



Farm Facts



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Tennessee's Wheat Yields Rise Above Last Year

Tennessee's 2003 winter wheat yields are expected to average 52 bushels per acre, 6 bushels better than a year ago, according to a recent survey conducted by the Tennessee Agricultural Statistics Service. Total production is forecast at 14.0 million bushels, 2 percent above the 2002 total. Acres for harvest as grain are forecast at 270,000, down 30,000 acres from last year and the smallest acreage since 1985. Planting of the State's 430,000 acres of winter wheat got underway by the first week of October 2002. Growers struggled to wrap up fall seedings as wet weather hindered the amount of acreage sown. Severe thunderstorms, heavy rains, hail, and wind during May provided less than ideal conditions for the crop's development, causing moderate to severe damage to some of the State's acreage. The crop recovered from the adverse weather and, by month's end, over half of the acreage was rated in good-to-

excellent condition. Producers were also able to minimize the effects of disease brought about by persistent rains with timely fungicide applications. As of July 7, winter wheat harvest neared completion with progress running behind the normal pace and the latest harvest since 1997.

U.S. Winter Wheat Production

Winter wheat production is forecast at 1.72 billion bushels, up 6 percent from last month and 50 percent above 2002. The U.S. yield is forecast at 47.0 bushels per acre, up 2.4 bushels from last month. Hard Red Winter, at 1.09 billion bushels, is up 9 percent from a month ago. White Winter production is up 2 percent from last month and now totals 259 million bushels. Soft Red Winter, at 366 million bushels, is down 1 percent from the last forecast.

Winter Wheat: Tennessee, Surrounding States, and U.S., July 1, 2003 with Comparisons ¹

State	Acreage Harvested		Yield Per Acre		Production	
	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003
	1,000 Acres		Bushels		1,000 Bushels	
Arkansas	840	580	46.0	50.0	38,640	29,000
Georgia	200	230	41.0	44.0	8,200	10,120
Kentucky	340	300	53.0	59.0	18,020	17,700
Mississippi	205	125	44.0	48.0	9,020	6,000
Missouri	760	780	45.0	58.0	34,200	45,240
North Carolina	480	420	42.0	37.0	20,160	15,540
TENNESSEE	300	270	46.0	52.0	13,800	14,040
Virginia	170	165	63.0	53.0	10,710	8,745
United States	29,651	36,491	38.5	47.0	1,142,802	1,715,912

¹ 2003 forecast, 2002 final.

July 1 Cattle Inventory Down 1 Percent

All cattle and calves in the United States as of July 1, 2003, totaled 103.9 million head, 1 percent below the 105.1 million on July 1, 2002 and 2 percent below the 105.8 million two years ago. All cows and heifers that have calved, at 42.7 million, were slightly below the 42.9 million on July 1, 2002 and 1 percent below the 43.0 million two years ago. Beef cows, at 33.6 million, were down slightly from July 1, 2002 and 1 percent below two years ago. Milk cows, at 9.1 million, were down 1 percent from July 1, 2002 but were unchanged from two years ago.

Other class estimates on July 1, 2003 and the changes from July 1, 2002, are as follows: All heifers 500 pounds and over, 15.9 million, down 2 percent; beef replacement heifers, 4.6 million, unchanged; milk replacement heifers, 3.6 million, down 3 percent; other heifers, 7.7 million, down 3 percent; steers weighing 500 pounds and over, 14.2 million, down 2 percent; bulls weighing 500 pounds and over, 2.1 million, unchanged; calves under 500 pounds, 29.0 million, down 1 percent; all cattle and calves on feed for slaughter, 11.7 million, down 6 percent.

The 2003 calf crop is expected to be 38.0 million, down 1 percent from 2002 and down 1 percent from 2001. Calves born during the first half of the year are estimated at 27.7 million, down 1 percent from 2002 and down 1 percent from 2001.

