The value of principal crops grown in Louisiana totaled $275 million in 1962, an increase of about 10 percent over 1961, the Louisiana Crop Reporting Service in Alexandria announced today. The lower value is attributable to both smaller production and lower prices although both production and prices showed mixed trends. Cotton, rice, and sugarcane continued as the top three crops, accounting for four-fifths of total crop value in 1962, followed by hay, soybeans, corn, sweet potatoes, strawberries, commercial vegetables, and peas. Total harvested of 2.4 million acres was up slightly from 1961, with increases in cotton, rice, soybeans, and sweet potatoes nearly offset by decreases in corn for grain, sugarcane, hay, production of cotton, rice, soybeans, strawberries and potatoes increased in 1962 but was lower for sugarcane, hay, corn, sweet potatoes, peas, and commercial vegetables.

The Index of Crop Production at 133 percent of the post World War II (1949-51) base period is about 2 percent below 1961 but is practically the same level as 1960. Compared with 1961, cotton and food grains were both up 15 percent, while production of hay and sugarcane was down by 7 percent. Other commodity groups show declines, with fruit and nuts, other vegetables, and hay and grain down 25 percent, sugarcane and potatoes 25 percent, and peanuts 5 percent.

Harvested acreage of principal crops in 1962, an increase of about 2 percent above the 2.345 million acres harvested in 1961 but 13 percent below the 2.732 million harvested in 1963. Compared with 1961, the most significant change was in cotton, corn, soybeans, and hay, where harvested were 20,000 acres, 50,000 acres, 22,000 acres, and 15,000 acres, respectively. Production of corn for grain was up 6 percent, and production of hay was down 7 percent.

The 1962 planting season was generally favorable, but dry weather during most of May delayed corn and soybean plantings and got crops off to a good start. The growing season was marked by unusually dry weather in May, July, and August which reduced crop prospects materially. Airing in late August and September, however, were highly beneficial and most crops made good recovery. Except for cotton and rice, per acre yields generally were below 1961 but were mostly above average. Weather during harvest was nearly ideal, and crops were gathered in record time.

Cotton production in 1963 is estimated at 47,000,000,000 pounds, gross weight, 14 percent above the 41,700,000,000 pounds harvested in 1963, a 45 percent increase in 1962 at 30,700,000,000 pounds. Yield of lint per harvested acre is estimated at 400 pounds per acre, 13 percent above last year and 36 pounds above average. Value of lint per acre, including seed, is placed at $99.7 million, $2.4 million more than in 1962.

Production of rice is estimated at 15,494,000,000 pounds (8,864 barrels), 16 percent above last year and the second largest crop of record. Yield per acre is estimated at 56.5 pounds per acre, 11 percent above last year and 15 pounds above average. Milling quality of rice was considerably below last year owing to high moisture content. Value of the crop, second only to cotton, is estimated at $192.7 million, $25 million more than in 1962.

Sugarcane production for sugar and seed is estimated at 5,044,000 acres, 23 percent less than last year's record crop but 5 percent above average. Yield per acre is estimated at 20.5 tons, compared with the record high in 1961 of 21.7 tons and 21.8 tons above average. The unusually low yield is attributed to poor stands and dry weather. About 44,000 acres of sugarcane, mostly stubble cane, were abandoned owing to fears of dry weather, and 9,000 acres were harvested to be used for sugar at 87 cents per 100 pounds. Some additional ground damage occurred in mid-December, but as most of the crop was harvested at that time, damage was relatively light. Sugarcane is the state's third most valuable crop, accounting for about $18 million in value. This is about 23 percent or $11.7 million less than in 1961. Sugar cane syrup production is estimated at 1,522,000 gallons, about one-fifth less than the 1,811,000,000 pounds produced in 1961. Value of syrup production is placed at $24 million, $4.4 million less than in 1961.

Production of Corn for Grain is estimated at 2,625,000 bushels, or less than last year and about 12 percent below average. Production continued to decline in 1965 owing to the Frosty-Granite Disease and drought, which damaged production in 1964. Acreage harvested for grain in 1962 is estimated at 225,000 acres, 17 percent below last year and 56 percent below average. Value of production is placed at $7.5 million, compared with $11.7 million in 1961.

Soybean production of 4,213,000 bushels in 1962 is valued at $19.9 million, compared with $21.7 million and $16.6 million, respectively, in 1961. Acreage harvested for beans is estimated at 23,000 acres, 19 percent above last year and 89 percent above the average. Production is placed at $40,000,000, 14 percent above last year and 3 percent below last year's record. Value of production is placed at $11.8 million, compared with $13.5 million in 1961 and $11.8 million in 1962, representing a record crop value in 1962. Of the 262,000 acres harvested for hay, 161,000 acres were harvested for hay, 18,000 acres for livestock feed, and 10,000 acres for seed grain. Small grain (mostly oats) were harvested 21,000,000,000 bushels, 40 percent less than in 1961, the only serious widespread drought centered in Eastern Pennsylva. The composite index corn yields in 1962 was 38.8 percent better than in 1961. Acreage harvested was 132 million, up 4 percent from the previous high of 1961. New yield records were established for corn and the other three food grains, as well as for hay, silkage crops, and a number of others. Spring wheat new year yields peaked, while winter wheat yields per acre was the fourth highest of record. Soybean yields were second to last year. Acreage harvested in 1962 (49 million acres) totaled 288 million acres, a decline of 3 percent from last year and the lowest acreage since the comparable series started in 1939. The previous low point for reported acreage was the 1949-50 crop year. Value of production for 1962 was $211.7 million, compared with $197.9 million in 1961.