

Crop Acreage Harvested of Selected Crops

The acreage of corn, wheat, tobacco, soybeans, and hay reported in Tables 11 and 12 totals 2.3 million acres of harvested cropland in 1997, or 53 percent of Virginia cropland acres. In terms of harvested acres in 1997, these crops were ranked corn (2), wheat (3), tobacco (7), soybeans (1), and hay (18). Compared to 1992, corn was down by 43,118 acres (- 11.9 percent), wheat was up by 16,021 acres (+ 6.6 percent), tobacco was down by 1,384 acres (-2.5 percent), soybeans were down by 20,877 acres (-4.1 percent), and hay was up by 87,895 acres (+8.0 percent).

Table 11. Crop Acreage Harvested by Extension District					
Extension District	Corn (Acres)	Wheat (Acres)	Tobacco (Acres)	Soybeans (Acres)	Hay (Acres)
Central	17,198	28,902	39,953	25,539	293,674
Northeast	104,139	90,571	203	179,745	45,371
Northern	58,194	22,065	33	60,988	282,662
Northwest	42,071	8,458	0	14,566	268,782
Southeast	87,179	105,748	2,384	201,683	14,603
Southwest	9,183	1,024	11,348	197	284,333
Virginia	318,208	257,063	54,035	487,001	1,189,425

Planning District	Corn (Acres)	Wheat (Acres)	Tobacco (Acres)	Soybeans (Acres)	Hay (Acres)
Central Virginia	2,463	2,752	1,482	2,830	91,599
West Piedmont	5,974	10,353	13,995	3,220	81,910
Southside	3,870	10,997	18,661	15,002	47,007
Piedmont	6,039	4,922	6,767	7,684	86,349
Richmond Regional	22,991	23,583	203	47,254	35,792
Northern Neck	33,526	31,009	0	55,979	2,980
Middle Peninsula	46,259	35,192	0	74,377	5,612
Peninsula	1,363	787	0	2,135	987
Northern Virginia	11,547	5,377	0	11,282	54,530
Rappahanock-Rapidan	25,998	4,252	0	17,689	125,231
Thomas Jefferson	5,600	1,767	33	18,67	81,511
Radco	15,049	10,669	0	31,150	21,390
Fifth	1,010	227	0	0	34,035
Central Shenandoah	25,453	5,114	0	7,052	148,684
Lord Fairfax	15,608	3,117	0	7,514	86,063
Crater	18,698	21,870	2,384	54,676	9,412
Southeastern Virginia	52,298	39,493	0	78,797	4,743
Accomack-Northampton	16,183	44,385	0	68,210	448
Lenowisco	1,049	0	4,440	0	38,699
Cumberland Plateau	410	10	1,815	0	37,189
Mount Rogers	3,984	259	4,126	0	131,805
New River Valley	2,592	633	15	0	63,449

As a proportion of total Virginia acreage, Central District is most important for tobacco (74 percent) and hay (25 percent). Central Virginia Planning District lost 4,153 corn acres, while increasing its tobacco slightly by 103 acres. West Piedmont Planning District lost 2,579 corn acres, 1,906 wheat acres and 2,300 soybean acres, while gaining 6,660 hay acres. Most cropland losses occurred in Pittsylvania County, which lost 700 acres of corn, 2,100 acres of wheat, and 2,100 acres of soybeans. Southside Planning District lost moderate amounts of corn and wheat acres, while increasing tobacco by 1,773 acres and hay by 7,681 acres. Piedmont Planning District, while losing corn, wheat, tobacco, and soybean acres, increased hay by 14,372 acres,

more than the total losses for other crops. Buckingham County, the largest gainer in cropland acres, increased hay acres by more than 3,700 acres.

Northeast District is most important in corn, wheat, and soybean acreage, with 33 percent, 35 percent, and 37 percent of state acreage, respectively. Northern Neck corn and wheat acres increased by 5,262 acres and 4,132 acres, respectively. Middle Peninsula acres increased for corn (+4,714 acres) and wheat (+9,751 acres), but decreased for soybeans (-5,284 acres). Among counties with large acreage changes, Essex County had a large increase in cropland acres harvested, increasing corn acreage by more than 2,500 acres and wheat acres by more than 4,600 acres. In King and Queen, small increases in corn and wheat acres were swamped by a loss of nearly 4,000 acres of soybeans.

Northern District is important in corn acres (18 percent of state acres), soybeans acres (13 percent), and hay acres (24 percent). Northern Virginia Planning District lost corn and wheat acres, while increasing soybean and hay acres (the latter by 5,773 acres). Within this district, Loudon County lost 11.6 percent of its cropland acres between 1987-92, and a further 6.3 percent of its cropland acres between 1992-97. Loudon lost 1,755 corn acres and 2,539 wheat acres, while gaining a few soybean acres and 3,353 hay acres. Rappahannock-Rapidan Planning District lost corn and wheat acres, but exhibited a large increase in soybean acres (+9,677 acres). Thomas Jefferson Planning District lost corn, wheat and soybean acres, but increased hay by more than 5,000 acres. Radco Planning District increased acreages for corn, wheat, soybeans, and hay.

Northwest District is important in the acreage of several crops. Although corn as reported here as corn for grain, the district has 13 percent of corn acres harvested and 23 percent of hay acres harvested in Virginia. Fifth Planning District, which has few row crops, increased hay by 4,091 acres. Central Shenandoah decreased corn by 4,440 acres, and increased soybeans by 3,338 acres. Hay acres were also sharply up by 11,753 acres. Rockingham County decreased harvested corn for grain by 3,900 acres, while increasing hay by 2,112 acres and soybeans by 2,277 acres. Lord Fairfax Planning District soybean acres were also up significantly (+4,183 acres). Shenandoah County had the sharpest rise in soybean acres.

Although peanuts are of primary importance to Southeast District, the district is also important in several other crops. The district harvests 27 percent of Virginia corn acres, 41 percent of wheat acres, and 41 percent of soybean acres. Because of decreased peanut quota rates, the district decreased peanut acres by 18,853 acres (-20 percent) from 1992-97. Crater Planning District acres changed little except for corn (-6,578 acres) and hay (+1,368 acres). Southeast Virginia Planning District lost 32,778 corn acres and 24,684 soybean acres. The two units that lost most crop acres were Suffolk and Virginia Beach. Suffolk harvested corn acres declined by 9,309 acres, while soybeans declined by 3,145 acres. Virginia Beach harvested acreage declined by 3,151 corn acres, 3,382 wheat acres, and 10,564 soybean acres. Most of the crop acreage in these and other Southeast units was replaced with cotton, which increased statewide from 20,568 acres in 1992 to 98,244 acres in 1997, and is produced almost entirely in Southeast District. Accomack-Northampton wheat acreage increased sharply by 11,262 acres from 1992-97.

Southwest District is important in terms of Virginia tobacco acreage (21 percent) and hay (24 percent). For this district, tobacco acreage losses were heavy. Lenowisco Planning District lost 1,104 tobacco acres, Cumberland Plateau lost 388 acres, and Mount Rogers lost 1,216 acres. Across counties within Southwest District, the largest tobacco acreage losses were Lee (-541 acres), Scott (-559 acres), and Washington (-618 acres). All planning districts increased hay acreage by more than 2,000 acres, and Mount Rogers District increased hay by 9,281 acres. Russell County increased hay acreage harvested by 2,065 acres, while Washington County gained 2,459 hay acres.