

USDA, NASS, Illinois Field Office



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Illinois
Department of
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Dear Friend:

We are happy to bring you another edition of the *Illinois Agricultural Statistics Annual Bulletin*. This annual bulletin represents the efforts of a large number of people all around Illinois and serves as a historical document which recaps the results from a multitude of surveys during the previous year. The basic information is supplied voluntarily by thousands of grain farmers, livestock producers, fruit and vegetable growers, grain elevators, slaughter and dairy plants, retail stores that serve farm families, and other producers and agribusinesses.

The year 2004 was certainly one for the record books. A new State record of 180 bushels per acre was set for corn, surpassing the previous year's record by an amazing 16 bushels. The soybean crop also set a new benchmark at 50.5 bushels per acre, 5 bushels better than the old record set in 1994. And while record yields generally mean lower commodity prices, that was not the case in 2004. The near record low 2003 carry over stocks for corn and soybeans supported a bullish market and livestock prices also held favorably strong for most of the year. All in all, it was a pretty good year as most farmers were able to post a positive net farm income.

In this edition of the *Annual Bulletin*, we will continue to provide over 150 tables of statistical information covering virtually every crop grown or livestock species raised in the State. In addition, a wealth of economic data is also included along with the latest results from the 2002 Census of Agriculture.

Although much of the statistical information we publish is for the benefit of farmers, others who serve the agriculture sector also benefit. One of the strengths of our free society is our public information system. Our statistics are not just for the government but are provided on an equal basis to producers, buyers, processors, suppliers, and other interested parties.

The staff of the Illinois Field Office is dedicated to serving agricultural data needs for all users. Please contact us any time with your questions, comments and requests for information.

Respectfully,

Brad Schwab, Director
Illinois Agricultural Statistics

