

Corn Planting A Big Investment in Nebraska

(KLZA) -- The USDA says Nebraska farmers will plant 9.4 million acres of corn this spring, down from 9.95 million acres in 2013.

The cost to producers is projected at about \$280 per acre to get the crop in the ground and off to a good start, based on estimates calculated by the University of Nebraska Extension. The total investment to plant the crop will be nearly \$2.6 billion. Nebraska Corn Board Chairman Tim Scheer says that figure does not include land costs, labor or equipment.

With a projected 91.7 million acres of corn to be planted, it will be the fifth-largest U.S. corn crop planted since 1944.

Weather is always a key element in farming. The harsh, dry winter brings concerns about the available soil moisture at planting time. Last week the USDA Nebraska Crop Progress and Condition report showed topsoil moisture supplies at 13 percent very short, 42 percent short, 45 adequate and 1 percent surplus. Subsoil moisture was 17 percent very short, 43 percent short and 39 percent adequate.

Another challenge producers expect to face this year, is lower commodity prices, while input costs continue to be on the rise. Scheer says this makes the margin for the cost of production very slim for Nebraska farmers. In the past 30 days there has been a slight bounce in crop prices, and producers are hoping to be able to lock in some profits.

Corn planting is underway in the listening area, but has been slowed by cool weather so far this spring.

Many Signals Communications