

USDA shifts 2026/27 acres toward soybeans as KC wheat breaks out and Brazil harvest weather adds risk

Global Agricultural Developments

2026-02-20

USDA shifts 2026/27 acres toward soybeans as KC wheat breaks out and Brazil harvest weather adds risk

By Global Agricultural Developments • February 20, 2026

USDA's 2026/27 outlook pushed the acres mix toward fewer corn acres and more soybean acres, while KC wheat broke to multi-month highs amid technical buying and Black Sea risk headlines. The brief also covers Brazil's rain-driven harvest disruptions and logistics costs, plus actionable guidance on hedging, fertilizer placement, and livestock supplementation—alongside policy and weather wildcards to watch into spring.

Market Movers

USDA 2026/27 outlook: fewer corn acres, more soybean acres

USDA's 2026/27 outlook discussion across market sources converged on a **corn acreage cut** alongside a **soybean acreage increase**.

- **Corn:** projected around **94M planted acres** with **183 bpa** yield and about **1.837–1.84B carryout** ¹²³⁴
- **Soybeans:** projected around **85M planted acres**, **53 bpa** yield, and **355M carryout** ⁵⁶

¹ post by @MarketMinuteLLC

² post by @MarketMinuteLLC

³ post by @MarketMinuteLLC

⁴ post by @MarketMinuteLLC

⁵ post by @MarketMinuteLLC

⁶ post by @MarketMinuteLLC

- **Wheat:** projected around **45M planted acres**, **50.8** yield, and **933M carryout** ⁷⁸

One summary of the release described **corn acres** “a little lower than expected” with **carryout at 1.8**, **bean acres higher** with **carryout at 355**, and **wheat steady year-over-year at 933** ⁹.

Price action (Feb. 19): soybeans and wheat firmer; corn lagged

- **Futures snapshot (Feb. 19):** March corn **\$4.27¼**; March soybeans **\$11.37¾**; March Chicago wheat **\$5.53¾**; March KC wheat **\$5.58¼**; March spring wheat **\$5.77½** ¹⁰¹¹¹²¹³¹⁴.

Market commentary tied wheat strength to **short covering/technical buying**, with additional support from **production concerns in the U.S. and the Black Sea** plus **Middle East geopolitical risks** ¹⁵¹⁶.

Corn was described as struggling near **chart resistance (430–435)** into first notice day/delivery dynamics ¹⁷, while also being weighed down by a “**too much of it**” framing in one discussion of supply ¹⁸.

KC wheat: breakout + hedging signals

KC wheat was flagged at **8-month highs** and “trading to its highest levels since summer” ¹⁹²⁰. Technical notes said KC wheat **broke out of a multi-year wedge** and is on its **longest sustained rally since 2021** ²¹²², now pressing a **key resistance level** where a break “could spark further upside” ²³.

A producer-focused hedge alert noted KC wheat is nearing a target discussed “for months” ²⁴ and suggested, for those needing cash flow and unable to store,

⁷ post by @MarketMinuteLLC

⁸ post by @MarketMinuteLLC

⁹ post by @GoddessofGrain

¹⁰“Future is at Risk” - Corn Growers Plead for Improved Policy

¹¹“Future is at Risk” - Corn Growers Plead for Improved Policy

¹²“Future is at Risk” - Corn Growers Plead for Improved Policy

¹³“Future is at Risk” - Corn Growers Plead for Improved Policy

¹⁴“Future is at Risk” - Corn Growers Plead for Improved Policy

¹⁵Markets Now Closes - 2/19 Beans, Wheat Hit Fresh Highs on Technical Buying: Why Can't Corn Follow?

¹⁶Markets Now Closes - 2/19 Beans, Wheat Hit Fresh Highs on Technical Buying: Why Can't Corn Follow?

¹⁷Markets Now Closes - 2/19 Beans, Wheat Hit Fresh Highs on Technical Buying: Why Can't Corn Follow?

