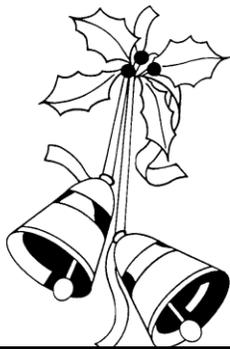


Released: December 17, 2018 · Volume No.37, Issue No. 12 · Published Monthly

*Featuring:*

Agricultural Prices • County Rankings • Farm Labor • Imports/Exports • Milk Production • Wheat County Est.



## HAPPY HOLIDAYS

*from the staff of*

### USDA, NASS, Kentucky Field Office

#### **FY 2019 Export Forecast Reduced by \$3.0 Billion to \$141.5 Billion; Imports Forecast at \$127.0 Billion**

Fiscal year (October/September) 2019 agricultural exports are projected at \$141.5 billion, down \$1.9 billion from fiscal year 2018 and \$3.0 billion from the August 2018 forecast, largely due to decreases in soybeans and cotton. Soybean export volumes are down because of declining Chinese purchases from the United States as a result of trade tensions, and as a record U.S. crop continues to pressure soybean prices lower. Cotton exports are down \$1.0 billion from the August forecast to \$5.9 billion, primarily due to slowing growth in global demand. Grain and feed exports are forecast up \$700 million to \$33.8 billion, driven by higher corn and wheat volumes. Livestock, dairy, and poultry exports are down \$200 million to \$30.1 billion. Declines in poultry and dairy products offset increases in beef and pork products. Horticultural products are unchanged at \$35.3 billion. The forecast for exports to China is reduced by \$3.0 billion to \$9.0 billion, the lowest since fiscal 2007.

U.S. agricultural imports in fiscal year 2019 are forecast at \$127.0 billion, up \$500 million from the August forecast, primarily due to expected increases in horticultural, sugar, and tropical products. The U.S. agricultural trade surplus is expected to decline by \$3.5 billion to \$14.5 billion in fiscal 2019.

Source: USDA ERS, *Outlook for U.S. Agricultural Trade* report, November 29, 2018.

U.S. Agricultural Trade, Fiscal Years, 2013 - 2019 (Year ending September 30)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Fiscal Year 2019	
							Aug <sup>1</sup>	Nov <sup>1</sup>
	<i>Billion Dollars</i>							
Exports	141.1	152.3	139.8	129.6	140.2	143.4	144.5	141.5
Imports	103.9	109.3	114.2	113.0	119.1	127.6	126.5	127.0
Balance	37.3	43.1	25.5	16.6	21.1	15.8	18.0	14.5

Reflects forecasts in the November 8, 2018 *World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates* report.

Source: Compiled by USDA using data from U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce.

<sup>1</sup> Forecast

County Rankings: Kentucky's Leading  
Agricultural Counties

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2017 Crop Production:										
Corn, Grain	Christian	Henderson	Union	Graves	Daviess	Logan	Todd	Hickman	Mclean	Webster
Soybeans	Henderson	Daviess	Graves	Christian	Union	Logan	Mclean	Todd	Fulton	Hickman
Wheat	Christian	Logan	Todd	Simpson	Graves	Warren	Caldwell	Hickman	Trigg	Calloway
Tobacco										
Burley	Breckin.	Green	Shelby	Harrison	Christian	Metcalfe	Henry	Mason	Nicholas	Hart
Dark Fire	Christian	Trigg	Logan	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Dark Air	Logan	Daviess	Christian	Mclean	Simpson	Webster	Ohio	Muhlen.	---	---
Hay										
Alfalfa	Hart	Henry	Owen	Woodford	Logan	Oldham	Madison	Montgom.	Pendleton	Simpson
All Other	Barren	Madison	Pulaski	Warren	Hart	Monroe	Breckin.	Shelby	Grayson	Fleming
Jan 1, 2018 Livestock										
Cattle <sup>1</sup>	Barren	Madison	Pulaski	Lincoln	Bourbon Monroe	Fleming Mercer	Nelson	Marion	Warren	Garrard
Beef Cows <sup>2</sup>	Barren	Pulaski	Madison	Monroe	Warren	Bourbon	Lincoln	Breckin. Marion	Adair	Allen Fleming Grayson Washing. Nelson
Milk Cows <sup>3</sup>	Barren	Adair	Logan	Todd	Christian	Monroe Warren	Marion	Lincoln	Metcalfe	
2012 Census										
Farms	Barren	Pulaski	Warren	Shelby	Graves	Grayson	Hart	Hardin	Nelson	Breckin.
Cropland	Christian	Graves	Logan	Daviess	Union	Henderson	Warren	Calloway	Barren	Todd

