

## CROP HIGHLIGHTS

**ACREAGE:** Indiana's principal field crops totaled 12.1 million acres for harvest during 2018, unchanged from 2017. Soybean acreage at 5.95 million and corn acreage at 5.35 million were both unchanged from 2017.

**YIELDS:** The 2018 spring planting season started off cold, wet, and snowy in some areas, keeping planters out of the fields for most of April. Average statewide temperatures were recorded at 6.1 degrees below normal for the month, and farmers saw an average of only 2.35 days suitable for fieldwork per week. Flooding events in early April kept soil moisture high, even as the weather started to cooperate towards the end of the month. By the end of April, planting progress for corn and soybeans was well behind that of the previous year and the 5-year average.

Ideal weather conditions in May kicked planting into high gear. Consistently above average temperatures and below average rainfall gave farmers a weekly average of 5.4 days suitable for fieldwork, allowing significant planting progress to be made as previously saturated fields dried out. The month of May saw crop progress go from being well behind schedule to far ahead of the previous year and 5-year average in terms of corn and soybeans planted and emerged. By the first week of June, planting was wrapping up and winter wheat harvest was beginning.

Erratic weather in June resulted in the replanting of some soybean fields, either due to dry conditions thwarting emergence or flood damage from localized storm events depending on the area. In general, the high temperatures and above average rainfall benefitted the corn and soybean crops, as progress continued to stay ahead of the 5-year average.

June saw fewer days suitable for fieldwork than May, averaging 4.3 days per week. With planting wrapped up for the most part, farmers kept busy with winter wheat harvest, planting double-cropped soybeans, and applying herbicide to corn and soybean fields. By the end of June, corn and soybeans were rated 76% and 71% in good to excellent condition, respectively, with crop emergence, corn silking, and soybeans blooming all either on pace or ahead of schedule.

Irrigation rigs that had sat largely unused through June got put to work come July. At the start of the month, topsoil and subsoil moisture levels sat right at 90% adequate to surplus. However, the first two weeks of July only saw an average of 0.73 inches of precipitation, 39% of normal, throughout the State. Signs of drought stress were reported in fields across the State by mid-July, with topsoil and

subsoil moisture levels reported at 43% and 35% short to very short, respectively, for the week ending July 15. Relief came late in the third week of July, with rain and storm systems moving through most areas allowing soil moisture to replenish slightly.

The final days of July brought cool temperatures and very little rain, which caused soil moisture to fall back to the mid-July levels. The residual moisture and cooler temperatures helped corn and soybeans weather the dry week well. Both corn and soybeans were progressing ahead of schedule and were reported at 69% and 67% in good to excellent condition, respectively.

As the season progressed, the Indiana corn and soybean crop continued to benefit from good weather. At the beginning of September, corn and soybeans were both rated 72% good to excellent condition.

Very good harvesting weather finished out the season. The Indiana corn yield was 189 bushels per acre which was a record high. Soybeans yielded 58.5 bushels per acre on average which was also a record high.

**PRODUCTION:** Indiana corn production in 2018 totaled 983 million bushels, 5 percent above 2017's total of 936 million bushels. Indiana's soybean production totaled 346 million bushels, up 8 percent from 2017's 321 million bushels. Indiana wheat production at 18.5 million bushels was up 4 percent. All hay production at, 1.38 million tons, was down 7 percent from the previous year.

"Corn"  
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