

CROPS

The drought of 1999 had adverse effects on New Jersey crops. Corn and soybeans were severely damaged. Corn for grain harvested acres is the lowest since 1972 and yield has not been this low since the late 1950's. Corn for silage yield is the lowest on record. Seven percent of soybean acres went for abandonment compared with the historical two percent. Hay yields also declined. The small grain crops had no significant damage since they were harvested before the drought intensified, with barley setting a new record high yield.

Corn planted in 1999 totaled 110,000 acres, 60,000 of which were harvested for grain. Yield decreased 60 percent to 37 bushels per acre. This decrease in yield lowered production by 6,796,000 bushels to a level of 2,220,000 bushels. Acres harvested for silage increased by 4,000 acres to 25,000. Silage yield was half of 1998's yield, declining to a record low of 6 tons per acre. Production was 150,000 tons, 40 percent lower than in 1998. Growers received \$2.15 per bushel for their grain, a decrease of 5 cents per bushel from 1998's price of \$2.20 per bushel. Due to the devastating drought, total crop value for corn for grain decreased by 76 percent from 1998's \$19,835,000 to \$4,773,000 in 1999.

Soybean planted acreage decreased by 10,000 acres to 105,000, with harvested acres decreasing by 15,000 to 98,000 acres for 1999. Soybean yield, at 24 bushels per acre, was down from 1998's yield of 28 bushels per acre. Due to the decrease in yield, production decreased to 2,352,000 bushels from 1998's 3,164,000 bushels. There was a decrease of 65 cents in the price received in 1999 to \$4.55 per bushel, compared to 1998's return of \$5.20 per bushel. Total crop value decreased by 35 percent from 1998's \$16,453,000 to \$10,702,000 in 1999.

The 42,000 acres planted to winter wheat in 1999 was 6,000 less than in 1998. Harvested acreage is estimated at 33,000, a decrease of 11,000 acres below 1998's harvested acres. Yield at 56 bushels per acre was 4 bushels per acre more than the previous year. Production at 1,848,000 bushels

was down 19 percent from 1998. The season average price of \$2.20 was 26 cents less than the price in 1998, producing a 28 percent decrease in total crop value to \$4,066,000.

Rye planted acreage decreased by 18,000 acres to 20,000, with harvested acres decreasing by 1,000 to 4,000 acres for 1999. At 30 bushels per acre, the 1999 yield was 3 bushels per acre below 1998's. Due to the decrease in the yield and harvested acres, production decreased to 120,000 bushels from 1998's 165,000 bushels. The season average price of \$2.90 per bushel was 10 cents less than 1998's \$3.00 per bushel. The value of production for the 1999 crop amounted to \$348,000 compared with \$495,000 for the 1998 crop year.

Barley planted and harvested acres remained unchanged at 6,000 and 4,000, respectively. Yield was 79 bushels per acre, a record yield of 316,000 bushels; an increase of 36 percent from 1998. The prices received by growers increased by 9 cents per bushel, from 1998's \$1.11 per bushel, to \$1.20 in 1999.

Acres of hay harvested increased by 10,000 acres from 1998 to 130,000. Alfalfa hay remained unchanged from 1998 at 30,000 while other hay increased 10,000 acres from 1998 to 100,000. Both alfalfa and other hay's yield decreased by 4 percent to 2.7 tons per acre and 6 percent to 1.6 tons per acre, respectively, from the previous year. The overall yield was 1.85 tons per acre. Alfalfa production was 81,000 tons and other hay production was 160,000 tons; the resulting total hay production was 241,000 tons. The season average price for all hay increased by \$7.00 per ton, from 1998's \$128.00, to \$135.00 in 1999. Overall, total crop value increased 6 percent in 1999 to \$32,239,000.

Planted potato acres, at 2,600, were down 100 acres from 1998. Harvested acres also decreased by 100 acres to 2,500. Yield was down 7 percent at 250 hundredweight per acre in 1999 from

1998's 270 hundredweight per acre. Total production was down 11 percent from 1998 to 625,000 hundredweight. The season average price increased by \$1.05 per hundredweight, from a price of \$6.95 per hundredweight in 1998, to \$8.00 per hundredweight in 1999.

Sweet potato planted acreage decreased by 100 acres to 1,000 while harvested acres remained unchanged from 1998 at 1,000. Yield was 100 hundredweight per acre, down 5 percent from last year. As a result, total production decreased by 5,000 hundredweight to 100,000 hundredweight, 5 percent below 1998. The season average price of \$32.00 was \$10.50 more than 1998's \$21.50 per hundredweight. Total crop value increased by 42 percent to \$3,200,000.