitation was above normal with a few exceptions. The trend continued through the month of March. By month's end, topsoil moisture condition was rated 5% very short, 21% short, 68% adequate and 6% surplus. Subsoil moisture was rated 26% very short, 37% short, 36% adequate, and 1% surplus. In addition, wind damage to the winter wheat crop was rated 55% none, 29% light, 14% moderate, and 2% heavy. Freeze and drought damage to the crop was rated 57% none, 26% light, 15% moderate, and 2% heavy. Winter wheat had broken dormancy, and was rated 40% still dormant, 53% greening, and 7% green and growing. Overall, the winter wheat crop condition was rated 2% very poor, 9% poor, 58% fair, 26% good, and 5% excellent. (Continued on page 2)

## November 1, 2003 Crop Production Forecast, Montana and U.S.

Crop	Unit	Acres Planted		Acres Harvested		Yield		Production	
		2002	2003 1/	2002	2003 1/	2002	2003 1/	2002	2003 1/
		(000) Acres		(000) Acres				(000) Units	
Winter Wheat	Bu.	1,450	1,800	750	1,720	28.0	37.0	21,000	63,640
Durum Wheat	Bu.	590	640	565	630	23.0	23.0	12,995	14,490
Spring Wheat	Bu.	3,750	2,850	3,450	2,700	22.0	22.0	75,900	59,400
All Wheat	Bu.	5,790	5,290	4,765	5,050	23.1	27.2	109,895	137,530
Corn for Grain 2/	Bu.	65.0	60.0	13.0	15.0	140.0	3/	1,820	3/
Oats	Bu.	145	120	55.0	45.0	49.0	44.0	2,695	1,980
Barley	Bu.	1,200	1,100	950	810	42.0	39.0	39,900	31,590
Flaxseed	Bu.	17.0	13.0	15.0	12.0	13.0	3/	195	3/
Dry Beans	Cwt.	26.9	19.0	23.0	17.0	15.7	19.2	361	326
Dry Peas	Cwt.	32.0	32.0	27.0	30.0	7.6	12.7	205	381
Lentils	Cwt.	25.0	29.0	21.0	18.0	7.1	7.8	149	140
Aus. Winter Peas	Cwt.	9.5	9.5	3.5	3.0	5.8	8.5	20	26
Sugar Beets	Ton	58.0	52.3	55.9	52.2	19.6	25.0	1,096	1,305
Fall Potatoes	Cwt.	10.5	10.7	10.4	10.6	310.0	320.0.	3,224	3,392
Alfalfa Hay	Ton	--	--	1,400	1,650	2.10	2.10	2,940	3,465
All Other Hay	Ton	--	--	1,200	1,000	1.40	1.30	1,680	1,300
All Hay	Ton	--	--	2,600	2,650	1.78	1.80	4,620	4,765
<b>UNITED STATES</b>		<b>(000) Acres</b>		<b>(000) Acres</b>				<b>(000) Units</b>	
Winter Wheat	Bu.	41,845	44,945	29,751	36,541	38.5	46.7	1,145,602	1,707,069
Durum Wheat	Bu.	2,909	2,915	2,703	2,869	29.4	33.7	79,450	96,637
Spring Wheat	Bu.	15,714	13,840	13,463	13,429	29.3	39.7	393,949	532,820
All Wheat	Bu.	60,468	61,700	45,917	52,839	35.3	44.2	1,619,001	2,336,526
Corn for Grain 2/	Bu.	79,054	79,066	69,313	71,765	130.0	142.2	9,007,659	10,207,141
Oats	Bu.	4,995	4,601	2,093	2,224	56.7	65.0	118,628	144,649
Barley	Bu.	5,071	5,299	4,129	4,688	54.9	58.9	226,573	276,087
Flaxseed	Bu.	785	583	704	572	17.9	3/	12,569	3/
Dry Beans	Cwt.	1,922.1	1,501.2	1,726.9	1,417.8	17.4	16.7	29,974	23,603
Dry Peas	Cwt.	302.7	330.0	279.7	321.0	15.2	15.6	4,242	5,009
Lentils	Cwt.	221.0	241.0	209.0	226.0	12.0	10.1	2,508	2,286
Aus. Winter Peas	Cwt.	21.5	20.7	11.6	11.6	14.1	12.4	164	144
Sugar Beets	Ton	1,427.3	1,364.7	1,361.1	1,345.6	20.4	22.2	27,718	30,624
Fall Potatoes	Cwt.	1,138.8	1,109.7	1,109.4	1,094.8	373.0	378	414,317	413,549
Alfalfa Hay	Ton	--	--	23,135	23,541	3.19	3.34	73,824	78,523
All Other Hay	Ton	--	--	41,362	40,838	1.86	2.01	77,138	82,183
All Hay	Ton	--	--	64,497	64,379	2.34	2.50	150,962	160,706