¹⁸Markets Now Early - 2/19 Wheat Breaks Higher: Corn & Soybeans Fade USDA Ag Outlook Numbers

¹⁹ post by @MarketMinuteLLC

²⁰ post by @MarketMinuteLLC

²¹ post by @MarketMinuteLLC

²² post by @MarketMinuteLLC

²³ post by @MarketMinuteLLC

²⁴KC WHEAT HEDGE ALERT & SELL SIGNAL

incremental sales or options protection (puts/calls) ²⁵.

Innovation Spotlight

Brazil (Santa Catarina): open-pollinated corn variety targets stability under drought

At the Itaipu Rural Show, Ipagri highlighted a new **open-pollinated corn variety (VPA)** with **lower seed cost**, current yields around **160–165 sacas/ha**, and potential up to **200 sacas/ha** ²⁶. The variety's **longer flowering period** was presented as a way to reduce losses during **dry spells** ²⁷.



Como as tecnologias estão influenciando as decisões do produtor para 2026? (2:01)

Brazil: scaling ag-tech depends on shared connectivity models

ABDI described connectivity as a core bottleneck for “agriculture 4.0,” citing **70% of Brazil’s territory without connectivity coverage** and highlighting **shared infrastructure** (e.g., cooperative antennas/satellite) as a practical model for smaller producers ²⁸²⁹.

²⁵KC WHEAT HEDGE ALERT & SELL SIGNAL

²⁶Como as tecnologias estão influenciando as decisões do produtor para 2026?

²⁷Como as tecnologias estão influenciando as decisões do produtor para 2026?

²⁸Tecnologia, inovação e agro: o papel estratégico da ABDI no Brasil | Direto ao Ponto

²⁹Tecnologia, inovação e agro: o papel estratégico da ABDI no Brasil | Direto ao Ponto

A Rio Grande do Sul example described a microclimate platform that aggregates multiple weather stations and offers access for about **R\$100/month**, making data services cheaper for smallholders than buying their own stations ³⁰.

Regenerative systems: new efforts to standardize definitions and measurement

A Spain-based effort set out **10 consensus-based scientific criteria** for regenerative agriculture and cited findings that regenerative soils can **sequester at least 35% more carbon** and buffer summer ground temperatures by **up to 3.6°C**, while producing **similar yields at similar or lower cost** after transition ³¹.

Regional Developments

Brazil (Mato Grosso): harvest delays and quality loss from excess rain

In Paranatinga (MT), reports described persistent rain disrupting soybean harvest and raising uncertainty about losses ³². One producer cited **80 hectares** ready for harvest but inaccessible due to moisture, with grain **rotting and germinating**; he estimated about **50% loss** already and warned the field could be **100% lost** if harvest couldn't occur within **2–3 days** ³³.

Conab progress updates said Brazil's soybean harvest reached **24.7%** of area but remained **behind last year and the 5-year average** ³⁴³⁵.

Second-crop corn planting was described as delayed by rain that slows soybean harvest (about **3% behind last year** and nearly **6% behind** the 5-year average) ³⁶³⁷. Mato Grosso was a bright spot at about **52.7%** planted—**9.4% ahead of last year** ³⁸.

Brazil logistics: BR-174 road conditions raise costs (Juína, MT)

Producers described BR-174 (Juína–Vilhena corridor) as strategically important for flows toward Porto Velho ³⁹, but reported severe road impacts—e.g., **11**

³⁰Tecnologia, inovação e agro: o papel estratégico da ABDI no Brasil | Direto ao Ponto

³¹#103 - STANDARD, KUMAMOTO, LDC

³²Chuvas sem trégua travam colheita e ameaçam safra de soja

³³Chuvas sem trégua travam colheita e ameaçam safra de soja

³⁴AO VIVO: Brasil negocia mercado para o feijão e tarifas do frango na Índia | M&C – 18/02/2026

³⁵AO VIVO: Brasil negocia mercado para o feijão e tarifas do frango na Índia | M&C – 18/02/2026

³⁶Excesso de chuva atrasa plantio do milho safrinha; meteorologista atualiza situação

³⁷Excesso de chuva atrasa plantio do milho safrinha; meteorologista atualiza situação

³⁸Alerta! Temporais e ventos de 100 km/h estão previstos em 5 estados do Brasil

³⁹Buracos e atoleiros na BR-174 custam até R\$ 10 por saca em Juína | Patrulheiro Agro ep. 229

km taking ~1 hour for a truck ⁴⁰ and tire damage costing **R\$6–7k** on a short trip ⁴¹. Local basis impacts were also noted: soybean prices cited around **R\$92–93/sack** in Juína vs **R\$100–103** in Campo Novo, with losses of about **R\$10/sack** attributed to logistics ⁴²⁴³.

