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USDA Forecasts Third Largest Corn Crop on Record

Washington, Aug. 12, 2015 – U.S. growers are forecast to produce 13.7 billion bushels of corn this year, according to the *Crop Production* report issued today by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). Despite a 4 percent decrease from last year’s production, if realized, this will be the third largest production on record.

Growers in the eastern part of the Corn Belt were hampered by wet conditions throughout spring and the early part of the summer this year. The rest of the region’s states experienced favorable conditions, however, resulting in record-high corn yields in several states, including Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. Overall, across the United States growers planted 88.9 million acres to corn, unchanged from the previous NASS estimate, made in June. As of August 2, 70 percent of U.S. corn was reported to be in good or excellent condition, three percentage points below the same time last year.

U.S. soybean growers are also forecast to reduce their production this year. NASS forecasts U.S. soybean production of 3.92 billion bushels, down 1 percent from last year. If realized, despite the decrease, this will be the second largest U.S. soybean production on record. This year’s soybean yield, at 46.9 bushels per acre, is also forecast to be the second largest on record, down 0.9 bushels per acre from the record set in 2014. Growers are expected to set new record-highs in Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Virginia.

Today’s report also included the first production forecast for U.S. cotton. NASS forecasts all cotton production at 13.1 million 480-pound bales, down 20 percent from last year. Yield is expected to average 795 pound per harvested acre, down 43 pounds from last year.

Wheat production is forecast up from 2014. According to the report, all wheat production is expected to total 2.14 billion bushels this year, up 5 percent from 2014. Based on August 1 conditions, NASS forecasts the all wheat yield at 44.1 bushels per acre, up 0.4 bushels from last year.

NASS interviewed approximately 23,000 producers across the country in preparation for this report. The agency also conducted field and lab measurements on corn, soybeans, wheat and cotton in the major producing states, which usually account for about 75 percent of the U.S. production. NASS is also gearing up to conduct its September Agricultural Survey, which will focus on wheat, barley, oats and rye growers. That survey will take place during the first two weeks of September.

The *Crop Production* report is published monthly and is available online at www.nass.usda.gov.

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