

Crops review

general... Wet weather during the spring growing season heavily impacted small grain development. The heavy precipitation caused disease in some areas and considerable lodging in other areas. While disease did not have a significant effect on yield, the above normal precipitation was a significant contributor to below average yields. Summer showers aided both soybean and corn crop growth. Harvest however, was delayed by snow storms which left significant amounts of snow on the ground towards the end of the corn and soybean harvest season. Despite difficulty in harvest both crops produced above average yields.

corn... Maryland farmers planted 470,000 acres of corn in 2009, up 2 percent from 2008. Of the 470,000 acres planted, 425,000 acres were harvested for grain, 40,000 acres were cut for silage, and the remaining 5,000 acres were abandoned. Yield for grain averaged 145 bushels per acre, up 24 bushels from last year and the highest yield per acre since 2004. Production totaled 61.6 million bushels, up 27 percent from 2008, when 48.4 million bushels of corn were produced from 400,000 acres. Silage yield is estimated at 19 tons per acre, up 27 percent from last year, for a total production of 760,000 tons of silage.

hay... Acres harvested for hay increased 5,000 acres from last year to 210,000 acres. Alfalfa acreage decreased 5,000 acres, at 40,000 acres, while all other types of hay increased 10,000 acres to 170,000 acres. Despite an increase in acreage, wet summer conditions led to a 9 percent decrease in production from 626,000 tons in 2008 to 571,000 tons in 2009. Alfalfa production is estimated at 180,000 tons, at an average yield of 4.5 tons per acre, and the production of all other types of hay is estimated at 391,000 tons of hay, at an average yield of 2.3 tons per acre.

small grains... Maryland farmers have produced an average 60 bushels per acre of wheat, the lowest since the 2004 number of 59 bushels per acre. Wheat was planted on 230,000 acres this year, disregarding the record set last year this is the largest planting since 1953. However, a significant amount of this acreage was enrolled in the Maryland Cover Crop Program, leaving 195,000 acres harvested for grain. This resulted in a total wheat production of 11.70 million bushels, 11 percent below the 13.14 million bushels produced last year. Yield for barley was also low, at 70 bushels per acre, the lowest yield on record since the 2003 yield of 87 bushels per acre. Producers planted an estimated 55,000 acres of barley in 2009 and harvested 48,000 acres for grain, with a majority of the remaining acreage enrolled in the Maryland Cover Crop Program. Total barley production is estimated at 3.36 million bushels, up 6 percent from 3.15 million bushels produced in 2008.



soybeans... Maryland farmers planted 485,000 acres of soybeans, 10,000 acres less than were planted in 2008. From the 485,000 acres of soybeans planted, 475,000 acres were harvested for beans, down 2 percent from 2008. Soybean yields averaged 42 bushels per acre, up 12 bushels from 2008 and one bushel below the record yield set in 2004. Production of soybeans is estimated at 19.9 million bushels.