



NEWS RELEASE

VIRGINIA AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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VIRGINIA'S ROW CROP YIELDS UP FROM 2003

Based on conditions as of October 1, Virginia producers expect row crops to have higher yields compared to last year. Corn yields are forecast to average 145 bushels per acre, up 26 percent from last year's 115 bushels per acre. If realized production would be 49.3 million bushels up 30 percent from last year. Based on additional administrative data, producers expect to harvest 340,000 acres in 2004, which is 10,000 acres above last year.

Cotton producers currently expect to harvest 81,000 acres with an average yield of 836 pounds per acre. Production is expected to total 141,000 bales, up 18 percent from last year.

Virginia's soybean yields are expected to be 34 bushels per acre which is 9 percent higher than last year. Production is estimated at 19.2 million bushels, up 18 percent from 2003. Based on additional administrative information, acres for harvest at 520,000, is 40,000 acres more than last year.

The forecasted peanut yield of 3,100 pounds per acre is up 7 percent from 2003. Production is forecast at 99.2 million pounds, up from last year. Harvesting activities have begun with 18 percent of the crop combined.

Alfalfa hay production is expected to be up 3 percent from last year to 468,000 tons. The forecasted yield for other hay is 2.6 tons per acre. Other hay production is forecast at nearly 3.25 million tons, a 42 percent increase from 2003.

Flue-cured tobacco yield is forecast at 2,400 pounds per acre, up 710 pounds from 2003. Production is estimated to be 55.2 million pounds, up 82 percent from last year.

Fire tobacco yield is forecast at 1,850 pounds, up 325 pounds from the 2003 estimate. If realized, production would total 1.33 million pounds, up 59 percent from last year.

Burley tobacco producers expect to average a yield of 1,850 pounds per acre from 6,000 acres. Production is forecast at 11.1 million pounds, up nearly 3.63 million pounds from last year. Based on additional administrative data, acres harvested is down from last year.

Sun tobacco yields have increased 100 pounds per acre from last year. Producers expect yields to average 1,500 pounds per acre, with production estimated at 90,000 pounds.

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CORN PRODUCTION UP 6 PERCENT FROM SEPTEMBER FORECAST

SOYBEAN PRODUCTION UP 10 PERCENT

COTTON PRODUCTION UP 3 PERCENT

Corn production is forecast at 11.6 billion bushels, up 6 percent from last month and 15 percent above 2003. Based on conditions as of October 1, the yield is expected to average 158.4 bushels per acre, up 9.0 bushels from September and 16.2 bushels above last year. If realized, both production and yield would be the largest on record. The previous record for both was set last year when production was estimated at 10.1 billion bushels and yield was 142.2 bushels per acre. Yields are forecast at record high levels in all Corn Belt States, except Minnesota and Wisconsin, as weather conditions have been mostly favorable throughout the growing season. Based on administrative information, acreage updates were made in several States and farmers now expect to harvest 73.3 million acres of corn for grain, down 66,000 acres from September but up 3 percent from 2003.

Soybean production is forecast at 3.11 billion bushels, up 10 percent from the September forecast and 27 percent above 2003. If realized, this would be the largest U.S. soybean crop on record. Based on conditions as of October 1, yield is expected to average a record high 42.0 bushels per acre, up 3.5 bushels from September. Below-normal temperatures and adequate moisture during August and early September across most of the Corn Belt, Great Plains, and Delta were beneficial to the crop during the final stages of development. Above-normal temperatures followed, during the rest of September, just in time for the beginning of the harvest season. Based on administrative data, acreage updates were made in several States. Area planted is now estimated at 75.1 million acres, up 256,000 acres from the August estimate. Area for harvest is forecast at 74.0 million acres, up 335,000 from September.

Revised 2003 soybean acreage, yield, and production were published in the September 30, 2004 Grain Stocks report.

All cotton production is forecast at 21.5 million 480-pound bales, up 3 percent from last month and 18 percent above last year's 18.3 million bales. Yield is expected to average 782 pounds per acre, up 24 pounds from last month and 52 pounds from 2003. If realized, both production and yield would be the largest on record. Thirteen of the 15 published States are expecting production to remain the same or increase from a month ago. Harvested area, at 13.2 million acres, is the same as September but up 10 percent from 2003.

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