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World Agricultural Production

Brazil: Drought Reduces Yield Prospects for First-Crop Corn

The USDA forecasts Brazil's corn production for 2008/09 at 49.5 million tons, down 2.0 million or 4 percent from last month and down 9.1 million or 16 percent from last year. Harvested area is estimated at 14.2 million hectares, unchanged from last month but down 0.5 million or 1 percent from last year. Yield is forecast at 3.49 tons per hectare, down 5 percent from last month but slightly above the 5-year average of 3.48 tons per hectare. Estimated yield was decreased this month due to severe drought in southern Brazil, where approximately half of the main-season (first-crop) corn is grown. The drought lasted from mid-November until January and extended from the southern portion of Mato Grosso do Sul to Rio Grande do Sul. Damage is reported to be greatest in Parana, the country's highest producing corn state, where the crop was in the critical pollination and early grain-filling stages when the drought occurred. Losses were high also in Rio Grande do Sol, but damage was less severe than in Parana state because crop development was not as advanced and the dryness not as prolonged.

Approved by the World Agricultural Outlook Board

