



Farm Facts



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Excellent Season Results in Record-Breaking Yields

Based on the results of a November 1 Grower Survey conducted by Tennessee Agricultural Statistics Service, Tennessee farmers are wrapping up an excellent growing season with record-breaking yields expected for corn, cotton, and soybeans, as outstanding October weather provided favorable “finishing touches.” Virtually all of the State’s corn and almost half of the cotton and soybean acreage had been harvested by the end of October. State Statistician Debra Kenerson stated that “Although crops were planted late, summer and fall weather have proven beneficial as record setting yields are being reported.” She added, “Clear skies and warm temperatures throughout much of last month boosted crops progress and increased projected yields from our previous forecast.” Results from the November 1 survey showed the following:

Corn, a record 134 bushels per acre, 27 bushels above 2002; **Cotton**, a record 772 pounds per acre, up 31 pounds from last year; **Soybeans**, an unsurpassed 40 bushels per acre, up 9 bushels from a year ago.

Highest Corn Production in 83 Years and New State Record Yield

The State’s corn production is forecast at 87.1 million bushels, exceeding 2002 production by almost a third and the highest since 1920. Corn yields are expected to average 134 bushels per acre, up 2 bushels from our last

forecast and 27 bushels above a year ago. If realized, this would surpass the record breaking yield of 132 bushels set in 2001. Acreage for grain harvest is estimated at 650,000 acres, up 30,000 acres from last year and the highest since 1996. Dry conditions last month were favorable for corn growers to wrap up harvest activities. Virtually all of the State’s corn had been combined by mid-to-late October, on pace with last year and normal.

State Record Soybean Yield

Soybean production is forecast at 46.0 million bushels, 32 percent above 2002 and the highest in 19 years. Tennessee’s soybean yield is forecast at 40 bushels per acre, 2 bushels above our previous forecast and a new state record. If realized, this will exceed the previous record set in 1994 by 3.5 bushels. Growers are expected to harvest 1.15 million acres, 3 percent above a year ago. Warm and dry temperatures during October provided ideal conditions for final development and harvest. As of November 2, 61 percent of the State’s acreage had been harvested, outpacing last year but slightly behind the 5-year average.

Record Cotton Yield Anticipated

Tennessee’s cotton production is forecast at 860,000 bales, up 10,000 bales from our previous forecast and 5 percent above 2002. The average per acre lint yield from Tennessee’s 535,000 acres is expected to set a new record of 772 pounds, up 9 pounds from October’s forecast and 31 pounds more than a year ago. Weather conditions during October proved to be ideal for the Tennessee cotton crop as temperatures as much as 15 degrees above normal for an extended period of time helped bolls mature rapidly. During the last week of October, nearly half of the cotton acreage had been harvested with defoliation virtually completed. Harvest progressed in line with last year, but was well behind normal. The crop was rated in mostly good-to-excellent condition throughout the month.

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Crop Forecasts: Tennessee and United States, November 1, 2003, with Comparisons

Crop	Unit	Harvested Acres		Yield Per Acre		Production	
		2002	Indicated 2003	2002	Indicated 2003	2002	Indicated 2003
		Thousands		Number of Units		Thousands	
Tennessee							
Apples	lb.	---	---	---	---	6,500	9,000
Corn for grain	bu.	620	650	107	134	66,340	87,100
Cotton ¹	lb.	530	535	741	772	818	860
Hay, All (excluding Alfalfa)	ton	2,000	1,950	2.20	2.60	4,400	5,070
Peaches	lb.	---	---	---	---	4,000	3,500
Soybeans	bu.	1,120	1,150	31.0	40.0	34,720	46,000
Tobacco, All	lb.	35.90	34.04	2,096	2,255	75,261	76,770
E. Dark-fired (22)	lb.	5.0	5.1	3,110	3,000	15,550	15,300
W. Dark-fired (23)	lb.	.39	.40	3,550	3,300	1,385	1,320
Burley (31)	lb.	30.0	28.0	1,900	2,100	57,000	58,800
One-sucker (35)	lb.	.51	.54	2,600	2,500	1,326	1,350
Winter Wheat	bu.	300	270	46.0	50.0	13,800	13,500
United States							
Apples	lb.	---	---	---	---	8,555,600	9,351,600
Corn for grain	bu.	69,313	71,765	130.0	143.2	9,007,659	10,277,932
Cotton ¹	lb.	12,426.6	12,107.4	665	722	17,208.6	18,215.0
Hay, All (excluding Alfalfa)	ton	41,362	40,838	1.86	2.01	77,138	82,183
Peaches	lb.	---	---	---	---	2,575,400	2,618,100
Soybeans	bu.	72,437	72,538	38.0	33.8	2,749,340	2,451,759
Tobacco, All	lb.	428.70	413.01	2,055	2,044	880,734	844,298
E. Dark-fired (22)	lb.	7.45	7.60	3,126	3,066	23,292	23,300
W. Dark-fired (23)	lb.	2.79	2.80	3,636	3,471	10,145	9,720
Burley (31)	lb.	158.60	149.20	1,892	2,033	300,051	303,300
One-sucker (35)	lb.	2.61	2.74	2,922	2,821	7,626	7,730
Winter Wheat	bu.	29,751	36,541	38.5	46.7	1,145,602	1,707,069

