

Crop Production, 2003

By Stephen M. Habets

2003 Crop Summary: The average high temperature for January was 29.8 degrees, which was below normal. The average low temperature was 17.7 degrees which was also below normal. The average monthly temperature was 21.1 degrees, 4.7 degrees below normal. The highest temperature recorded for the month was 62 on the 1st. The lowest was around -17 degrees which occurred on the 27th of the month. It was a dry January with an average precipitation of 2.36 inches, about 77% of normal. Maximum precipitation was at Laurel Summit with 4.1 inches. Seasonal snowfall amounts varied around the state from 6 to 15 inches.

The average high temperature for February was 33.2 degrees, which was below normal. The average low temperature was 18.8 degrees which was also below normal. The average monthly temperature was 24.0 degrees, 4.3 degrees below normal. The highest temperature recorded for the month was 59 on the 23rd. The lowest was around -14 degrees which occurred on the 8th of the month. It was a wet February with an average precipitation of 3.49 inches, about 135% of normal. Maximum precipitation was at Philadelphia with 7.3 inches. Seasonal snowfall amounts varied around the state from 6 to 30 inches.

During March many areas of the state received generous amounts of rain, however at 2.86 inches was still only 83% of normal. The states soil conditions were mostly adequate to surplus for the month. The month of April started warm and considerable rain and had a high on 88 on the 17th, and only about 15 days favorable for field work. The month of May ushered in a surplus of rain and hindered spring planting. With June came more rain, and the corn and soybean condition started it's slow decline due to the excessive moisture, combined with very little sunshine. Corn and soybean planting was delayed and was generally about 15 percent behind previous years. Barley harvest was just beginning heading in to the month of July.

July had an excess of rain as well, the opposite extreme from the 2002 crop year. Field crops were showing the stress effects of the additional of moisture combined with cooler than normal average temperatures. Wheat harvest started in mid July and was delayed into the third week of August until it was complete. Crop conditions started to improve as August started as the days were warmed and there was more sunshine, despite the continued wet conditions. Corn progress was still behind the 5-year average by around 20 percent due to the late seedings. Potato harvest started the third week of August and continued through October. Tobacco harvest also started and continued through the end of September. Corn silage harvest started the end of August and remained behind the average until completion the end of October. Corn harvest was behind the average and went into December and in some instances into the next year. Soybean harvest started the beginning of October and was completed the beginning of December due to the late planting and the excessive rain all crop year .



Small Grains: Production of winter wheat was 7,095,000 bushels, 29 percent below last year. Acreage harvested was 165,000 acres in 2003, 20,000 less than 2002. Yields were 43 bushels per acre, compared to 54 bushels per acre in 2002. Oats production was 6,490,000 bushels, down 7 percent from last year. Oats acres for harvest was 110,000 in 2003, down 5,000 from 2002. Oat yields were 59 bushels per acre, down 2 bushels from 2002. Barley production for 2003 was 3,965,000 bushels, down 11 percent. Acreage harvested was 65,000, up 5,000 from 2002. Barley yield was 61 bushels per acre, down from 74 in 2002.

Hay: Production of all hay in 2003 was 4,070,000 tons, 14 percent above 2002. Total acres harvested was 1,650,000, down 150,000 from 2002. Yield was 2.47 tons per acre, up from 1.98 tons in 2002. Alfalfa hay production was 1,650,000 tons, 7 percent below 2002's production. Alfalfa acreage harvested was 550,000, down 130,000 from 2002. Yield was 3.00 tons per acre, up from 2.60 in 2002. Other hay production was 2,420,000 tons, up 35 percent from the 1,792,000 tons produced in 2002. Other hay acreage harvested was 1,100,000, down 20,000 from 2002. Yields of 2.2 tons per acre were up 37 percent from 2002. Haylage production for 2003 was 2,451,000 tons. Haylage harvested acreage was 440,000 with an average yield of 5.57 tons per acre.

Row Crops: Corn for grain production was 102,350,000 bushels. Corn acres harvested for grain amounted to 890,000 acres, up 2 percent. Yield was 115 bushels per acre, up 47 bushels from 2002, a much needed increase from the drought of the previous year. Corn silage production was 7,975,000 tons, 1,535,000 tons more 2002. Acres harvested for silage totaled 550,000 acres, down 2 percent from last year. Average yield was 14.5 tons per acre, up 3.0 tons from last year. Soybean production for 2003 was 15,375,000 bushels, 52 percent more than 2002. Soybean acres harvested was 375,000, down 15,000 acres from last year. Yield per acre was 41 bushels, up 15 bushels from 2002. Potato production was 3,915,000 cwt., 51 percent more than 2002. Acres harvested decreased 500 acres to 13,500. Yield increased 105 cwt. to 290 cwt. per acre. Total production of tobacco was 7,880,000 lbs., up 16 percent from 2002. Total acres harvested was 3,700, 300 more than last year. All tobacco yield was 2,130 lbs. per acre, up 126 pounds from last year.