

Peanut Blog

An ounce of information



Texas peanut acres drop to 145,000 acres amid drought, market pressure

Several factors converged to prompt a reduction in Texas peanut acreage this season, including a strong crop last year, better prices for other commodities and a challenging weather outlook.

After a larger-than-normal peanut supply in 2025, conventional and organic peanut acres are down this year. Persistent heat has challenged production while keeping disease at bay.

Texas peanut producers made careful planting choices in 2026, responding to both market signals and a dry outlook, according to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service experts.

The USDA Farm Service Agency peanut acreage report released Sept. 11 shows about 145,000 acres of peanuts planted this year in Texas, down from 2025. Several factors drove the shift, said Emi Kimura, AgriLife Extension agronomist at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center at Vernon. The biggest factor was an exceptional 2025 crop, which left a larger-than-normal supply of peanuts and put downward pressure on prices. Two other considerations were more favorable prices on other commodities at planting time and the weather outlook, Kimura added. Peanuts require good moisture, and Texas was entering a very dry period, so many producers chose to plant more drought-tolerant crops as a result.

Bob Whitney, Regents Fellow and AgriLife Extension organic specialist with the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center at Stephenville, reported organic peanut acreage followed the same trend, falling 25% from 2025, as prices for organic peanuts dropped 25%.

Growers who planted peanuts had to manage a demanding summer because peanuts slow their activity when daytime highs rise above 95 degrees F. Temperatures stayed above that mark from July 21 through Sept. 18 across much of the peanut-growing regions, Kimura said, so they experienced about 60 days of continuous stress.

A few days dipped into the 80s, but it wasn't enough to break the stress. Nighttime temperatures stayed high as well.

"The peanuts just didn't get a rest," Whitney said.

The hot, dry weather brought one clear benefit: disease pressure remained low.

Kimura said the only disease issues were minor leaf spot damage and pod rot in an early-planted trial in Wilbarger County and some spider mite pressure in drought-stress trials at Stephenville. This could mean producers with drought-stressed fields faced similar challenges.

Recent rainfall and cooler nights offered relief from the heat, but Kimura warned these conditions can also create a favorable climate for disease.

If harvest is still several weeks away, producers may need to treat fields. Growers who have noted diseases in a field during previous seasons should be extra cautious. Kimura advised growers to check chemical labels before applying.

Some producers in the Rolling Plains and West Texas have begun digging, depending on crop maturity. South Texas growers will likely wait until the end of October or November.

With rain in last week's forecast, Kimura said the majority of peanut digging will begin once fields dry out. At the same time, producers are keeping an eye on the approaching colder weather and possible frost to time their harvest.

The overall quality will become clearer after harvest, she noted. Yields should be good where growers had irrigation water and managed it well. The crop needed more water this year than in past seasons, she said, but most growers did not have enough to keep up.

That challenge is exactly why Texas A&M AgriLife Research breeders like Johnny Cason at the research and extension center in Stephenville are developing drought-tolerant peanut lines. Cason's work aims to give Texas producers more options for future dry years.

Source: <https://www.farmprogress.com/peanut/peanut-acres-drop-to-145-000-acres-amid-drought-market-pressure>