

US planted corn acreage to increase by 4pc – Update

(Adds corn stocks, price impact and soybean data in paragraphs 4-6.)

Houston, 30 March (Argus) — US corn growers planned to plant 95.9mn acres this year, which if realized would represent the largest acreage for the crop since 1937.

The planned acreage was a 4pc increase from 2011 and a 9pc increase from 2010, according to the National Agricultural Statistics Service of the US Department of Agriculture. North Dakota reported the strongest increase in planned acreage, to 3.4mn acres, a 52pc increase from 2.23mn acres the year before.

Planned Iowa plantings increased slightly, by 500,000 acres to 14.6mn acres, and Illinois planned acreage fell by 1pc to 12.5mn acres.

Stockpiled corn fell 8pc from last year to 6.01bn bushels in storage as of 1 March, which is about 141mn bushels less than traders had been expecting, as consumption rose more than anticipated in the quarter.

May Cbot corn futures climbed 40c throughout the day to settle at 644c/bushel – a move traders attributed to lower-than-anticipated storage. Contracts further out did not rise as much because of the news of increased plantings.

Farmers are expected to plant 73.9mn acres of soybeans, edging down 1.4pc from 74.98mn last year and less than the 75.43mn that had been expected by analysts. May Cbot soybean futures surged more than 47c to 1403c/bushel today. Soybeans in storage increased 10pc from last year to 1.37bn bushels.

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