Rankings based on published counties only. <sup>1</sup>Bourbon and Monroe tied for 5th. Fleming and Mercer tied for 6th. <sup>2</sup>Breckinridge and Marion tied for 8th. Allen, Fleming, Grayson and Washington tied for 10th. <sup>3</sup>Monroe and Warren tied for 6th.

## FARM LABOR

There were 784,000 workers hired directly by farm operators on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of October 7-13, 2018, down 7 percent from the October 2017 reference week. Workers hired directly by farm operators numbered 843,000 during the week of July 8-14, 2018, down 4 percent from the July 2017 reference week.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$14.47 per hour during the October 2018 reference week, up 8 percent from the October 2017 reference week. Field workers received an average of \$13.74 per hour, an increase of 7 percent. Livestock workers earned \$13.38 per hour, up 9 percent. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$13.64 per hour, was up 8 percent from the 2017 reference week. Hired laborers worked an average of 41.5 hours during the October 2018 reference week, down slightly from the hours worked during the October 2017 reference week.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$14.28 per hour during the July 2018 reference week, up 8 percent from the July 2017 reference week. Field workers received an average of \$13.58 per hour, up 8 percent, while livestock workers earned \$13.22 per hour, up 8 percent from a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$13.48 per hour, was up 8 percent from the July 2017 reference week. Hired laborers worked an average of 41.2 hours during the July 2018 reference week, down slightly from the hours worked during the July 2017 reference week.

The 2018 all hired worker annual average wage rate was \$14.17 per hour, up 6 percent from the 2017 annual average wage. The 2018 field worker annual average wage rate was \$13.32 per hour, up 6 percent from the 2017 annual average. The 2018 annual average combined wage for field and livestock workers was \$13.25, up 6 percent from the 2017 annual average of \$12.47 per hour.

The number of hired works on farms in the **3-State Region including Kentucky**, Tennessee, and West Virginia totaled 31,000 during the week of July 8-14, 2018. Hired workers worked an average 39.0 hours during the survey week. The average wage rate for all hired workers was \$12.33 per hour. Field workers averaged \$11.52 per hour and livestock workers averaged \$11.77 per hour. The number of hired works on farms totaled 30,000 during the week of October 7-13, 2018. Hired workers worked an average 39.0 hours during the survey week. The average wage rate for all hired workers was \$12.39 per hour. Field workers averaged \$11.63 per hour and livestock workers averaged \$11.84 per hour.

## CHRISTIAN COUNTY TOPS KENTUCKY WHEAT PRODUCTION

LOUISVILLE, Ky. - The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) released the first of its county estimates today from the 2018 production year. These estimates are based on farmer-reported information from the Small Grains County Agricultural Production Survey and the September Agricultural Survey.

Christian County is the leading wheat producing county in Kentucky for 2018, with production totaling 3,247,000 bushels, harvested from 46,200 acres. The top five counties, which account for 61 percent of Kentucky's wheat production, include: Christian County - 3,247,000 bushels ; Logan County - 2,737,000 bushels ; Todd County - 1,918,000 bushels ; Simpson County - 1,698,000 bushels ; Graves County - 1,270,000 bushels

Union County had the highest yield at 74.8 bushels per acre. The top five counties for yield include: Union County - 74.8 bushels per acre ; Simpson County - 71.9 bushels per acre ; Todd County - 71.3 bushels per acre ; Christian County - 70.3 bushels per acre ; Trigg County - 69.9 bushels per acre.