June Milk Production Down 0.1 Percent

Milk production in the 20 major States during June totaled 12.3 billion pounds, down 0.1 percent from June 2002. May revised production, at 13.0 billion pounds, was down 0.4 percent from May 2002. The May revision represented a decrease of 9 million pounds from last month's preliminary production estimate. Production per cow in the 20 major States averaged 1,587 pounds for June, unchanged from June 2002. The number of milk cows on farms in the 20 major States was 7.77 million head, 10,000 head less than June 2002, and 11,000 head less than May 2003. Milk production in the U.S. during the April-June quarter totaled 43.9 billion pounds, down 0.3 percent from the April-June quarter last year. The average number of milk cows in the U.S. during the quarter was 9.11 million head, 35,000 head less than the same period last year.

Tennessee's Peach Crop Down 12 Percent from 2002

As of July 1, Tennessee's 2003 peach crop is forecast at 3.5 million pounds, down 12 percent from last year and the smallest production since 2000. The State's peach crop survived the winter months in good condition with only light freeze damage to some orchards. However, wet weather and hail damage during the spring hindered the crop's development.

U.S. Peach Production Up 2 Percent

The July 2003 forecast of U.S. peach production is 2.62 billion pounds, up 2 percent from 2002 and 8 percent above two years ago. Nineteen States forecast increases in production from last year, while 7 States expect declines and 3 States remain unchanged.

The South Carolina peach crop is forecast at 120 million pounds, down 8 percent from the June 1 forecast and 25 percent below 2002. The peach crop is not doing as well as originally expected. An abundance of rainfall has caused poor pollination in some areas, as well as rot and above average fruit drop. Damage from several hail storms in addition to a late frost have also taken their toll on quality and production. North Carolina's peach crop, forecast at 9.00 million pounds, is down 10 percent from last year. Some orchards in the mountains and Piedmont received light frost damage beginning of April. The quality of peaches remaining is good. Thinning was required in orchards that did not receive any frost. Wet conditions during June caused harvest problems for the crop with many orchards reporting hail damage. Georgia's peach crop is forecast at 125 million pounds, unchanged from the June 1 forecast but up 25 percent from the 2002 crop. The peach crop remains in mostly good condition, although above normal rainfall continued in June. This excess moisture added to already heavy disease pressure. Harvest as of June 29 was 54 percent complete, equal to the 5-year average.

2002 Noncitrus Fruit Utilized Production Up 3 Percent, Value Up 3 Percent

In 2002, the Nation's utilized production of the leading noncitrus fruit crops totaled 17.2 million tons, up 3 percent from the 2001 utilized production. Utilized production increased from 2001 for apricots, blackberries, California raspberries, cranberries, dates, figs, grapes, kiwifruit, nectarines, peaches, California prunes, and strawberries. Value of utilized production for noncitrus fruit crops totaled 8.16 billion dollars, up 3 percent from 2001. The value of apples, peaches, and strawberries increased 8 percent, 2 percent, and 14 percent, respectively, from the previous year. However, the value of grapes decreased 3 percent.

U.S. Nut Production Up 11 Percent, Value Up 35 Percent

The 2002 U.S. nut production (in-shell basis) rose to 1.45 million tons, an 11 percent increase from a year earlier. Almond production totaled 881,900 tons, up 31 percent from 2001. This represents a record high production for almonds in the U.S. The pistachio crop totaled 151,500 tons for a new record high. This is an increase of 88 percent over the crop of 80,500 tons realized in 2001. Hazelnut production, at 19,500 tons, is down 61 percent from 2001. Walnut production for 2002 is estimated at 282,000 tons, 8 percent below the previous year. Macadamia production, at 26,000 tons, is down 7 percent from 2001. Pecan production for 2002 is estimated at 86,500 tons, a 49 percent decrease from 2001. The 2002 U.S. value of utilized nut production is estimated at 2.04 billion dollars, up 35 percent from 2001. The 2002 almond value, estimated at 1.19 billion dollars, is up 61 percent from 2001. Pistachio value for 2002, at 336 million dollars, is double the 2001 value because of increased production. Hazelnut value decreased 44 percent to 19.5 million dollars from the 2001 value. The pecan crop translated into an 18 percent reduction in value due to decreased production. The macadamia value, at 29.6 million dollars, is 10 percent below the previous year.

