



Changes in Where Corn Is Grown in the Last Ten Years

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Over the last ten years, U.S. corn acres grew by 7.2 million acres. However, changes in acres across the United States were not even. High growth areas included North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, and Minnesota. Growth occurred near and around the western corn-belt while acres in the eastern corn-belt remained relatively stable.

Data and approach

Harvested acres for corn on a county-basis were obtained from the National Agricultural Statistical Service (NASS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These data were summarized into two yearly periods:

1. 2004-05 – County harvested acres were average for 2004 and 2005, and
2. 2014-15 – County harvested acres were averaged for 2014 and 2015.

Two years were averaged to mitigate differences that may occur in only one year. Differences were taken between the two periods. These periods are ten years apart, causing the following discussion to reflect differences across ten years.

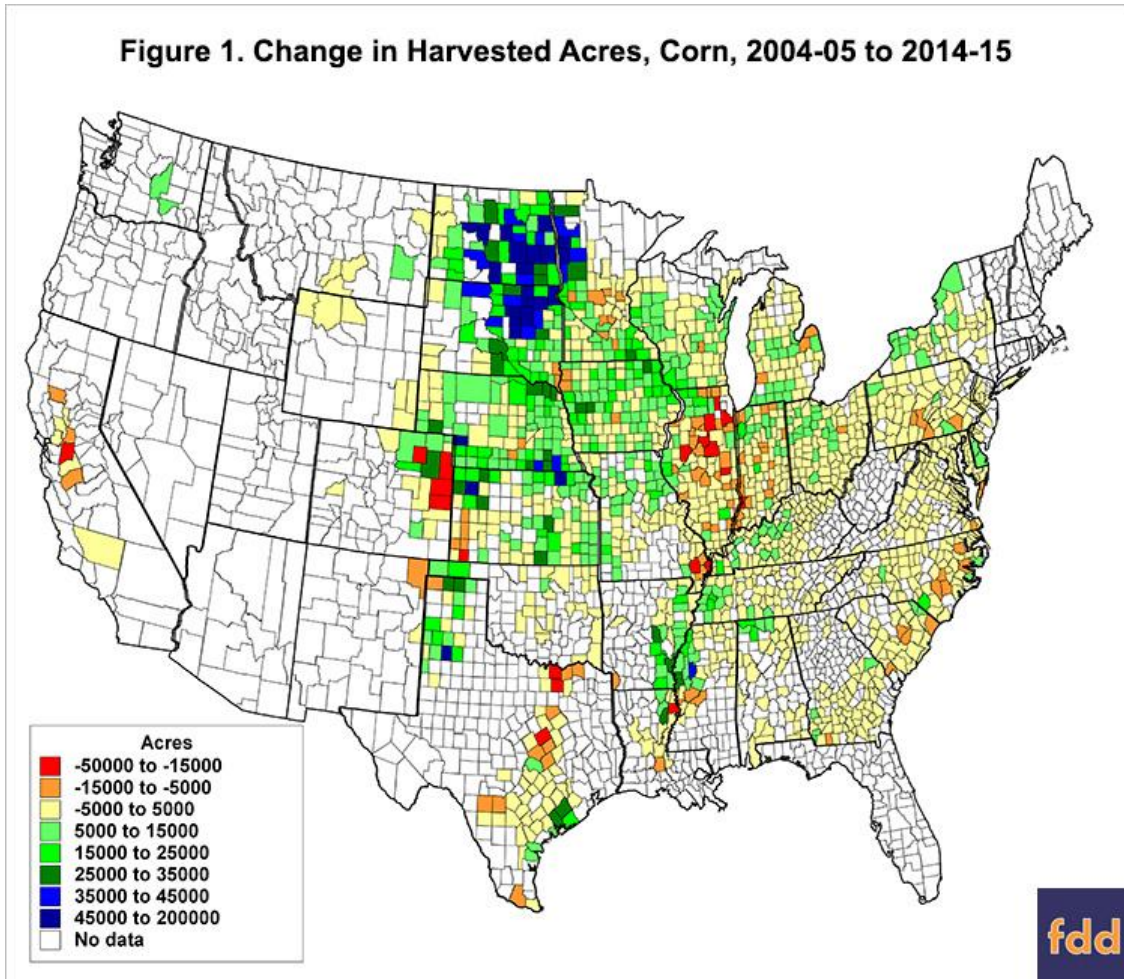
Acreage changes

Harvested corn acres in the United States averaged 74.7 million acres in 2004-05, increasing by 7.2 million acres to 81.9 million acres in 2014-15. Between the two ten year periods, harvested acres increased by 10%.

As can be seen in Figure 1, acre changes were not the same. Acreages increased the most in North Dakota and South Dakota. Between 2004-05 and 2014-15, North Dakota had a 1.4 million acre increase and South Dakota had a 1.1 million acre increase. The next four states in terms of increases were Nebraska (1.0 million acre increase), Iowa (.7 million acre increase), Kansas (.7 million acre increase), and Minnesota (.6 million acre increase).

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Figure 1. Change in Harvested Acres, Corn, 2004-05 to 2014-15



Some states decreased acres. Illinois had the largest decrease of 150,000 acres between 2004-05 to 2014-15. While having the largest acre decrease, Illinois' decrease only represented a 1% decrease in percentage terms. Other states that lost acres were California, Virginia, Indiana, South Carolina, Colorado, New Mexico, and Maryland.

Summary

Overall, areas in and around the western corn-belt grew in corn acres while areas in the eastern corn-belt remained relatively the same. Most noticeable was growth in the Dakotas. North Dakota increase by 1.4 million acres from 2004-05 to 2014-15, a more than doubling of corn acres. In 2014-15, corn acres harvested were 2.5 million acres, ranking 13 in all states in terms of acres harvested. South Dakota acres increased by 1.1 million acres from 2004-05 to 2014-15, an increase of 28% of corn acres. In 2014-15, corn harvested in South Dakota was 5.2 million acres, ranking 8th of all states in terms of acres harvested.