

On March 1 Crop Report

For Immediate Release: March 31, 2006

For Information Contact:
Terry Mathews
800.256.4485

COTTON AND SOYBEAN ACREAGE EXPECTED TO INCREASE

“Based on our March 1 survey of planting intentions, Louisiana cotton and soybean acres are expected to increase over last year,” said Nathan Crisp, Director of the National Agricultural Statistics Service’s Louisiana Field Office. “We expect cotton and soybeans to be up eight percent.” Crisp also noted that planting intentions for sweet potatoes show an increase from 2005.

“The prospective planting intentions reflect the current economic and weather conditions as of March 1,” Crisp cautions. “Actual acreage planted may increase or decrease based on what happens during the rest of the planting season.” A June 1 survey will be conducted, and planted acreage updates will be released from that survey on June 30, 2006.

Cotton growers intend to plant 660,000 acres, up 50,000 acres, or 8 percent, from a year ago.

Soybean planted acreage is expected to increase 8 percent from last year, to 950,000 acres.

Rice planted acreage is expected to decrease to 440,000 acres, 17 percent below last year. This would be the lowest planted acreage since 1987, when the state planted 425,000 acres. Long grain varieties are expected to account for 430,000 acres. Growers intend to plant 10,000 acres of medium grain varieties, the same as in 2005.

Corn planted acreage is expected to total 280,000 acres, down 60,000 acres, or 18 percent from a year ago. This would be the lowest planted acreage since 1995, when the state planted 230,000 acres.

Grain sorghum intentions indicate acreage will total 90,000, the same as in 2005.

Sweet potato planted acreage, at 19,000 acres, is expected to be up 6 percent from a year ago.

Winter wheat acreage seeded last fall is estimated at 110,000 acres, the same as a year ago.

An estimated 320,000 acres of hay will be harvested, down 9 percent from last year.

An estimate of sugarcane acreage for harvest will be available on June 30, 2006.

The **U.S.** planted area for **all cotton** in 2006 is expected to total 14.6 million acres, up 3 percent from 2005. **Upland cotton** acreage is expected to total 14.3 million acres, up 3 percent from last year.

U.S. Soybean planted area is estimated at 76.9 million acres, up 7 percent from 2005 acreage. If realized, this will be the largest planted area on record.

Rice planted area for the **U.S.** is expected to total 2.97 million acres, 12 percent below last year’s planted acreage and down 11 percent from 2004.

The U.S. Corn planted acreage for all purposes is estimated at 78.0 million acres, down 5 percent from 2005 and 4 percent below 2004.

U.S. Grain sorghum area in 2006 is estimated at 6.48 million acres, up fractionally from 2005.

Sweet potato acreage for the **U.S.** is estimated at 94,200 acres for the 2006 season, up 4 percent from 2005 and down 3 percent from 2004.

The U.S. all wheat planted area is expected to total 57.1 million acres, virtually unchanged from 2005. The 2006 **winter wheat** planted area, at 41.4 million acres, is 2 percent above last year.

U.S. producers expect to harvest 61.5 million acres of **all hay** in 2006, down fractionally from last year.

-30-

For free automatic e-mail subscriptions to this report, go to the following website via Internet and follow the instruction:
www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Subscribe_to_State_Reports/index.asp