

Corn Worries Over?

H. LOUIS MOORE
Penn State Economist

The November crop report released by USDA Nov. 12 raised the corn crop estimate again. The current estimate places the crop at 9.27 billion bushels, up 3 percent from October's estimate and 25 percent higher than last year's poor crop.

At mid-year there were fears that slow crop development, early frost possibilities, and harvest woes might keep the crop as low as 8 billion bushels. There was no early frost, and most of the crop is in storage.

As a bonus, most areas harvested much higher yields per acre than anticipated. At 9.27 billion bushes, the 1996 harvest was the third largest on record. The soybean crop, at 2.4 billion bushels, is the second largest on record.

Despite the lowest ever carryover of corn on hand this past September, prices have fallen sharply in response to the news of a large harvest. Prices are currently about 40 percent below the high recorded in August. USDA estimates that the amount of corn on hand next Sept. 1 will exceed 1 billion bushels. This is thought to be a sufficient cushion in case we would have a crop failure in

1997.

Everyone has been closely watching the supply side of the market this fall and has forgotten the demand side. USDA believes that exports of grains will not be as large as a year ago, and predicts that only a modest increase in domestic uses will take place. It seems that low prices will actually spur exports. Livestock and poultry producers have been looking at current corn and meat prices as "cheap." This means more hogs, chickens, and beef cattle will be fed in the months ahead. This extra demand in addition to the ethanol plants coming back into production, means that prices will be increasing in the new year.

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — Need to know the number of acres U.S. farmers planted to corn? How about listening to crop conditions from corn growers around the country?

Want to know the difference between wet milling and dry milling?

Detailed information about the nation's top agricultural crop is now available on the Internet.

The National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) recently launched a corn specific web site to serve the growing number of people seeking information from the Internet. The site can be reached at <http://www.ncga.com> 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

"We want to use the Internet to provide valuable information about corn and our organization to members, the media,

the entire agricultural industry, and the general public," said Wallie Hardie, president of the NCGA.

"The Internet provides a very efficient method for reaching large groups of people. Our site is easy to use and provides useful information to a wide variety of people all over the globe."

The corn grower's web site consists of 11 categories, including such things as "The World of Corn On-line," an on-line version of the organization's popular booklet packet with corn statistics and facts; the "Corn FAQtory," a compilation of frequently asked questions about corn; and a U.S. map which automatically sends visitors to information about the organization's affiliated state associations, corn boards and promotion councils.

Its "News of the Day" section, updated every other day, features a "News for Corn Growers" section, the latest NCGA news releases, and a real time audio report that can be assessed with the click of a computer mouse.

A "Members Only" section allows all NCGA members easy access to the biweekly "Corn Commentary" newsletter as well as legislative alerts from the NCGA office in Washington, D.C.

Computer users or soon-to-be users can contact the NCGA at (314) 275-9915 for additional information. On-line users can send questions via e-mail to corninfo@nega.com and technical questions can be addressed by sending e-mail to webmaster@nega.com.

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