1/ Preliminary. 2/ Planted for all purposes. 3/ Forecast available January 9, 2004. -- Not published.

### 2003 Crop Year Summary

(Continued from page 1)

Small grain seeding began in April. During the month, there were 18.6 days suitable for field work. By the end of the month, barley was 55% planted, with 22% of the crop emerged. The corn crop was 35% planted, and 4% emerged. Dry beans were 23% planted. Oats 32% planted and 7% emerged. Potato planting had started and 8% of the crop was in the ground. The spring wheat crop was 57% seeded and 12% emerged. Sugar beets were 87% planted. Sugar beet emergence was rated at 13%. The winter wheat crop condition was rated 1% very poor, 8% poor, 22% fair, 53% good, and 16% excellent.

May and June brought normal to above normal precipitation and warm temperatures to much of the state. By the end of June, most of the topsoil and subsoil in the state was rated adequate for moisture. In addition, crop progress was

ahead of normal levels. Localized hail storms and grasshoppers impacted crop production in parts of the state during June.

The months of July and August delivered record high temperatures and little to no precipitation to Montana. In accordance, over optimistic outlooks for spring seeded crops dried up with soil moisture. By mid-August, crop conditions were as follows: Barley condition was rated 18% very poor, 22% poor, 27% fair, 28% good, and 5% excellent. Corn was rated 0% very poor, 8% poor, 35% fair, 32% good, and 25% excellent. Dry beans were rated 3% very poor, 15% poor, 41% fair, 30% good, and 11% excellent. Oat condition was rated 9% very poor, 15% poor, 31% fair, 32% good, and 13% excellent. Potatoes were rated 0% very poor, 1% poor, 10% fair, 71% good, and 18% excellent. Sugar beets were rated 1% very poor, 4% poor, 28% fair, 26% good, and 41% excellent. Spring wheat was

rated 14% very poor, 33% poor, 39% fair, 12% good, and 2% excellent. Winter wheat did very well, with harvest finishing up by the fourth week of August, well ahead of last year and the 5-year averages. Harvest finished early on spring grains too.

Montana's 2003 winter wheat production was 63.6 million bushels, more than three times larger than last year's crop due to higher yields and more acres harvested. Producers seeded 1.80 million acres, up 350,000 acres from 2002, which is the largest planted acreage since 1996. Producers harvested 1.72 million acres, up from 750,000 acres last year. The 2003 average yield was 37.0 bushels per acre, 9 bushels higher than 2002. Favorable weather conditions and above average rainfall during the spring helped boost plant counts, however extreme heat during the summer reduced head weights.

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## September 2003 Agricultural Prices Received

September full month crop prices were higher compared with August 2003. Montana's winter wheat average price was \$3.36 per bushel, up \$0.09 from the previous month; spring wheat moved up \$0.04 to \$3.52 per bushel; and durum wheat prices gained \$0.15 to \$4.16 per bushel. Feed barley prices increased \$0.11 from the previous month to \$2.10, and malt barley prices were unchanged at \$3.42 per bushel.

