

## CROP HIGHLIGHTS

**ACREAGE:** Indiana's five major field crops totaled 12.1 million acres for harvest during 2009, down one percent from the 2008 harvested acreage. Corn acreage for harvest was unchanged from a year ago, while soybean acreage for harvest was up slightly from 2009. Winter wheat harvested acreage was down 20 percent from a year ago, but all hay harvested acreage was up 5 percent from the 2008 level. Oat acreage for harvest increased 40 percent from 2008. Other crops showing harvested acreage changes were tomatoes for processing, up 18 percent while tomatoes for fresh market decreased 11 percent. Sweet corn acreage for harvest increased 13 percent and watermelon harvested acreage increased 3 percent from 2008. In addition, snap beans for processing decreased 2 percent, while cucumbers for processing decreased 12 percent from 2008. Furthermore, cantaloupes for fresh market decreased 4 percent.

**YIELDS:** The 2009 growing season got off to a slow start due to cold, wet soil conditions. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of April, many areas of the state encountered snow with some northern areas receiving up to 3 inches. During late April and early May persistent rain showers kept farmers out of the fields, and by May 31<sup>st</sup>, only 78 percent of the intended corn acreage and 50 percent of the soybean acreage had been planted. Some farmers were still trying to plant corn during the second week of June, but many had either switched to soybeans or had taken preventive plantings. It was difficult for farmers to find enough rain-free days in a row to cut and bail hay without it getting wet. Winter wheat harvest progressed at a mostly normal pace across the state with good yields obtained in most areas. Below normal temperatures during July slowed crop development causing concern of potential damage from an early frost. Field crops in some northern counties were under stress from dry conditions in early and mid August while a few central and southern counties experienced flooding. Sudden death syndrome (SDS) and white mold were problems in many soybean fields. Corn and soybeans were very slow to mature, and by mid October, corn harvest was over 20 days behind the average pace. At this same

time, the soybean harvest briefly fell to a new record low pace, but moved out of this territory by the end of the month. Moisture content in harvested corn and soybeans remained higher than desired resulting in a large portion of the crops needing to be dried to prevent spoilage. Corn harvest lagged behind the normal pace all fall and by November 22<sup>nd</sup> it was the latest since 1992. Finally by December 6<sup>th</sup>, 91 percent of the corn acreage had been harvested and the soybean harvest was virtually complete. Mold was a severe problem in harvested corn resulting in considerable price dockage at the elevator with some corn being rejected entirely. The average yield for corn in 2009 was 171 bushels per acre, 11 bushels above the 2008 yield setting a new record high. The average yield for soybeans was 49 bushels per acre, 4 bushels above the 2008 yield. The average yield for winter wheat at 67 bushels per acre was 2 bushels below the previous year's yield of 69 bushels per acre. The average oat yield at 69 bushels per acre was down 6 bushels from last year's yield of 75 bushels per acre. All hay yield at 2.77 tons per acre was down from the 2008 yield of 3.16 tons per acre. Popcorn averaged 4,300 pounds per acre, down 200 pounds from the 4,500 pounds per acre produced a year earlier.

**PRODUCTION:** Corn produced during 2009 totaled 933.7 million bushels, 7 percent above the 2008 level of 873.6 million bushels. Soybean production was 266.6 million bushels, 9 percent above the 244.4 million bushels produced a year earlier. Winter wheat production decreased 22 percent from a year earlier, to 30.2 million bushels. Popcorn production totaled 258.0 million pounds, 6 percent below the 2008 level. Oat production of 483 thousand bushels was 29 percent above the 375 thousand bushels produced in 2008. All hay production, at 1.7 million tons, decreased 8 percent. Peppermint production increased 47 percent while spearmint production increased 6 percent from 2008. Apple production increased 30 percent to 30.0 million pounds. Blueberry production totaled 3.7 million pounds, a 3 percent decrease from the previous year.



"Flying Fertilizer"  
Photographer ~~ Cameron Moore  
Age 18, Howe, IN