

Late Planting Shows In Slower-Than-Average Cotton Harvesting

JONESBORO, ARK.

Arkansas' corn harvest is moving along at a faster-than-average clip, but cotton harvest is dragging along at a below-average pace, according to the National Agricultural Statistics Service report released Monday.

"The corn harvest is running ahead of the five-year average of 83 percent with 92 percent of the crop harvested; slightly behind last year's pace of 99 percent," Scott Stiles, extension economist for the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, said Tuesday. "Pretty impressive considering how late some of it was planted."

The Arkansas cotton and soybean harvest is off to a slow start. The soybean harvest is 17 percent complete. The five-year average for the week ending September 25 is 22 percent. The good news is that average bean yields for the state were bumped up in September from 36 to 37 an acre, which is average, but it's still 2 bushels per acre better than last year, Stiles said.

Cotton is only 6 percent complete as of Sunday, compared to a five-year average pace of 16 percent. Last year, 37 percent of the state's cotton crop was harvested at this point. However, cotton did get off to a very slow start in 2011. The state average cotton yield is pegged at 1,018

pounds per acre, which is below last year's 1,045.

"From NASS data, 53 percent of Arkansas cotton acreage was planted after May 15," Stiles said. "Planting wasn't complete until June 12."

After a slower-than-normal start this year following excessive rain, rice harvest is following the five-year average pace of 56 percent harvested. This is well behind last year when 81 percent of the crop was harvested at this point.

"Rice yields will be average at best, but it appears we are going to see a lot of 140-bushel-per-acre yield reports," Stiles said. "Given the heat and late planting this year, growers were already expecting yields to be off. In reality, yields may be 15-20 bushels below expectations."

Stiles, who's based in Jonesboro, said "soybeans are late in this area and still green – probably seven to 10 days from harvest."

"Yield prospects are more optimistic though for soybeans," he said. "We could see a lot of 45-50 bushel yields in this part of the state."

Winter wheat planting is 5 percent complete and slightly faster than the 3 percent average.

See the NASS report at http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Arkansas/Publications/Crop_Progress_&_Condition/cw092611.pdf . Δ



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