



NEWS RELEASE



NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

United States Department of Agriculture - Nebraska Agricultural Statistics Service
100 Centennial Mall North Suite 298 - Lincoln, Nebraska 68508 - Phone: (402) 437-5541

Contact: Mark Harris (402)437-5541

E-mail: nass-ne@nass.usda.gov

Web: www.usda.gov/nass/

NEBRASKA'S MARCH 1, 2004 PROSPECTIVE PLANTINGS

LINCOLN, Neb., March 31, 2004 -- Nebraska producers expect to increase acreage planted to soybeans and winter wheat (planted last fall) while decreasing acreage devoted to corn, hay, sorghum, oats, dry edible beans, sunflowers, and sugar beets according to USDA's Nebraska Agricultural Statistics Service.

Nebraska **corn** growers expect to plant 8.0 million acres in 2004, down 1 percent from last year. Of these acres, 41 percent is expected to be planted to insect resistant (Bt) varieties, 15 percent to herbicide resistant varieties and 8 percent to stacked gene varieties, compared to 36 percent, 11 percent and 5 percent, respectively a year ago.

Nebraska producers expect to plant more acres of **soybeans** than the previous year. Expected plantings of 4.65 million acres in 2004 would be the third highest on record, up 2 percent from last year but 6 percent below the record high set in 2001. Of these acres, 89 percent are expected to be planted to herbicide resistant varieties, up from 86 percent last year.

Last fall, **winter wheat** was sown on 1.95 million acres, up 3 percent from a year earlier and 18 percent from two years ago.

Sorghum growers expect to plant 550,000 acres, 17 percent less than 2003, but 22 percent more than 2002.

Hay acreage for harvest, at 3.1 million, would be down 2 percent from last year. **Oat** planting intentions, at 155,000 acres, are down 30 percent from 2003. **Dry edible bean** producers intend to plant 145,000 acres, down 6 percent from a year earlier. **Sugar beet** plantings of 45,000 acres would be down slightly from 2003, while **sunflower** planting intentions, at 55,000 acres, are down 17 percent.

These acreage estimates are based on surveys conducted the first two weeks of March. This report is intended to assist growers in finalizing their acreage plans for 2004. Actual area planted may vary from that indicated due to final farmer assessment of planting options, the effects of weather, availability of production inputs, and changes in expected prices for 2004 crops.

Access the National publication for this release at:

<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/reports/nassr/field/pcp-bbp/pspl0304.pdf>