

State crop production forecasts down as drought persists

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Wisconsin crop forecasts for this year are down across the board, as farmers in parts of the state continue to grapple with drought conditions.

The USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service reports state corn production is expected to be 515 million bushels, which would be 6 percent lower than last year's total. Based on conditions at the start of the month, yields are predicted to average 166 bushels per acre, marking a decline of 14 bushels from last year.

And soybean production is predicted to be 104 million bushels — 11 percent lower than last year. The yield is forecast at 50 bushels per acre, which would be 4 bushels lower than 2022.

Meanwhile, winter wheat production is estimated to be 17.2 million bushels, for an 8 percent decline over the year. The yield is expected to be 70 bushels per acre, for a decline of 8 bushels from the prior year.

Production of oat for grain is forecast at 3.54 million bushels, which would be 26 percent lower than the previous year. The expected yield is 59 bushels per acre, down 15 bushels from 2022.

And production of alfalfa and alfalfa mixtures for hay is predicted to hit 1.99 million tons this year, marking a 20 percent decline. With a yield of 2.4 tons per acre, that would be 0.70 tons lower than last year.

At the same time, the National Integrated Drought Information System shows nearly 18 percent of the state is experiencing "extreme" drought, the second-worst category for this measure. Aside from some small patches near the state's northwestern border, the area of extreme drought stretches across parts of southwestern, south central and central Wisconsin.

While the NIDIS site also shows 35 percent of the state is seeing a moderate drought and 29 percent is seeing severe drought, just 0.3 percent of the state falls

under “exceptional” drought conditions. That small area is located along the shoreline of Lake Superior.

About 5 million Wisconsin residents are currently living in areas of drought. That figure has risen 1.4 percent since last week.

See the report:

<https://www.wispolitics.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/230811-crop.pdf>

See the NIDIS site: <https://www.drought.gov/states/wisconsin>