

Border Valley News

January 18, 2008

WHEAT:

2008 will see a very big increase in the acres planted to wheat compared to previous years. The world wheat price is very strong and prices being offered to farmers are at record levels. The increase in acres planted to wheat will have a noticeable impact on forage crop production.



Wheat acres in 2008 in the Imperial Valley could exceed 100,000 acres compared to 47,000 acres in 2007.

With the increase in wheat acres, this will impact the acres of other forage crops. Acres of early planted sudan will be much less than in 2007. Some growers will plant sudan after the wheat has been harvested, but the amount of late planted wheat will also depend on individual farmers' crop rotational needs.



Acres of alfalfa, bermuda grass, and klein grass have also decreased as farmers have plowed under older stands and replaced them with wheat.

It is difficult to understand the total impact of record high wheat prices on other forage crops, but we do expect to see a decrease in total production of sudan, bermuda hay and straw, klein grass and alfalfa.



In Central California, there will also be an increase in wheat acres. We do not expect to have as big of an impact on other forage crops in the Central California region as a lot of the wheat acres will be from acres planted to corn in 2007.

While it is difficult to truly understand the shift in crop production in Central California, we are hearing that alfalfa acres are about the same as in 2007. There will be less oat hay produced as farmers that planted oats in 2007 will plant wheat instead.

With the increase in wheat acres, there could be some opportunity in some growing areas of the Central California region to plant sudan. In some areas the availability of water will also be a factor for farmers to plant sudan after wheat harvest.

WATER:

According to an article in The Imperial Valley Press on December 19, 2007, the Imperial Irrigation District Board of Directors voted to rescind an earlier decision implementing water allocations in 2008.



The IID will now implement a pilot water rationing program for the 2008 crop year. Imperial Valley farmers must comply with the total allotment of water from the Colorado River, this decision will allow more time for the IID and the agriculture community to study and implement water allocation.



Due to conservation efforts as well as rainfall in November and December, the imbalance of water used, compared to the amount allocated

from the Colorado River, is negligible. It is very important to note, that even with this decision, Imperial Valley Farmers must comply with the total amount of water allocated for agriculture use.

It is also important to note that even though the Imperial Valley will see a reprieve from water allocation at the farm gate, many farmers will continue to plan and operate with crop rotations that are viable with future allocations.

Farmers will begin to experiment with different watering schedules, number of cuttings, crop rotations, on-farm efficiency programs and other methods to prepare for future allocations. They understand the future of farming in the Imperial Valley will come with new regulations and some level of water availability...now is the time to prepare.



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Imperial Valley Wheat Acres

	NOV-15TH	DEC-15TH	JAN-15TH	FEB-15TH	MAR-15TH	APRIL-15TH	MAY-15TH	JUNE-15TH	JULY-15TH	AUG-15TH	SEPT-15TH	OCT-15TH
94	5563	34350	49046	53931	57221	58247	55123	18524	3041	1490	1214	755
95	7092	47360	56393	56678	62117	61672	54624	13934	5161	2913	1414	1017
96	2056	38802	84446	100509	107784	108688	93876	30660	12481	1495	1113	627
97	2561	35824	66064	85107	89635	90005	83022	28932	3534	1412	383	206
98	1766	23415	55310	70601	79405	79983	76556	27882	12707	1032	343	141
99	6500	24929	31743	37973	42345	42154	41936	19543	4870	2359	1676	1635
2000	1174	19669	37244	44289	49617	50017	46387	14539	6213	2202	303	322
2001	1393	18494	27365	31689	38546	41094	41009	17031	6072	2722	1380	923
2002	1865	30704	28680	40666	43583	45536	44581	19976	9891	5432	2588	1167
2003	1387	19485	43563	53950	58769	58899	55592	14941	4399	2519	563	847
2004	801	5462	34417	45785	49146	49506	42333	9055	4131	1456	0	0
2005			16283	27191	30152	30648	29405	9335	1735	72	0	0
2006		8826	16587	22079	24308	24252	23530	7441	168	85	63	63
2007	1057	17616	29310	41678	46482	46964	43471	13580	536	10	71	214
2008	4756	44321	71135									
Compare w/ prev year	3699	26705	41825	19599	22174	22712	19941	6139	368	-75	8	151
	450%	252%	243%	189%	191%	194%	185%	183%	319%	12%	113%	340%
10 YR AVG			33633	41590	46235	46905	44480	15332	5072	1789	699	531
Compare w/ prev month	4542	39565	26814	12368	4804	482	-3493	-29891	-13044	-526	61	0

Imperial Valley Weather

JAN 18	JAN 20	JAN 21	JAN 22	JAN 23
Sunny	Sunny	Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Few Showers
High: 18° Low: 0°	High: 19° Low: 1°	High: 21° Low: 5°	High: 18° Low: 3°	High: 17° Low: 3°

Modesto Weather

JAN 18	JAN 20	JAN 21	JAN 22	JAN 23
Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy
High: 14° Low: 2°	High: 15° Low: 3°	High: 13° Low: 2°	High: 11° Low: 1°	High: 12° Low: 0°