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U.S. Farmers Report Increased Corn, Wheat, and Cotton Planting Intentions in 2011 *March 1 rough rice and wheat stocks up; corn stocks down from 2010*

WASHINGTON, Mar. 31, 2011 – With commodity prices significantly higher than last spring, U.S. farmers plan to plant 3.99 million (4.5 percent) more corn acres, 3.89 million (8.2 percent) more wheat acres, and 12.6 million (15 percent) more cotton acres than last year according to the *Prospective Plantings* report released today by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). In all, farmers reported intentions of planting 323.8 million acres across the 21 major crops surveyed for this report, a 7.09 million (2.2 percent) increase from 2010 but still 1.21 million acres below the 2008 total.

“Despite increased plantings for most major field crops as reported in today’s *Prospective Plantings* report, the March 1 *Grain Stocks* report indicates continued strong demand and usage for these commodities. This suggests the current tight supply situation will continue into 2011 and 2012,” said USDA Chief Economist, Joseph Glauber.

The largest increase in corn-planted acreage in 2011 is expected in South Dakota where growers intend to plant an additional 850,000 acres compared to last year when wet field conditions during planting prevented many from getting all of their intended acreage seeded. Iowa and North Dakota acreage is expected to increase 500,000 and 450,000 acres respectively. The largest decrease in planted acreage is expected in Texas, down 150,000 acres due to an increase in cotton acreage.

The 2011 wheat planted area is estimated at 58.0 million acres. Of this, 41.2 million acres is winter wheat planted area, 10 percent above last year and up 1 percent from the previous estimate.

Cotton acreage increases are expected in every state, for a total of 12.6 million acres, 15 percent above last year. The largest increase, at 548,000 acres, is expected in Texas. Acreage increases of more than 100,000 acres are expected in North Carolina, Georgia and Mississippi.

Soybean acreage planting is expected to be 76.6 million acres, down 1 percent from last year, for the third largest on record. Compared with last year’s record planting intentions, declines of 100,000 acres or more are expected Iowa, Kansas, Mississippi, Nebraska and Ohio are expected. If realized, the planted area in New York and North Dakota will be the largest on record at 1.5 million and 4.35 acres respectively.

Prospective Plantings provides the first official, survey-based estimates of U.S. farmers’ 2011 planting intentions for corn, all wheat, winter wheat, durum wheat, other spring wheat, oats, barley, flaxseed, cotton, rice by length of grain classes, all sorghum, sweet potatoes, dry edible beans, soybeans, sunflower, peanuts, and sugarbeets; acreage for harvest of oats, hay, and tobacco. NASS surveyed approximately 85,000 farm operators across the United States from Feb. 26 to March 17, 2011. NASS will publish data on actual planted area in the *Acreage* report, to be released June 30 at 8:30 a.m. EDT.

NASS also released the quarterly *Grain Stocks* report today, showing corn stocks in all positions at 6.52 billion bushels as of March 1. This is down 15 percent from last year. Soybeans stored in all positions on

March 1 totaled 1.25 billion bushels, down 2 percent from a year ago, while all wheat stored totaled 1.42 billion bushels, up 5 percent from March 1, 2010. Rough rice stocks in all positions on March 1, 2011 totaled 121 million hundredweight, up 16 percent from the same time last year.

Prospective Plantings, Grain Stocks and all NASS reports are available online at www.nass.usda.gov.

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