Corn and Biotechnology Special Analysis

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) started monitoring the U.S. corn crop for adoption of biotechnology in 2000. These data were collected as a part of the March and June Agricultural Surveys with results published in the Prospective Plantings and the Acreage reports, respectively. Randomly selected farmers across the United States were asked if they intended to plant or had planted corn that, through biotechnology, was resistant to insects, herbicides, or both. If the biotech variety was resistant to both insects and herbicides, it was referred to as a stacked gene variety. Insect resistant varieties included only those containing the bacillus thuringiensis (Bt) gene. Conventionally bred herbicide resistant varieties were excluded. The estimates resulting from these surveys were subject to sampling variability because not all operations planting corn were included in the sample. The variability, as measured by the relative standard error at the U.S. level, was approximately 1.7 percent for insect resistant only varieties and 6.2 percent for stacked gene varieties.

This special analysis provides additional information on corn farms and acres planted in 10 major States. The 10 States included in the analysis are Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. These States planted 61.3 million acres of corn in 2002 which represents 77 percent of the U.S. all corn planted area. The 10 States planted 45.1 million acres (74 percent) of corn to non-Bt varieties and 16.2 million acres (26 percent) to varieties containing the Bt gene. Of the 16.2 million acres planted with a Bt variety, 11.9 million acres were planted on farms with 80 percent or less of their total acreage planted to Bt varieties. Growers who plant corn varieties containing Bt have a requirement to also plant an area, known as a refuge, to non-Bt corn varieties. The refuge requirements are specified in a contractual agreement between the grower and the seed technology company. Other details, such as proximity of the Bt corn to its refuge, are also specified in the contractual agreement. Refuge requirements vary depending on the mix of biotech crops planted. All 10 States highlighted in this report have a refuge requirement that 20 percent of the total corn area be planted to non-Bt corn varieties. No questions were asked during the March and June Agricultural Surveys about the refuge.

State Veterinarian Issues Advisory to Horse Owners

State animal health officials on alert for the return of West Nile virus (WNV) are also on the lookout for the re-emergence of another mosquito-borne disease in the Southeast – eastern equine encephalitis (EEE).

Outbreaks of viral encephalitis in horses is a seasonal occurrence due to the prevalence of mosquitoes this time of year,” said Ron Wilson, state veterinarian with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. “Horse owners should be aware of symptoms of viral encephalitis and consult their local veterinarian should their horse develop any of the signs associated with this group of diseases.” Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina have seen several horse cases of EEE this season. Tennessee’s only horse case to date this year was confirmed the week of July 13 in Anderson County. Wilson says the disease warrants close monitoring because of the high mortality rate in horses. Mosquitoes feeding on infected birds and later transmitting the virus to susceptible horses generally cause outbreaks. The disease is relatively sporadic in Tennessee with only a handful of horses having contracted the disease in recent years.

There have been no cases of equine WNV reported in Tennessee this year, but Wilson says the spread of WNV has heightened awareness and concern for other nervous system diseases in horses. Many of the signs of EEE overlap with those described for WNV in horses and include: decreased alertness; blindness or impaired vision; aimless wandering or circling; head pressing; inability to swallow; weakness, paralysis or convulsions.

“Definitive diagnosis is important in tracking the spread of viral infections,” said Wilson. “It requires a commitment on the of horse owners working with their local veterinarian and verifying test results through laboratory analysis.”

A vaccine is available to protect against EEE and its variant, western equine encephalitis. An approved vaccine for equine WNV is also available. Horse owners are encouraged to review their records and consult with their veterinarian regarding immunization for these diseases.

The Department of Agriculture’s Kord Animal Disease Laboratory in Nashville provides diagnostic services for livestock owners and private veterinarians. For more information about EEE or other viral diseases in horses, contact the State Veterinarian’s office and laboratory at (615) 837-5120.