"The 2018 Kentucky wheat crop will not be remembered as a good crop, and for many growers it was one of their worst crops," said David Knopf, director of the NASS Eastern Mountain Regional Office in Kentucky. "A cool, wet spring weather held back growth and increased disease pressure. June storms further reduced yields and resulted in lighter than average test weights."

Kentucky farmers harvested 19.8 million bushels of winter wheat during the summer of 2018, down seventeen percent from 2017. Yield is 66 bushels per acre, down eleven bushels from 2017. Farmers harvested 300,000 acres for grain, and another 150,000 acres were used as cover crop, cut as forage or abandoned. Kentucky ranks 18th in U.S. wheat production.

County-level estimates are used by other USDA agencies for farm programs and risk protection programs many farmers rely on to protect their operations. "Farm Service Agency (FSA) relies on the county-level estimates for Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC), Price Loss Coverage (PLC), County Loan Rates, and its disaster program calculations," Knopf said. "The Risk Management Agency (RMA) uses the data for administering the Area Risk Protection Insurance Plan and establishment of transitional yields. When drought and flooding impact crop production, or even in a year with good yields, these data are crucial to the agriculture industry."

The complete listing of winter wheat county estimates for each county is available online at [https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/Kentucky/Publications/County\\_Estimates/coest/2018/index.php](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Kentucky/Publications/County_Estimates/coest/2018/index.php). For more information, call the NASS Kentucky Field Office at (800) 928-5277.

### Livestock Average Prices Received <sup>1</sup>

Commodity	United States		
	Oct 2017	Sep 2018	Oct 2018
	\$ / Cwt.	\$ / Cwt.	\$ / Cwt.
All Hogs	47.30	43.20	50.30
Barrows & Gilts	47.60	43.70	50.80
Sows	36.30	28.60	35.20
All Beef Cattle <sup>2</sup>	109.00	108.00	110.00
Steers & Heifers <sup>3</sup>	111.00	110.00	112.00
Cows	65.40	60.80	57.80
Calves <sup>4</sup>	177.00	169.00	174.00

<sup>1</sup> U.S. prices based on data provided by USDA AMS. <sup>2</sup> "Steers & Heifers" and "Cows" combined. <sup>3</sup> 500 lbs. and over. <sup>4</sup> Under 500 lbs.

### Crop Average Prices Received <sup>1</sup>

Commodity	Kentucky		U.S.	
	Oct 2017	Oct 2018	Oct 2017	Oct 2018
	\$	\$	\$	\$
All Corn (Bu) <sup>23</sup>	3.39	3.58	3.26	3.41
Soybeans (Bu) <sup>2</sup>	9.54	8.73	9.18	8.58
Winter Wheat (Bu) <sup>2</sup>	(4)	(4)	4.17	5.21
Hay, Alfalfa (Ton)	205.00	215.00	153.00	178.00
Hay, Other (Ton)	100.00	145.00	120.00	132.00

<sup>1</sup> Only full month prices published starting in January 2015. <sup>2</sup> Includes contract sales paid during month. <sup>3</sup> Includes yellow and white corn. <sup>4</sup> Kentucky is a minor State, not published separately.

## MILK PRODUCTION

**Milk production** in the 23 major States during October totaled 16.9 billion pounds, up 1.0 percent from October 2017. September revised production, at 16.4 billion pounds, was up 1.5 percent from September 2017. The September revision represented a decrease of 2 million pounds or less than 0.1 percent from last month's preliminary production estimate.

**Production per cow** in the 23 major States averaged 1,934 pounds for October, 20 pounds above October 2017. This is the highest production per cow for the month of October since the 23 State series began in 2003.

**The number of milk cows** on farms in the 23 major States was 8.72 million head, 8,000 head less than October 2017, and 1,000 head less than September 2018.

**Internet Access:** Data including this report are available free of charge on our Internet homepage located at <http://www.nass.usda.gov/ky>. Links to the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, the University of Kentucky Agricultural Weather Center and other web sites related to Kentucky Agriculture are also included. National & State reports and data are available on the USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service homepage located at <http://www.nass.usda.gov/>