Argentina: short strike halts grain shipments

A 48-hour strike by Argentine maritime workers was reported as bringing grain shipments “to a standstill,” with the main oilseed crushers union planning a separate 24-hour strike tied to proposed labor reforms ⁴⁴.

Black Sea: Ukraine winter wheat risk in the news flow

KC wheat strength was linked by some market commentary to Ukraine winter wheat risks following a **thaw and then cold snap**, according to Ukraine’s farmers union ⁴⁵.

Best Practices

Grain marketing: align hedges with storage and cash-flow constraints

- For producers **unable to store wheat** and needing cash flow, one hedge alert favored **incremental sales** or **option structures** (puts/calls or combinations) ⁴⁶.
- For **old-crop corn** needing movement before spring, a separate recommendation emphasized **downside protection**, noting corn options were “so cheap it makes no sense” to be unprotected if movement is required soon ⁴⁷⁴⁸.

Fertility placement: when banding can (and can’t) reduce fertilizer rates

Ag PhD highlighted interest in **banding vs. broadcasting** to reduce rates under high fertilizer prices, noting improved extraction and reduced tie-up when fertilizer is placed where roots will find it—especially for **immobile nutrients**

⁴⁰Buracos e atoleiros na BR-174 custam até R\$ 10 por saca em Juína | Patrulheiro Agro ep. 229

⁴¹Buracos e atoleiros na BR-174 custam até R\$ 10 por saca em Juína | Patrulheiro Agro ep. 229

⁴²Buracos e atoleiros na BR-174 custam até R\$ 10 por saca em Juína | Patrulheiro Agro ep. 229

⁴³Buracos e atoleiros na BR-174 custam até R\$ 10 por saca em Juína | Patrulheiro Agro ep. 229

⁴⁴“Future is at Risk” - Corn Growers Plead for Improved Policy

⁴⁵“Future is at Risk” - Corn Growers Plead for Improved Policy

⁴⁶KC WHEAT HEDGE ALERT & SELL SIGNAL

⁴⁷USDA OUTLOOK MATTER?

⁴⁸USDA OUTLOOK MATTER?

like **P, K, zinc, and copper** ⁴⁹. It cautioned that banding offers less benefit for **leachable nutrients** (nitrate, sulfate, boron) and warned about **salt injury** risk near seed (lower rates and more distance are safer) ⁵⁰.

Livestock (Brazil): rainy-season supplementation targets measurable gain

A Brazil segment described how balancing **energy, protein, and minerals** during the rainy season can raise daily gains from about **450g up to 900g per animal/day**, improving cash flow and shortening production cycles ⁵¹⁵². A worked example described a **9-arroba** heifer reaching **12 arrobas** in **90 days** with energy supplementation (vs. about **6 months** otherwise) ⁵³.

Input Markets

Fertilizer remains a focal variable for 2026 row-crop decisions

One market discussion repeatedly emphasized **fertilizer cash prices** as a key variable in corn/soy acreage decisions, with observations of fertilizer movement “on fire” and farmers filling sheds later than usual (suggesting deferred fall buying) ⁵⁴.

Agro policy also moved into the input narrative: President Donald Trump designated **glyphosate-based herbicides** and **elemental phosphorus** as **critical to national defense**, directing USDA to prioritize and secure domestic supplies ⁵⁵.

Policy, demand, and crush: soybean oil for biofuel remains central

USDA’s outlook discussion included a projected **record 17.3B lbs** of soybean oil use for biofuel ⁵⁶. Separately, USDA-ag-economy commentary framed the **RFS/E15 debate** and the **45Z rule** (including flexible feedstock provisions) as “wildcards” that could affect corn/soy demand—and potentially the acreage and price outlook—depending on timing ⁵⁷.

