



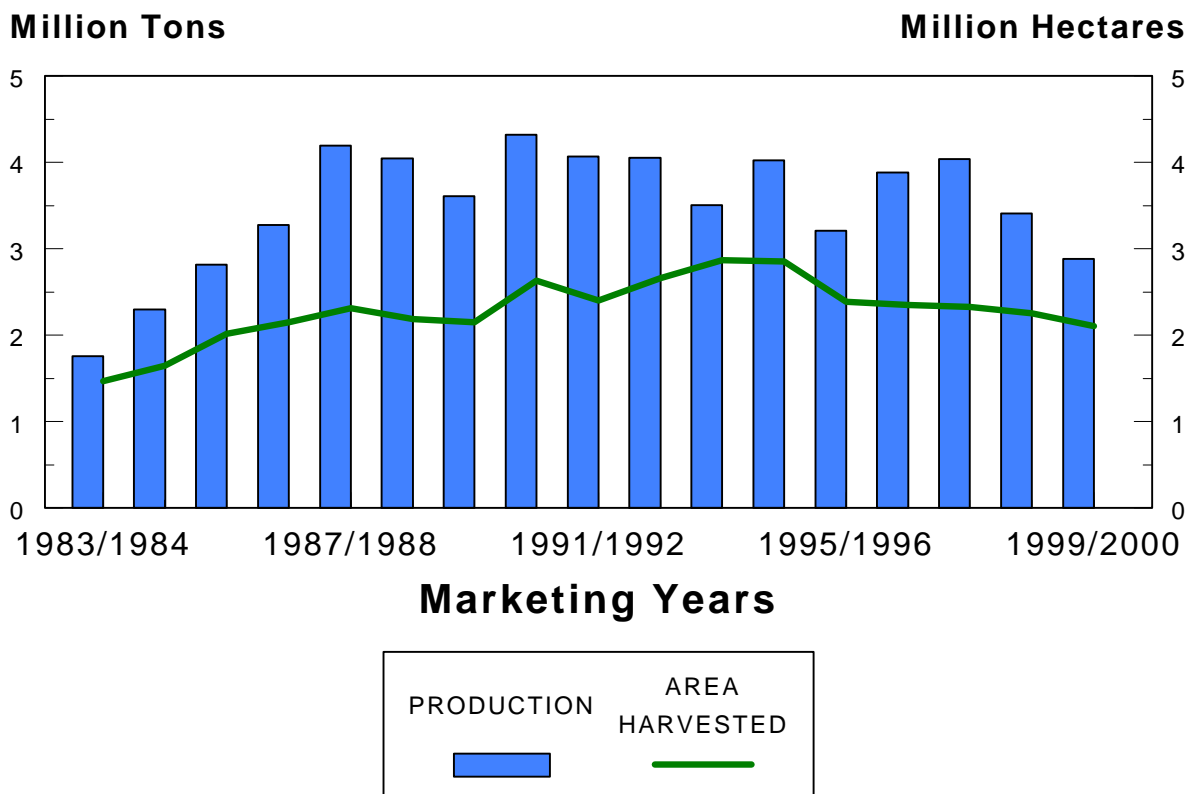
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Oilseeds: World Markets and Trade

Drought, Low Prices, and Competitive Pressures Contribute to the Smallest EU Sunflowerseed Crop Since 1985/86



EU sunflowerseed production is forecast to decline 15 percent in 1999 to 2.9 million tons. This is the lowest level since 1985 and is in response to dry weather and reduced plantings. Sunflowerseed harvested area is forecast to decline 6.5 percent from the previous year and nearly 10 percent since 1997 to the lowest level since 1985/86. Poor grower returns in recent years have discouraged plantings. Drought conditions, particularly in Spain, have also contributed to the decline in sunflowerseed production even though EU-wide yields, at 0.73 tons/ha, are at their highest level since 1995 and on par with yields in 1984 and 1985. The decline in sunflowerseed plantings on marginal land has been the major factor in boosting EU-wide average yields.