The mid-October price for alfalfa hay was up \$1.00 to \$77.00 per ton and all other hay held steady at \$71.00 per ton. The mid-October grain prices were mixed with winter wheat price averaging \$3.16 per bushel; spring wheat was \$3.44; durum wheat was \$4.05; feed barley was \$2.12; and malt barley averaged \$3.43.

Livestock prices for the full month of September were higher compared with August 2003. Steer and heifer prices

increased \$3.90 to \$90.50 per cwt and cows rose \$1.60 to \$49.10. The average price for calves was unchanged at \$106.00 per cwt. Sheep prices rose \$6.00 to \$32.00 per cwt and lamb prices jumped \$7.90 to \$106.00 per cwt. Milk prices were up \$1.30 per cwt from last month to \$13.00 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-October averaged \$95.40 per cwt.; cows averaged \$49.00 per cwt.; calves averaged \$108.00 per cwt.; and milk prices averaged \$14.50 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for September and changes from August were as follows: winter wheat was \$3.32, up \$0.04, spring wheat was \$3.42, up \$0.03; durum wheat was \$3.94, up \$0.16; the all barley price was \$2.88, down \$0.03, and steer and heifer prices were \$89.40, up \$5.90 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-October winter wheat price was \$3.14 per bushel, spring wheat was \$3.30 per bushel, durum wheat was \$3.90 per bushel, all wheat was \$3.23 per bushel, malt barley was \$2.80 per bushel,

feed barley was \$2.24 per bushel, and all barley was \$2.61. Steer and heifer prices were \$97.40 per cwt, cow prices were \$44.70, calves were \$112.00 per cwt., all hog prices were \$37.70 per cwt, and all egg prices were \$0.70 per dozen.

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in October is 113, based on 1990-92=100, 3 points above the September Index. Since last month, the Livestock & Products Index was higher while the All Crops Index was unchanged. Higher commodity prices for cattle, soybeans, dairy, and lettuce more than offset lower prices for corn, hogs, wheat, and potatoes. The seasonal change in the mix of commodities farmers sell, based on the past 3-year average, also affects the overall index. Increased average marketings of soybeans, corn, cotton, and cottonseed more than offset decreased marketings of dairy, grapes, wheat, and tobacco.

## United States Index Summary

INDEX (1990-92=100)	September 2002	October 2002	September 2003	October 2003
Prices Received	98	95	110	113
Prices Paid, Interest, Taxes, & Farm Wage Rates 1/	124	125	129	130
Ratio 2/	79	76	85	87

1/ Prices paid indexes (1990-92=100) published monthly. 2/ Ratio of index of prices received by farmers to index of prices paid.

## Montana Average Farm Prices Received

Commodity	UNIT	Monthly Average				Change From Previous		Mid-Month Average	
		Montana		U.S.		Month	Year	Montana	U.S.
		Sept. 2002	Aug. 2003	Sept. 2003	Sept. 2003	Aug. 2003	Sept. 2002	Oct. 15, 2003	Oct. 15, 2003
		Dollars							
Winter Wheat	Bu.	3.99	3.27	3.36	3.32	+0.09	-0.63	3.16	3.14
Durum Wheat	Bu.	4.41	4.01	4.16	3.94	+0.15	-0.25	4.05	3.90
Spring Wheat	Bu.	4.46	3.48	3.52	3.42	+0.04	-0.94	3.44	3.30
All Wheat	Bu.	4.37	3.46	3.61	3.39	+0.15	-0.76	3.48	3.23
Barley, All	Bu.	2.76	3.14	3.03	2.88	-0.11	+0.27	3.05	2.61
Feed Barley	Bu.	2.13	1.99	2.10	2.30	+0.11	-0.03	2.12	2.24
Malt Barley	Bu.	3.11	3.42	3.42	3.11	0.00	+0.31	3.43	2.80
Oats	Bu.	1.87	1.73	n/a	1.38	n/a	n/a	n/a	1.37
Alfalfa Hay	Ton	85.00	75.00	76.00	89.00	+1.00	-9.00	77.00	88.80
All Other Hay	Ton	75.00	68.00	71.00	70.10	+3.00	-4.00	71.00	71.40
All Hay Baled	Ton	83.00	73.00	75.00	84.20	+2.00	-8.00	75.00	84.40
Steers & Heifers	Cwt	76.40	86.60	90.50	89.40	+3.90	+14.10	95.40	97.40
Cows	Cwt	36.00	47.50	49.10	44.90	+1.60	+13.10	49.00	44.70
Beef Cattle 1/	Cwt	66.30	78.00	85.90	85.10	+7.90	+19.60	90.30	91.60
Calves	Cwt	90.70	106.00	106.00	109.00	0.00	+15.30	108.00	112.00
Sheep 2/	Cwt	21.40	26.00	32.00	32.10	+6.00	+10.60	n/a	n/a
Lambs 2/	Cwt	79.10	98.10	106.00	94.70	+7.90	+26.90	n/a	n/a
All Milk	Cwt	12.00	11.70	13.00	14.40	+1.30	+1.00	14.50	14.80