¹ Production in 480-lb. net weight bales. U.S. production includes American-Pima cotton.

United States: **Corn** production is forecast at 10.3 billion bushels, up 1 percent from last month and 14 percent above 2002. Based on conditions as of November 1, yields are expected to average 143.2 bushels per acre, up 1.0 bushel from October and up 13.2 bushels from last year. If realized, both production and yield would be the largest on record. Both previous records were set in 1994. Of the major producing States, Illinois and Ohio are expecting record yields. Yields are also forecast at record highs in 8 other States located mostly in the Southeast.

Soybean production is forecast at 2.45 billion bushels, down 1 percent from the October forecast and 11 percent below 2002. If realized, this would be the lowest production since 1996. Based on conditions as of November 1, yields are expected to average 33.8 bushels per acre, down 0.2 bushel from October and down 4.2 bushels from 2002. As harvest progressed, producers realized yield decreases from last month in South Dakota, upper Mississippi Valley, Great Lakes, and eastern Corn Belt. However, in Alabama, Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, the Tennessee Valley, and along the Atlantic Coastal Plains, yield prospects increased from last month. Area for harvest is forecast at 72.5 million acres, unchanged from last month but up fractionally from 2002.

All **cotton** production is forecast at 18.2 million 480-pound bales, up 4 percent from October and up 6 percent from last year's production. Yield is expected to average a record high 722 pounds per harvested acre, up 26 pounds from last month. If realized, it will be 14 pounds above the previous record high yield established in 1994. Record high yields are expected in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee. Harvested area, at 12.1 million acres, is unchanged from October 1 but 3 percent below 2002.

Cotton Ginnings: Running Bales Ginned(Excluding Linters) Prior to November 1, Crop Years 2000-2003

State	Running Bales Ginned			
	2000	2001	2002	2003
All Cotton				
AL	344,100	287,400	234,150	301,600
AZ	244,450	216,400	214,500	147,000
AR	1,131,900	1,089,000	832,700	928,650
CA	784,050	667,700	584,000	365,950
FL	45,250	45,950	16,800	41,450
GA	535,800	666,700	478,500	607,350
LA	825,250	706,600	474,400	823,850
MS	1,510,750	1,345,400	1,051,050	1,446,600
MO	423,250	407,300	309,000	261,150
NM	27,000	23,400	8,800	13,050
NC	408,650	444,900	275,900	208,100
OK	78,100	56,500	59,750	50,050
SC	151,100	166,600	34,750	70,250
Tennessee	613,500	566,300	403,000	369,500
TX	2,027,950	2,069,900	1,689,000	1,743,900
VA	38,250	46,300	30,350	17,200
US	9,189,350	8,806,350	6,696,650	7,395,650

Hired Workers Down 1 Percent, Wage Rates Up 1 Percent From a Year Ago

There were 1,197,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of October 12-18, 2003, down 1 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 891,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 306,000 workers. Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$9.05 per hour during the October 2003 reference week, up 10 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$8.42 per hour, up 8 cents from last October, while livestock workers earned \$8.64 per hour compared with \$8.42 a year earlier.

