

The progress of the 2009 growing season was slowed due to cool temperatures and rainfall in early spring. The wet conditions delayed field corn planting, and below normal temperatures resulted in uneven germination. Temperatures were variable during the month of April; from seven degrees below normal, to twenty-seven degrees above normal in Atlantic City on April 26, 2009. The month began with temperatures above normal the first week of April, falling to below normal until mid-month in most localities. Temperatures rose to more than twenty degrees above normal in many areas during the end of the month. Many localities experienced below normal precipitation for the month. Temperatures were variable throughout May; from up to twelve degrees below normal, to fifteen degrees above normal in many locations. For the month, temperatures and precipitation were near to slightly above normal. The topsoil moisture was mostly adequate to surplus after mid-May. Precipitation and wet soil conditions delayed field crop planting and hay cutting. Temperatures were variable for the first half of June. Substantial amounts of rainfall resulted in surplus topsoil moisture in many localities. Temperatures decreased to near or below normal the second half of June. For the month, precipitation was above normal across most of the state. During July, temperatures were below normal for the month in most localities. Precipitation decreased during July across the state. Producers reported that single crop soybeans looked good. Plantings after June 20, which continued until mid-July, suffered from a lack of moisture for both emergence and growth. Some of these late plantings had poor population stands and the plants were very short. Field observations confirmed that the total crop was generally good and the poorest fields were a small percentage of the total acreage. August temperatures were near normal with the exception of a few days of above normal temperatures. Moisture was frequent and adequate; and rainfall was above normal for the month of August. The warmer temperatures, along with sufficient moisture, produced favorable corn growing conditions for the month across the state. Pod fill for some double-cropped soybeans was behind schedule. The warm temperatures accelerated the early crop's growth. Double-cropped soybeans were tall and difficult to distinguish from single-crop beans. Wet and mild weather conditions prevailed during September. Producers were relieved by some much needed rainfall. Near normal temperatures and adequate rainfall for the month of September resulted in good growing conditions for the corn crop. The early crop soybeans suffered from the dry conditions and above normal temperatures during mid-September and soybean pods were small. Double-cropped soybeans didn't grow much during the dry weather. Frequent rainfall and variable temperatures prevailed throughout the month of October. Excessive moisture delayed field crop harvest. Soybean yields were good for full-season beans and better than normal for double-cropped despite high moisture levels.

Corn: Corn planted for all purposes in 2009 totaled 80,000 acres and 70,000 were harvested for grain. Yield

increased 27 bushels to 143 bushels per acre from the previous year's yield of 116 bushels. The increase in yield raised production by 1.4 million bushels to 10.0 million bushels. Growers received a market year average of \$3.40 per bushel for their grain, a decrease of \$0.75 per bushel from 2008's price of \$4.15 per bushel. Total crop value, for corn for grain decreased by 4 percent from \$35.6 million in 2008 to \$34.0 million in 2009.

Soybeans: Soybean planted and harvested acreages decreased by 3,000 acres to 89,000 acres planted and 87,000 acres harvested in 2009. The soybean yield was up 12 bushels per acre from 2008's yield of 30 bushels per acre to 42 bushels in 2009. Production increased to 3.65 million bushels in 2009, from 2.70 million bushels in 2008. The average price received by growers decreased by \$0.30 from \$9.75 per bushel in 2008 to \$9.45 per bushel in 2009. Total crop value increased by 31 percent to \$34.5 million.

Winter wheat: The 34,000 acres planted to winter wheat in 2009 was 1,000 acres less than in 2008. Harvested acreage was at 29,000, a decrease of 4,000 acres. The yield at 51 bushels per acre was 10 bushels per acre less than the previous year's. Production at 1.48 million bushels was down 27 percent from 2008. The season average price of \$3.75 per bushel was \$2.40 less than the price in 2008. Total crop value decreased by 55 percent to \$5.5 million.

Hay: All hay harvested acres decreased by 5,000 acres in 2009 to 110,000 acres. Alfalfa hay increased by 5,000 acres to 25,000 acres; while other hay acres decreased by 10,000 acres to 85,000 acres. The alfalfa hay yield decreased by 3 percent to 2.8 tons per acre. Yield for other hay was unchanged from the previous year, at 1.9 tons per acre. The overall hay yield was 2.11 tons per acre. Alfalfa production was 70,000 tons and other hay production was 162,000 tons; the resulting total hay production was 232,000 tons. The season average price for all hay decreased \$22.00 per ton from \$145 in 2008 to \$123.00 per ton in 2009. Overall, the total hay crop value decreased by 17 percent in 2009, to \$28.6 million.

Potatoes: Potatoes planted and harvested acreage totals were unchanged at 2,100 acres in 2009. The yield was 260 hundredweight per acre, an increase of 30 hundredweight from 2008. Production was 546,000 hundredweight in 2009 compared with 460,000 hundredweight in 2008. The total crop value decreased, by 19 percent from \$6.03 million in 2008 to \$4.86 million in 2009.

Sweet Potatoes: Sweet potato planted and harvested acreage was unchanged, at 1,200 acres, from the previous year. The yield was 110 hundredweight per acre, a decrease of 15 hundredweight from last year's. In 2009, production decreased by 12 percent, to 132,000 hundredweight. The average price per hundredweight increased by \$2.10 to \$29.00 in 2009. The value of production totaled \$3.8 million.