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Kentucky 2018 Wheat Yield May Be a Record High

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) released its May Crop Production report May 10, based on the Agricultural Yield survey conducted at the beginning of month. The report includes information on Kentucky’s winter wheat forecast.

Kentucky farmers expect to harvest 24.3 million bushels of **winter wheat** during 2018. The expected crop for 2018 would be up two percent from the previous year. Farmers seeded 440,000 acres last fall with 300,000 acres to be harvested for grain. Based on crop conditions as of May 1, and assuming a normal growing season, farmers expect a yield of 81 bushel per acre, up four bushels from 2017. Acres for other uses totaled 140,000 acres and will be used as cover crop for tobacco or cut as silage or hay.

“Despite a cool spring, farmers think the crop may average the highest state yield on record,” said David Knopf, director of the NASS Eastern Mountain Regional Office in Kentucky. “The weather this month will likely be the determining factor.”

The forecast will be updated June 12, based on conditions June 1.

“Development of the crop is running behind normal. As of April 29, five percent of the crop had headed, compared with the five-year average of 29 percent,” Knopf added.

Winter wheat production for the **nation** was forecast at 1.19 billion bushels, down six percent from 2017. The expected area to be harvested for grain or seed totals 24.8 million acres, down two percent from last year. As of May 1, the U.S. yield was forecast at 48.1 bushels per acre, down 2.1 bushels from last year.

As of May 1, **Kentucky** on-farm **hay stocks** totaled 670,000 tons, down 420,000 tons from May 1, 2017 stocks. Farmers have used 83 percent of their hay stocks since December 1, 2017.

U. S. hay stocks were at 15.7 million tons, down 8,719,000 tons from 2017.

To view the complete report, visit <http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/current/CropProd/CropProd-05-10-2018.pdf>. For more information, call the NASS Kentucky Field Office at (800) 928-5277.