

NATIONAL CORN GROWERS ASSOCIATION

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USDA Predicts Five Percent Increase in Planted Corn Acres for 2011

(WASHINGTON) March 31, 2011 -- Today's Prospective Plantings report released by the U.S. Department of Agriculture shows an increase in corn acres the National Corn Growers Association said. The report, based on a survey of actual farmer intentions in March, states farmers intend to plant 92.2 million corn acres in 2011. This is a five percent increase from 2010 and up seven percent from 2009. If realized, it will be the second highest corn planting in the United States since 1944. This is just behind the 93.5 million acres planted in 2007.

"Even after a difficult growing season last year, farmers produced the third largest crop and it initially shows they will produce another record crop this year," NCGA President Bart Schott said. "This report shows that the innovative American farmer understands the increasing global demands of corn for food, feed, fuel and fiber and that they see the importance of meeting those needs."

The USDA's estimate for 2011 is for 92.2 million acres to be planted in field corn. Assuming a 91.7 percent harvest rate and the USDA's projected yield of 162 bushels per acre, farmers will grow 13.7 billion bushels on 84.5 million harvested acres.

Acreage increases of 250,000 or more are expected in Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio and South Dakota. The largest decrease is expected in Texas, down 150,000 acres, which saw a 10 percent increase in cotton acreage. The actual number of planted acres will be released in USDA's June 30th report.

In the Grain Stocks report, also released this morning, USDA shows corn stocks in all positions stood at 6.52 billion bushels. The slight drop likely reflects stronger than anticipated demand from livestock. In total USDA shows 3.534 billion bushels of disappearance between December and February. Ethanol production through the first three months of the year has remained relatively steady at 900,000 barrels per day, or 13.78 billion gallons annualized. USDA will adjust usage projections in the April 8th WASDE report.

In the report, USDA also estimated:

- Soybean producers intend to plant 76.6 million acres, down one percent from last year.
- Wheat planted intentions are estimated at 58.0 million acres, up eight percent from 2010.
- Cotton plantings for 2011 are expected to total 12.6 million acres, 15 percent above last year.

Founded in 1957, the National Corn Growers Association represents 35,000 dues-paying corn farmers nationwide. NCGA and its 48 affiliated state organizations work together to create and increase opportunities for their members and their industry.