

CROP HIGHLIGHTS

ACREAGE: Indiana's principal field crops totaled 11.8 million acres for harvest during 2020, 740 thousand acres more than 2019. Soybean harvested acreage at 5.68 million and corn harvested for grain acreage at 5.25 million were up 320 thousand and 430 thousand acres respectively from the previous year.

YIELDS: The 2020 spring planting season was exceptionally more favorable than the previous year. Cool temperatures and below average precipitation throughout April made ideal conditions for fieldwork and planting. By the end of the month, corn and soybean plantings were off to a quick start, ahead of the five-year average, though the cooler temperatures kept winter wheat progress slightly behind schedule.

The colder weather continued into May, with the average temperature for the first two weeks at only 51.8 degrees, 7.1 degrees below normal for the State. While planting progress was not hindered much by the cool weather, concerns of damage in winter wheat and early planted soybeans arose after frost events in the first half of the month. Heavy rains in the latter half of the month also raised concerns, but by the end of May, crop conditions remained favorable with 68% of corn and 69% of soybeans rated in good to excellent condition.

Warmer and drier weather took hold in June, allowing corn and soybean planting to mostly wrap up by the middle of the month, slightly ahead of schedule. Corn and soybean emergence also progressed ahead of schedule, with 94% of corn emerged by June 14, compared to the 86% five-year average. Drought concerns arose after the first three weeks of the month saw precipitation levels well below normal. However, significant rain events near the end of the month helped to replenish moisture levels. By the month's end, topsoil moisture levels were at 65% adequate to surplus, compared to 97% at the end of May.

July welcomed even more hot and dry weather, which aided winter wheat maturation and harvest progress, but again brought about drought concerns in corn and soybeans. The dry weather pushed winter wheat harvest ahead of schedule, with 96% of the crop harvested by July 19, compared to the five-year average of 89%. Sporadic and scattered rainfall in the first half of the month did little to maintain soil moisture, with topsoil and subsoil moisture levels reaching a low of 54% adequate to surplus by July 13. The hot and dry weather also slowed pasture growth and caused concern for heat stress in livestock.

Thankfully, timely rain events in the last two weeks of July helped to ward off drought concerns and improve crop conditions, with corn and soybeans reported at 67% and 68% good to excellent condition, respectively.

Throughout the remainder of the growing season, corn and soybean progress continued either in line or ahead of the five-year averages. By August 30, 63% of both corn and soybeans were rated in good to excellent condition, compared to 33% for both crops in 2019.

Dry conditions persisted throughout much of the fall, causing some instances of field fires as harvest progressed. Corn and soybean harvest progressed mostly on schedule, with only minor delays after much needed rain events in late-October. Soybean harvest wrapped up around mid-November, with corn harvest not far behind, both finishing slightly ahead of the five-year averages. The Indiana corn yield was 187 bushels per acre, while soybeans yielded 58 bushels per acre.

PRODUCTION: Indiana corn production in 2020 totaled 981.8 million bushels, 21 percent above 2019's total of 814.6 million bushels. Indiana's soybean production totaled 329.4 million bushels, up 21 percent from 2019's 273.4 million bushels. Indiana wheat production at 17.5 million bushels was up 9 percent. All hay production at, 1.28 million tons, was down 1 percent from the previous year.



"Just a Boy Who Loves Tractors"
Photographer ~~ Alexis Pinkerton
Age 10, Liberty, IN