The largest decreases in number of hired farm workers over last year occurred in the Northeast I (New England and New York), Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi) and Northeast II (Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey and Pennsylvania) regions and in California and Florida. In the Northeast I and II regions, rain and strong winds slowed field activity, reducing the demand for hired workers. Dry weather in the Delta region during the weeks prior to the reference week allowed harvest of most field crops to progress ahead of normal. Therefore, fewer field workers were needed with less acreage left to harvest.

The largest increases occurred in Florida, the Northeast I, Appalachian II (Kentucky, Tennessee and West Virginia), Corn Belt II (Iowa and Missouri), Corn Belt I (Illinois, Indiana and Ohio) and Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas) regions. The higher wages in Florida, the Corn Belt I and Northeast I regions were mainly due to a higher percentage of nursery and greenhouse workers in the work force. Wages in the Appalachian II region were higher due to a larger proportion of equine workers in the work force. Corn Belt II wages were higher due to a greater percentage of full-time salaried workers in the work force. Wages in the Southern Plains region were up because of a larger concentration of higher paid feedlot workers.

The 2003 U.S. hired worker annual average wage rate was \$9.08, up 3 percent from the 2002 annual average wage rate of \$8.81. The U.S. field worker annual average wage rate was \$8.31, up 19 cents from last year's annual average. The field and livestock worker combined annual average wage rate at the U.S. level was \$8.42, up 3 percent from last year's annual average wage rate of \$8.18.

State Tobacco Board Sets Payment Rates for Growers Trust

Checks to be Mailed Dec. 30

Nashville, Tenn. – The Tennessee Tobacco Farmers Certifying Board announced payment rates for the state’s burley tobacco growers and quota owners who have been certified for the Phase II Tobacco Growers Settlement Trust. The board anticipates that tobacco growers will be paid a little more than 52 cents (.5253) per pound of burley tobacco marketed in 2002, and that quota owners will be paid a little more than six cents (.0650) per pound of quota owned in 2002.

“The board has set the payment rate based on what we know at this time,” said state Agriculture Commissioner Ken Givens, who also serves as board vice chairman. “There are a lot of unknowns at this point that could impact the payment rate and the future of the Phase II program, including resolution of trust default payments and pending buyout legislation. So the board is prepared to make adjustments in response to some very unpredictable circumstances.”

Checks will be issued by the end of December to approximately 41,000 growers and quota owners who were certified by the Oct. 17, 2003 deadline. The distribution is expected to total \$28.6 million. This year’s allocation is about eight percent below the projected amount and does not include two quarterly trust contributions by Brown & Williamson and Lorillard tobacco companies. For more information about their certification status, Tennessee burley tobacco growers and quota owners can call the toll-free Tennessee tobacco information line at **1-877-332-0711**, or for general information about the tobacco growers trust, visit online at www.picktnproducts.org/trust.

Ag Market News Audio Files Available November 17

Nashville, Tenn. – Current prices for agricultural commodities will now be available via a USDA Web site for Tennessee’s radio stations to download and broadcast. Producers and buyers can also access an audio daily market news report from their computer. Beginning November 17, the audio files can be accessed free of charge at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/lsaudio/index.htm>. The Tennessee Department of Agriculture Market News Service covers local livestock, grain and futures prices. Voiced daily by USDA livestock and grain market news officer in charge Lewis Langell or other market news staff, the statewide price report lasts about 2 minutes. The report is produced at about 10 a.m. CST Mondays through Fridays.

Currently, 18 weekly cattle auctions are reported in Tennessee, plus seasonal graded feeder calf sales and video board sales. This information is already made available to producers through local newspapers, taped reports accessed by telephone, and text reports accessed online. Farm reports are also broadcast on about 50 radio stations statewide which subscribe to a private service. “Not every radio station can afford to pay for this service,” says Langell, “but they want to provide this information that is important to their listeners. Now these stations will be able to download daily farm market tape from the USDA Web site, at no cost.” Farmers can still access the market news by calling toll-free (800) 342-8206, or local to Nashville at (615) 253-0787. For more information about market news contact Langell at (615) 781-5406 or (615) 837-5164. For more information about Tennessee agricultural products, visit picktnproducts.org.

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