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MEDIA CONTACT
Linda Funk
515.491.863
lfunk@flavorfulinsight.com

U.S. Food Soybean Growers Anticipate Average to Good 2017 Crop Yields

St. Louis, MO, September 28, 2017—Food soybean growers from across the U.S. report that their 2017 crop yields are expected to at least be average, and in some cases, above average. Growers have remained optimistic despite the year’s weather challenges, and in many cases their optimism has been well founded, as documented in periodic updates from growers. The U.S. Soy Export Council (USSEC) provides grower updates to partners and overseas importers who follow the state of annual soybean crops in the U.S.

Gene Leach, Crop Production Specialist at Healthy Food Ingredients in Fargo, ND, sums up the outlook: “The overall 2017 soybean crop in **North Dakota, Minnesota and Montana** should be an above-average one – not a record crop, but a good one.”

Stonebridge Ltd., headquartered in Cedar Falls, IA, grows soybeans—including high-protein tofu types and organic soybeans—in 15 states. Tim Daley of Stonebridge Ltd. expects this year’s harvest to be a variable one, with some growing areas doing very well, while yields in other areas will be affected by drought. “Nebraska will be the garden spot for us. We will see 70 bushel/acre yields for many of our growers. This should be commonplace under

irrigation in **Nebraska**. Our production areas in **Illinois, Indiana, Ohio** and **Michigan** all look very good,” he adds. “That being said, some areas of **Illinois** are dry and will have lower yields.”

Jim Traub of Clarkson Grain Company based in Cerro Gordo, IL, elaborates about the areas of **Illinois** from north of Gibson City to Tuscola. “Conditions are probably slightly above average,” he says, “and there could be improvement if rains develop in some of the areas.”

Paul Holmen of Brushvale Seed, based in Breckenridge, MN, reports that their identity-preserved food-grade soybean crops in the **Southern Red River Valley in Minnesota and North Dakota** continue to look as if yields will be average to slightly above average. “Nearly all fields have turned yellow, with most dropping leaves. The harvest will be well underway starting the week of September 25, depending on weather.”

Andy Bensed of AB Ag Services in Dallas, WI, reports that the **Northwestern Wisconsin** soybean crop appears to be average sized, with wide ranges in yield. “Yields will be highly variable, from one extreme to the other. Seemingly small environmental differences have made a big difference in the health and productivity of the crop from field to field and grower to grower.”

At the time of this writing, the soybean harvest in Iowa is just beginning. Soybean grower Ray Gaesser of Gaesser Farms in Corning, IA, reports that he expects his soybean yields in **Southwest Iowa** to be at, or near, the long-term average. “It appears that the USDA yield estimates for Iowa are fairly close,” he says. “I’ve heard some early soy yields, with lows of about 50 bushels per acre to highs of 70 bushels per acre.”

Tim Daley expects yields in Iowa to vary greatly, with some areas doing well. “It’s going to be tough in drought areas. In **Southeast to Northwest Iowa**, and in **Southwest Iowa**, yields will be all over the place. Recent rains aside, we don’t expect record yields.” Daley also says early reports of yields from producers in some **Iowa** counties are better than expected: 77 bushels per acre for non-GMO beans in Carroll County, 79 bushels per acre in Washington County, and 81 bushels per acre in Keokuk County.

Daley notes that some early yields in **Howard County, Indiana** are reported at 65 bushels per acre—lower than a year ago, but better than expected, given early heavy rains. He adds that in **Champaign and Piatt Counties in Illinois**, the early reports of 72 to 82 bushels per acre are just slightly below last year’s yields. In **Southeast Minnesota**, the 61 bushels per acre early yield report is better than expected.

Gene Leach summarizes the 2017 soybean crop expectations in **North Dakota** and **Minnesota**, this way: “The crop had only a few problems regarding disease and almost none regarding insects. Abnormally dry conditions prevailed throughout most of the early developmental stages for most growers in the region. However, rain eventually did fall and the crop improved significantly. Growers are now hoping for good harvest weather as they begin harvest on what is expected to be a slightly above average to a good crop.”

As Tim Daley summarizes it, “We will know more when the combines start to roll.”

For more information about the 2017 U.S. commodity soybean crop, visit the USSEC website at www.ussec.org.

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About the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC): The U.S. Soybean Export Council is a farmer-owned, non-profit entity 100% devoted to improving the value of and export demand for U.S. soy. It operates internationally, connecting overseas importers with opportunities to improve human nutrition, livestock production and aquaculture. USSEC accomplishes its mission with a science-based technical foundation and a global network of partnerships, including soybean growers, reporters, agribusiness and agricultural organizations, researchers and government agencies.



Soybeans in Cass County North Dakota on September 18. The crop should be above average in both yield and quality.



Physiologically mature soybeans in Ottertail County Minnesota (westside and middle of state) on September 21. Most fields in the region are nearly ready for harvest.



Soybean harvest on September 21, in Clay County (westside and a little north of middle of state) Minnesota.



Ray Gaesser farm in southwest Iowa.