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FIELD CROPS

PROSPECTIVE PLANTINGS FOR 2003



FLORIDA
 AGRICULTURE

April 1, 2003

FLORIDA

Wet weather and mostly warmer temperatures during March 2003 spurred the growth of small grains and pastures in the Panhandle and northern counties with oats forage, damaged by a virus, recovering well. The ample rains delayed the preparation of fields for corn, soybean, cotton and peanut planting in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula. Sugarcane harvesting remained active in the Everglades throughout the month with the rains causing only minor delays.

Florida farmers indicated that as of March 1 they intended to plant more corn, wheat, soybeans and peanuts, and less cotton and tobacco in 2003 than in 2002. The acreage harvested for hay will be the same as last year.

Peanut growers expect to plant 110,000 acres, up 14,000 acres or 15 percent from last year. Cotton acreage is expected to total 100,000 acres, down 20,000 acres or 17 percent from the 2002 acreage planted. The acreage planted to wheat is expected to total 20,000 acres. Corn, soybean and tobacco acreage is expected to total 85,000, 11,000 and 4,000 acres, respectively, compared with the respective 2002 acreages of 75,000, 10,000 and 4,600 acres. Producers expect to bale hay from 280,000 acres in 2003, equal to the previous year.

UNITED STATES

Corn growers intend to plant 79.0 million acres of corn for all purposes in 2003, virtually unchanged from 2002 but 4 percent above 2001. Expected acreage is up in the eastern Corn Belt as growers are switching back to corn after planting soybeans last year when persistent wet weather in the spring prevented them from seeding corn. However, all States in the Great Plains, except North Dakota, are decreasing their intended corn plantings as continued drought conditions are expected to persist into the 2003 crop year.

Soybean producers intend to plant an estimated 73.2 million acres of soybeans, down 1 percent from last year and, if realized, the lowest planted area since 1998. This is the third consecutive year that soybean acreage has declined in the United States. Growers in most of the Corn Belt and central Great Plains States intend to plant fewer acres in 2003. Expected increases in acreage, offsetting some to the decreases were located in the northern Great Plains, upper Mississippi Valley, Atlantic Coast, and Delta regions.

All wheat planted area is expected to total 61.7 million acres in 2003, up 2 percent from 2002. Winter wheat planted area for the 2003 crop is 44.3 million acres, up 6 percent from 2002.

All cotton plantings for 2003 are expected to total 14.3 million acres, 2 percent above last year. Upland acreage is expected to total 14.1 million acres, a 2 percent increase from 2002. Producers in the Southeast region and Arizona intend to decrease acreage from last year. All other cotton producing States intend to increase planted acreage, except for Oklahoma growers who intend to plant the same acreage as last year.

All hay producers expect to harvest 63.6 million acres of all hay in 2003, down 1 percent from 2002. Harvested acres for 2003 are expected to decrease in 17 States. North Dakota, down 900,000 acres, has the largest decrease following the drought conditions last year which resulted in more Conservation Reserve Program land and small grain acres harvested for hay. Hay acres in Texas dropped 430,000 acres from the record high acreage last year. Reduced water availability for irrigating hay is lowering growers' expectations in the Pacific Coast States.

Peanut producers intend to plant 1.24 million acres of peanuts in 2003, down 8 percent from one year ago. Of the nine producing States, six intend to plant fewer acres than in 2002. Florida and South Carolina intend to plant more acres, while New Mexico intends to show no change in planted area from 2002. Producers continue to adjust to the peanut provisions adopted in the 2002 Farm Bill. Southeast growers (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina) intend to plant 801,000 acres, down 1 percent from a year ago.

Flue-cured tobacco, at 241,000 acres, is 2 percent below a year ago. Flue-cured acreage accounts for 58 percent of this year's expected total tobacco acreage. Acreage in North Carolina, the leading flue-cured State, is down 6 percent from last year. Harvested acreage is also expected to decline in Virginia and Florida by 7 percent and 13 percent, respectively. Plans for flue-cured tobacco in Georgia are up 9 percent over last season, while South Carolina expects an 11 percent increase in harvested acres. Acreage in these two States is expected to increase to compensate for the low 2002 production and lack of carry over into the 2003 season.

Prospective plantings for 2003 with comparisons

Crops	Florida				United States			
	2001	2002	Indicated 2003 ^{1/}	2003 as % of 2002	2001	2002	Indicated 2003 ^{1/}	2003 as % of 2002
	1,000 acres		Percent		1,000 acres		Percent	
Corn:								
Planted for all purposes	65	75	85	113	75,752	79,054	79,022	100
Cotton, Upland planted	125	120	100	83	15,768.5	13,962.6	14,253.0	102
All Hay, harvested	270	280	280	100	63,521	64,497	63,552	99
Peanuts:								
Planted for all purposes	90	96	110	115	1,541.2	1,358.0	1,244.0	92
Soybeans:								
Planted for all purposes	10	10	11	110	74,075	73,758	73,182	99
Tobacco, harvested								
All types					432.3	430.3	417.5	97
Type 11-14	4.5	4.6	4.0	87	238.1	246.1	241.0	98
Winter wheat	10	9	20	222	41,078	41,735	44,308	106

^{1/} Intended plantings in 2003 as indicated by reports from farmers.