1/ Composite of steers, heifers, and cows. 2/ Mid-month prices for sheep and lambs discontinued January 1996.

## 2003 Crop Year Summary

(Continued from page 2)

Spring wheat production in Montana was 59.4 million bushels, down 22 percent from 2002 due to fewer acres seeded and harvested. The final seeded acreage was 2.85 million acres, down 900,000 acres from last year. This is the smallest acreage planted since 1993. Producers harvested 2.7 million acres, down 750,000 acres from the previous year. Yields averaged 22.0 bushels per acre, unchanged from 2002. High temperatures and lack of moisture experienced during the critical stages of crop development significantly reduced yields from early season forecasts.

Montana durum wheat growers seeded 640,000 acres, up 8 percent from last year. Producers harvested 630,000 acres, up 65,000 acres from 2002. This is the largest acreage planted since 1956 when 1.017 million acres were planted. The average yield was 23.0 bushels per acre, unchanged from last year. Total production was estimated at 14.5 million bushels, up 12 percent from last year due

to more acres harvested. Extreme heat and lack of moisture during head development reduced yields.

Montana growers seeded 1.10 million acres to barley, 100,000 acres fewer than the previous year. This is the lowest acreage number since 2001, when 1.10 million acres were also seeded. Producers harvested 810,000 acres, 140,000 fewer than were harvested for grain in 2002. A combination of factors, including increased demand for barley hay, poor protein grades, and abandonment due to drought conditions led to the decrease in harvested acres. The final yield for 2003 averaged 39.0 bushels per acre, down 3 bushels from last year. This is the lowest yield since 1988, when it averaged 24 bushels per acre. Production was estimated at 31.6 million bushels, down 21 percent from last year due to lower yields and fewer acres harvested.

Oat production in Montana was estimated at 1.98 million bushels, down 27 percent from last year. Planted acreage was estimated at 120,000 acres, down 25,000 acres from 2002. Harvested acreage was set at 45,000 acres, down 10,000 from last year. Yields averaged

44.0 bushels per acre, 5 bushels below 2002.

Alfalfa hay yield in Montana remains unchanged from the August forecast of 2.10 tons per acre. Total production of alfalfa hay is estimated to be 3.465 million tons, up 18 percent from the previous year. Harvested acreage, at 1.65 million for alfalfa, also remained unchanged from August, but represents a 250,000 acre increase from 2002. Other hay yield did not change from August's forecast, and is estimated at 1.30 tons per acre, down 0.10 ton per acre from last year. Other hay production is expected to be 1.30 million tons, down 23 percent from 2002. Other hay harvested acreage is unchanged from August at 1.0 million acres, but is down 200,000 acres from 2002. All hay production is estimated at 4.765 million tons, up 3 percent from last year. Overall, the increase in production is attributed to increased acreage, however the long hot summer and lack of precipitation since June decreased yields and limited many dryland producers to a single cutting.

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