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Illinois Prospective Plantings in 2014 with Historical Comparisons

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In recent years, there have been shifts in corn and soybean acres in Illinois. Between 1998 and 2013, corn acres have ranged from 55% of harvested acre in 2008 to 43% in 1998. In 2013, corn acres were 50% of all acres harvested in Illinois while soybeans were 40%. Prospective plantings released by the U.S. Department of Agriculture do not suggest large shifts in acres for 2014. Of course, actual planting could vary from prospective plantings.

Historical Acres in Illinois

Acres harvested in Illinois were obtained for the years from 1993 to 2013 from the National Agricultural Statistical Service (NASS) for the four crops with the most acres in Illinois: corn, soybeans, wheat, and hay. Also obtained from NASS were total acres in principal crops. For each of the four major crops, a percentage of total acres in that crop were calculated for each year from 1993 to 2013 (see Figure 1). For example, corn represented 50% of the acres harvested in 2013. The 50% was calculated by taking the 11.800 million acres harvested in 2013 and dividing by the sum of acres in principal field crops (22.680 million acres) and acres in hay (680,000 acres).

As can be seen in Figure 1, most acres in Illinois are in corn and soybeans. In 2013, corn acres accounted for 50% of harvested acres, soybeans for 40% of acres, wheat for 4%, and hay for 3%. Wheat and hay acres have trended down over time. For wheat, acres in excess of one million acres were common prior to 2000. In most years since 2000, however, wheat acres have been below one million acre. The lowest number of wheat acres was in 2009 with 295,000 acres harvested. In 2013, there were 830,000 acres of wheat harvested. For hay, acres harvested of over one million were common prior to 1996. In the last three years, hay acres harvested were 565,000 in 2011, 610,000 in 2012, and 680,000 in 2013.

Percent of acres in corn and soybeans have changed over time. In 1998, corn and soybeans both had a 43% share of acres in Illinois (see Figure 1). From 1998 to 2005, percent of corn acres increased from 43% in 1998 to 50% in 2005. During the same time period, soybean acres decreased from 43% in 1998 to 40% in 2005.

During the next three years from 2005 to 2008, percent of acres in corn and soybeans varied considerably. From 2005 to 2006, corn acre decreased from 51% to 47% while soybean acres increased from 40% to

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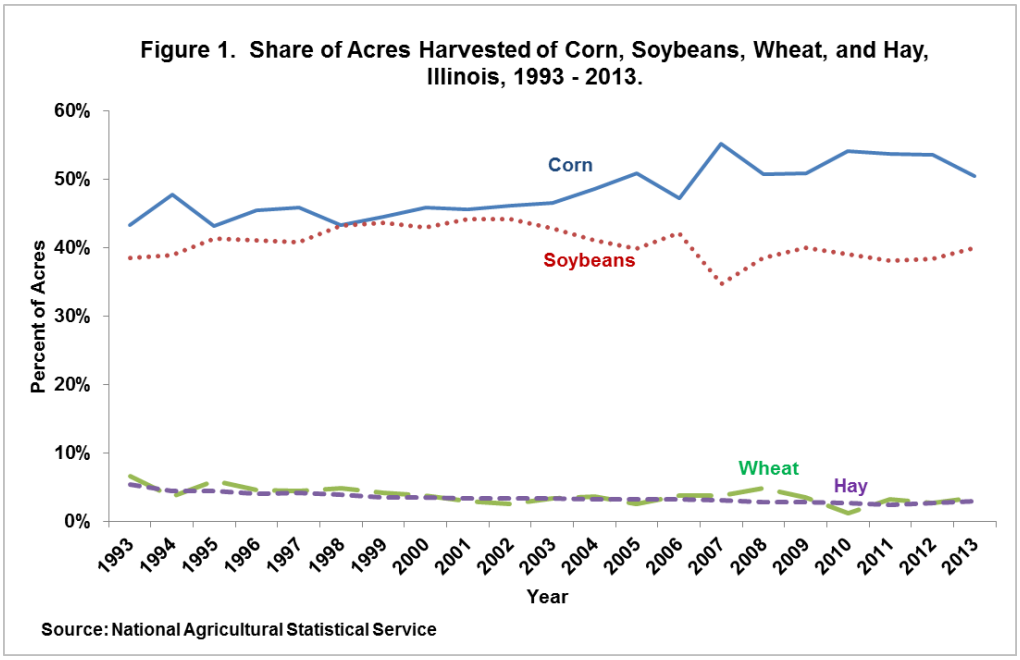
42%. From 2006 to 2007, corn acres increased from 47% to 55% while soybean acres decreased from 42% to 35%. The 2007 share of 55% for corn was the highest share since 1993, while the 35% share for soybeans was the lowest. From 2007 to 2008, corn acres decreased from 55% in 2007 to 51% in 2008, while soybean acres increased from 35% to 39%.



Since 2008, corn acres have remained above 50% of all years. Corn acres were 50% in 2009, 54% in the 2010, 53% in 2011 and 2012, and then declined in 50% in 2013. Soybean acres were 40% in 2009, 39% in 2010, 38% in 2011 and 2012, and 40% in 2013.

Since 2000, the major crop acreage dynamic in Illinois has been shifting of acres between corn and soybeans. Increases in corn acres typical result in decreases in soybean acres and vice versa. Between 2000 and 2013, the maximum number of corn and soybean acres harvested in Illinois was 21.615 acres in 2000, and the minimum was 21.120 million acres in 2008, yielding a difference from maximum to minimum of 495,000 acres. The 495,000 difference was 2.3% of the average acres in corn and soybeans during the 2000 to 2013 time period.

Planting Projections for 2014

The *Prospective Plantings* report released by NASS on March 31st estimated plantings for 2014. For Illinois, the 2014 corn acres estimated to be planted are 11.9 million acres, down slightly from 12.0 million acres in 2013. Projected planting for soybeans are 9.500 million acres in 2013, up slightly from 9.450 million acres planted in 2013. Corn acres prospective planting in 2014 differ only by 100,000 acres from 2013 actual plantings, and soybean prospective plantings differ only by 50,000 acres from 2013 levels.

Prospective planting were used to estimated acres harvested in Illinois using the average difference between planted and harvested acres. Given the nearness of 2014 prospective plantings to 2013 actual plantings, the prospective plantings do not result in a change in share of acres harvested. Given acres in the *Prospective Plantings* report, share of corn acres harvested will equal 50% of harvested acres and soybeans will equal 40%.

Summary

In the past ten years, acres in Illinois have shifted between corn and soybeans. In recent years, there has been a slight shift back to more soybeans acres. In 2013, corn accounted for 50% of acres and soybeans accounted for 40% of acres. The *Prospective Planting* report for 2014 does not indicate large shifts in acres between corn and soybeans.