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FIELD CROPS

PROSPECTIVE PLANTINGS FOR 2005



FLORIDA
AGRICULTURE

April 1, 2005

FLORIDA

Frequent showers throughout the month of March 2005 slowed ground preparations for planting in some Panhandle, northern Peninsula, and central Peninsula localities. Temperatures were below normal for the beginning of the month with northern areas receiving some temperatures near freezing. By the end of the month temperatures returned to normal. Corn planting was active in some counties by mid-March. Rains during the last two weeks in several Panhandle and northern Peninsula counties slowed preparations for cotton and peanut planting. Sugarcane harvesting remained active throughout most of the month but slowed seasonally during the last half as mills began to close.

Florida farmers indicated that in early March they intended to plant more peanuts and wheat and less corn, cotton, soybeans, and tobacco in 2005 than in 2004. Producers intend to bale 265,000 acres of hay, an increase of 5,000 acres from the previous year. Peanut growers anticipate planting 155,000 acres, up 10,000 acres or seven percent from a year ago. The acreage planted to cotton is expected to be 85,000 acres, 4 percent less than the 2004 acreage. Winter wheat acreage at 20,000 acres is up 2,000 acres from the previous year. Planted acreage is projected at 2,800 acres for tobacco, down 1,200 acres from a year earlier. Corn and soybean planted acreage is expected to total 65,000 and 11,000 acres, respectively, compared with 70,000 and 19,000 acres in 2004.

UNITED STATES

Corn planted area for all purposes is estimated at 81.4 million acres, up 1 percent from 2004 and 4 percent above 2003. If realized, this would be largest corn acreage since 1985. Expected acreage is up from last year throughout much of the Corn Belt and southern Great Plains. However, growers in most States in the Delta, Southeast, and northern Great Plains intend to decrease their corn acreage as producers are switching to other more profitable crops due to low corn prices and high fuel and fertilizer costs.

Soybean producers intend to plant 73.9 million acres in 2005, down 2 percent from last year's record high acreage. Of the 31 soybean producing States, growers in 16 States intend to plant fewer acres this year, while producers in 11 States intend to plant more acres than in 2004. The largest acreage declines are in the Dakotas, where low soybean prices have some farmers shifting to other crops. Large declines in soybean acreage are also expected in the Delta and Southeast States. Due to the discovery of Asian soybean rust in the U.S., questions were asked of farmers in soybean producing States about their awareness of the disease and how it has affected their planting decisions.

All wheat planted area is expected to total 58.6 million acres in 2005, down 2 percent from 2004. If realized, this would be the lowest planted acreage since 1972. Winter wheat planted area for the 2005 crop is 41.6 million acres, down 4 percent from 2004. Of the total, about 30.5 million acres are Hard Red Winter, 6.6 million acres are Soft Red Winter, and 4.5 million acres are White Winter. The 2005 other spring wheat planted acreage is estimated at 14.4 million, up 4 percent from last year. Of the total, about 13.7 million acres are Hard Red Spring wheat. Area planted to Durum wheat is intended to total 2.61 million acres, up 2 percent from the previous year.

All cotton plantings for 2005 are expected to total 13.8 million acres, 1 percent above last year. Upland acreage is expected to total 13.5 million acres, also up 1 percent. Producers in Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, and Texas intend to decrease acreage from last year. Growers in all other cotton producing States intend to increase planted acreage. American-Pima cotton growers intend to increase their plantings 10 percent from 2004, to 275,000 acres. The increase is primarily in California, where producers are intending to plant 25,000 more Pima acres than last year.

Hay: Producers expect to harvest 62.9 million acres of all hay in 2005, up 2 percent from last year. The two States with the largest expected increases are New York, which is up 470,000 acres from last year, and South Dakota, which is up 300,000 acres. Acreage in Texas and Oklahoma is expected to increase due to beneficial weather conditions. A wet fall combined with a mild winter has allowed for adequate soil moisture and expectations of a larger hay crop in those States. Conversely, much of the Northwest has experienced an unusually dry winter with very low snow-pack levels leading to reduced expectations for hay in that region.

Peanuts: Producers intend to plant 1.60 million acres of peanuts in 2005, up 12 percent from last year. Of the nine producing States, five intend to plant more acres than in 2004. Southeast growers (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina) intend to plant 1.18 million acres, up 18 percent from last year. In the Virginia-North Carolina region, producers intend to plant 130,000 acres, down 6 percent from 2004. Growers in the Southwest (New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas) intend to plant 292,000 acres, unchanged from last year.

Flue-cured tobacco, at 189,300 acres, is 17 percent below a year ago and down 19 percent from 2003. Flue-cured acreage accounts for 59 percent of this year's expected total tobacco acreage. Acreage in North Carolina, the leading flue-cured State, is down 14 percent from last year. Harvested acreage is also expected to decline in Virginia, Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina by 39 percent, 30 percent, 17 percent, and 15 percent, respectively.

Prospective plantings for 2005 with comparisons

Crops	Florida				United States			
	2003	2004	Indicated 2005 ^{1/}	2005 as % of 2004	2003	2004	Indicated 2005 ^{1/}	2005 as % of 2004
	<i>1,000 acres</i>		<i>Percent</i>		<i>1,000 acres</i>		<i>Percent</i>	
CORN:								
Planted for all purposes	75	70	65	93	78,603	80,930	81,413	101
Cotton, Upland planted	94	89	85	96	13,301	13,409	13,540	101
All Hay, harvested	255	260	265	102	63,383	61,916	62,940	102
PEANUTS:								
Planted for all purposes	125	145	155	107	1,344	1,430	1,597	112
SOYBEANS:								
Planted for all purposes	13	19	11	58	73,404	75,208	73,910	98
TOBACCO, HARVESTED								
All types	--	--	--	--	411.2	409.1	319.9	78
Type 11-14	4.4	4.0	2.8	70	233.4	228.4	189.3	83
Winter wheat	20	18	20	111	45,384	43,350	41,613	96

^{1/} Intended plantings in 2005 as indicated by reports from farmers.