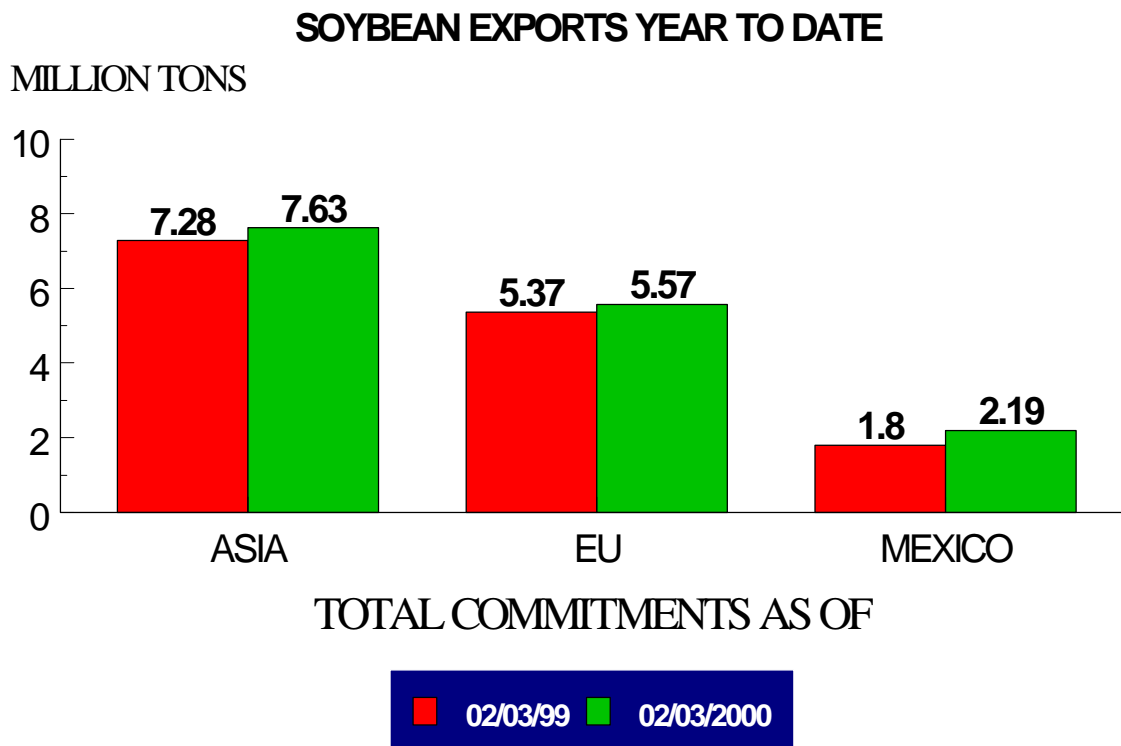




Oilseeds: World Markets and Trade

Strong Pace of U.S. Soybean Exports due to NAFTA and Recovery of Asian Economies



The United States is expected to export 24.2 million tons of soybeans in the 1999/2000 marketing year, up more than 10 percent from last year. This volume of exports represents the third highest export volume in U.S. soybean history, despite the strong trade competition from South America. Year-to-date data indicate that total commitments (accumulated exports plus outstanding sales) as of the end of January are up 31 percent for Mexico, 8 percent for Asian destinations and 6 percent for European. Mexico in the past couple of years has become a significant soybean importer as its economy improved and the NAFTA agreement substantially reduced tariffs. Devalued currencies in Asia have accelerated poultry exports further supporting the economic recovery evident in most Asian countries. Despite the increase in year-to-date exports total import demand for soybeans in the European Union is expected to remain unchanged from last year at around 16.3 million tons due to increased rapeseed supplies.