

# Crop Production, 1998

By Eric D. Stout

**1998 Crop Summary:** Across the State warm temperatures and normal rainfall permitted an early start on spring planting. Most crops got off to a fast start due to the nice weather. Spring plowing was completed during the first week of June, about the same as 1997. Other land activities were also ahead of normal. Soil moisture rating was mostly adequate to surplus from the beginning of April to mid July. Alfalfa and pastures got off to a fast start and started to show signs of good color.

Weather across the State during the month of June had mixed effects. In some areas, lack of rain slowed pasture growth. In other areas, strong storms caused flooding. Summer conditions were generally dryer than normal. By late June the warm and dry weather allowed field work to progress. Corn conditions throughout the season were generally fair to good. By the end of July farmers were reporting 11 percent of the corn crop in excellent condition. Fair to good was 80 percent. Very poor to poor was only 9 percent. The month of August was hot and dry. By the first week of September only 46 percent were reported in good to excellent condition, while 17 percent was reported in very poor to poor condition. Soil moisture starting in August was rated as 34 percent adequate to surplus and 66 percent very short to short. By the first week of September soil moisture rated adequate to surplus was only 25 percent. Very short to short soil moisture was 75 percent with 19 percent very short.

Hay stands and first cuttings were good to excellent around the State. Hay making was good for most of the season due to dry weather, but regrowth was slow in some areas. Barley harvest started the first week in June, 15 percent above the normal progress. By the second week of July harvest was completed, about two weeks ahead of normal schedules. Wheat harvest started the end of June and ended by the first of August. Oat planting was ahead in early spring, the crop harvested ended fairly close to the normal average and was completed by the end of September. Potato harvest began in early August and proceeded slightly behind normal until completion in late October. Tobacco harvest began in early August and was completed by the end of September, about one week ahead of normal. Corn harvest for silage started in late August, just above the average. Corn silage harvest reached completion by the end of October. Soybean harvest was underway in most areas by the end of September and was completed by the end of November. By the middle of October corn was 92 percent mature, one week ahead of normal. Corn for grain harvest began by mid September, about 2 percent above normal. Corn harvest remained ahead of normal until completion in

early December. Fall plowing and seeding of barley and wheat progressed about one week behind normal.

**Small Grains:** Production of winter wheat was 9,690,000 bushels, 6 percent above 1997. Acreage harvested was 190,000 acres in 1998, 15,000 more than in 1997. Yields were 51 bushels per acre, compared to 52 bushels per acre in 1997. Oats production was 8,480,000 bushels, down 6 percent from last year. Oats acres for harvest was 160,000 in 1998, 5,000 more than 1997. Oat yields were 53 bushels per acre, down 5 bushels from 1997. Barley production for 1998 was 5,025,000 bushels, up 10 percent. Acreage harvested was 75,000, up 10 percent from 1997. Barley yield was 67 bushels per acre. Rye production was 495,000 bushels in 1998, up 24 percent from 1997. Acreage harvested was 15,000 acres, up 5,000 acres from 1997. Rye yield decreased 7 bushels to 33 bushels per acre.

**Hay:** Production of all hay in 1998 was 3,915,000 tons, 5 percent below 1997. Total acres harvested was 1,850,000, down 20,000 from 1997. Yield was 2.12 tons per acre, down from 2.20 tons in 1997. Alfalfa hay production was 1,960,000 tons, 5 percent below 1997's production. Alfalfa acreage harvested was 700,000, down 40,000 from 1997. Yield was 2.80 tons per acre, the same as 1997. Other hay production was 1,955,000 tons, down 4 percent from the 2,034,000 tons produced in 1997. Other hay acreage harvested was 1,150,000, up 20,000 from 1997. Yields of 1.7 tons per acre were down 6 percent from 1997. Haylage production for 1998 was 2,470,500 tons. Haylage harvested acreage was 405,000 with an average yield of 6.10 tons per acre.

**Row Crops:** Corn for grain production was up 18 percent to 116,550,000 bushels. Corn acres harvested for grain amounted to 1,050,000 acres, up 4 percent. Yield was 111 bushels per acre, up 13 bushels from 1997. Corn silage production was 7,840,000 tons, 9 percent above 1997. Acres harvested for silage totaled 490,000 acres, down 5 percent from last year. Average yield was 16.0 tons per acre, up 2.0 tons from last year. Soybean production for 1998 was 15,800,000 bushels, 15 percent more than 1997. Soybean acres harvested was 395,000, up 25,000 acres from last year. Yield per acre was 40 bushels, up 3 bushels from 1997. Potato production was 3,360,000 cwt., 6 percent more than 1997. Acres harvested increased 500 acres to 14,000. Yield increased 5 cwt. to 240 cwt. per acre. Total production of tobacco was 15,720,000 lbs., down 8 percent from 1997. Total acres harvested was 7,800, 300 less than last year. All tobacco yield was 2,015 lbs. per acre, down 85 pounds from last year.