⁴⁹ post by @AgPhDMedia

⁵⁰ post by @AgPhDMedia

⁵¹Suplementação em períodos chuvosos pode aumentar a produtividade na pecuária

⁵²Suplementação em períodos chuvosos pode aumentar a produtividade na pecuária

⁵³Suplementação em períodos chuvosos pode aumentar a produtividade na pecuária

⁵⁴Markets Now Early - 2/19 Wheat Breaks Higher: Corn & Soybeans Fade USDA Ag

Outlook Numbers

⁵⁵ post by @SuccessfulFarm

⁵⁶USDA Ag Outlook: Farm Economy “Making Progress” in 2026, But Headwinds Persist

⁵⁷USDA Ag Outlook: Farm Economy “Making Progress” in 2026, But Headwinds Persist

Forward Outlook

Watch-list: policy timing + trade headlines as near-term volatility sources

- USDA’s biofuel-policy framing explicitly highlighted the importance of the RFS/E15 pathway and the 45Z rule’s incentive structure as potential demand drivers for corn/soy/canola ⁵⁸.



USDA Ag Outlook: Farm Economy “Making Progress” in 2026, But Headwinds Persist (8:05)

- Another market view tied recent soybean strength to improving U.S.–China relations and suggested markets may react to headlines in the lead-up to an April meeting; the same discussion recommended being **“3/4 cash sold”** on old-crop corn/soy/wheat ahead of that meeting window due to uncertainty ⁵⁹⁶⁰.

⁵⁸USDA Ag Outlook: Farm Economy “Making Progress” in 2026, But Headwinds Persist

⁵⁹Moving Iron: Quadtrac Whiplash — From Record Highs to Market Reset and the Road Back

⁶⁰Moving Iron: Quadtrac Whiplash — From Record Highs to Market Reset and the Road Back

Weather risk lens: KC winter wheat belt flagged for dry-spring and frost concerns

A weather-focused segment described a lag where sea-surface temperatures shifted toward neutral but the atmosphere remained “La Niña-like,” a pattern it said “always means a dry spring” for the **KC winter wheat belt** (KS/OK/NE), adding **frost risk** as wheat comes out of dormancy ⁶¹.

Sources

1. post by @MarketMinuteLLC
2. post by @MarketMinuteLLC
3. post by @MarketMinuteLLC
4. post by @GoddessofGrain
5. “Future is at Risk” - Corn Growers Plead for Improved Policy
6. Markets Now Closes - 2/19 Beans, Wheat Hit Fresh Highs on Technical Buying: Why Can’t Corn Follow?
7. Markets Now Early - 2/19 Wheat Breaks Higher: Corn & Soybeans Fade USDA Ag Outlook Numbers
8. post by @MarketMinuteLLC
9. post by @MarketMinuteLLC
10. KC WHEAT HEDGE ALERT & SELL SIGNAL
11. Como as tecnologias estão influenciando as decisões do produtor para 2026?
12. Tecnologia, inovação e agro: o papel estratégico da ABDI no Brasil | Direto ao Ponto
13. #103 - STANDARD, KUMAMOTO, LDC
14. Chuvas sem trégua travam colheita e ameaçam safra de soja
15. AO VIVO: Brasil negocia mercado para o feijão e tarifas do frango na Índia | M&C – 18/02/2026
16. Excesso de chuva atrasa plantio do milho safrinha; meteorologista atualiza situação
17. Alerta! Temporais e ventos de 100 km/h estão previstos em 5 estados do Brasil
18. Buracos e atoleiros na BR-174 custam até R\$ 10 por saca em Juína | Patrulheiro Agro ep. 229
19. USDA OUTLOOK MATTER?
20. post by @AgPhDMedia
21. Suplementação em períodos chuvosos pode aumentar a produtividade na pecuária
22. post by @SuccessfulFarm
23. USDA Ag Outlook: Farm Economy “Making Progress” in 2026, But Headwinds Persist

⁶¹Moving Iron: Quadtrac Whiplash — From Record Highs to Market Reset and the Road Back

24. Moving Iron: Quadtrac Whiplash — From Record Highs to Market Reset and the Road Back