

USDA Crop Report to Show Drought Impact

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — The U.S. Department of Agriculture is releasing its final crop report for 2012, providing a glimpse of what last year's drought cost the nation's farmers and others.

The report covers a number of crops, but attention will likely focus on corn production.

The USDA predicted the nation's biggest harvest ever in the spring, when farmers planted 96.4 million acres of corn. But it began scaling back its estimates as the drought spread across two-thirds of the nation.

Analysts said Friday morning that they expect the final report to reflect an even smaller crop than the USDA's December estimate.

Analysts on average expect a final estimate of 10.6 billion bushels, down from December's 10.7 billion bushel figure.

That would still be the eighth largest corn crop in the nation's history.

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