



South American Corn and Soybeans in US Perspective

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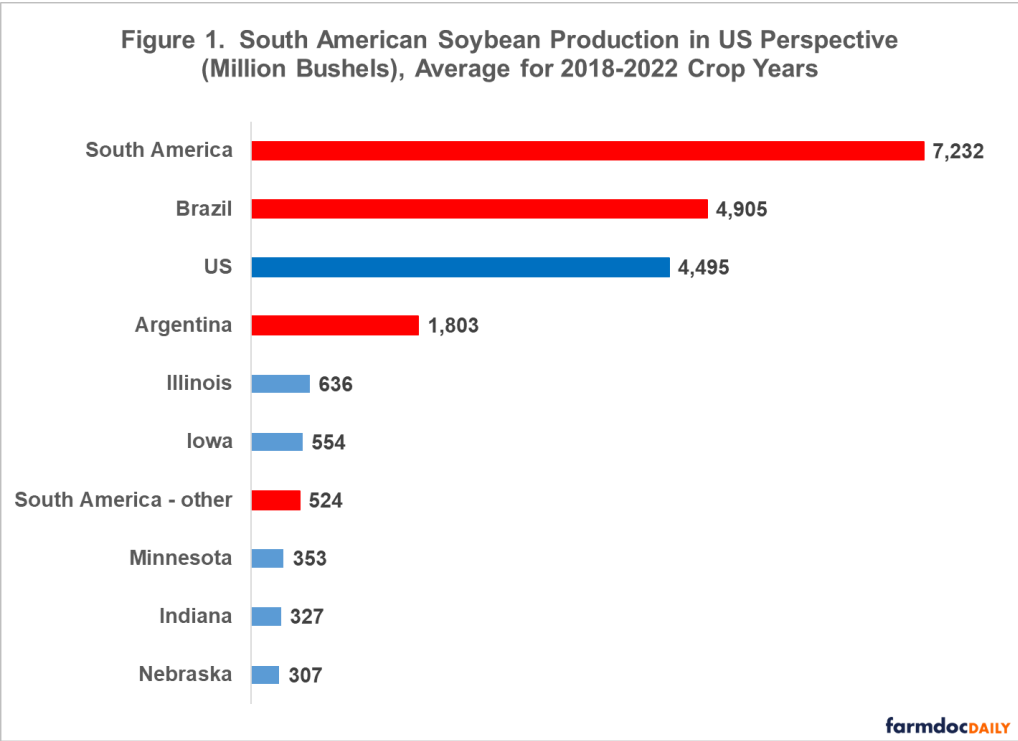
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Most *farmdoc* readers know that South America produces more soybeans than the US and is an increasingly important producer of corn. But, "facts" can often be appreciated (i.e. understood) only when put in a familiar context. This article therefore discusses South American corn and soybean production in the context of US states. Almost every US farmer and agribusiness person understands that what happens in Illinois and Iowa directly impacts them.

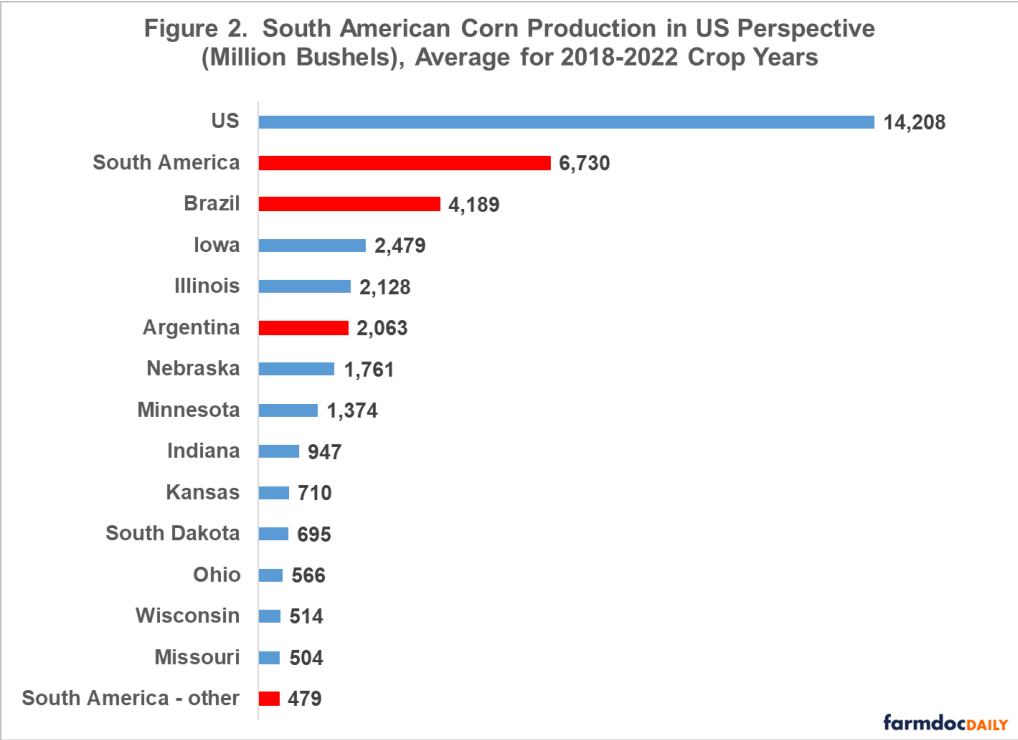
Data: South American production data are from the *Production, Supply, and Distribution Online* (PSD) database maintained by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), Foreign Agriculture Service. US production data are from the USDA *Quick Stats* database. To reduce the deviation from normal production that can exist if using production for a single year, average production is calculated for the five most recent crop years, the 2018 through 2022 crop years. South American production for the 2022 crop year is a forecast as of October 2022. US production for 2022 is from the October 2022 crop production report. South American production is broken out for Brazil, Argentina, and other South American countries.

Soybeans: Brazil produces more soybeans than the US (see Figure 1). Argentina produces almost as many soybeans as the combined output of Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and Indiana, the four largest soybean states (1.8 vs. 1.9 billion bushels). The rest of South America produces more soybeans than every state except Illinois and Iowa. In total, South America produces 7.2 billion bushels of soybeans, or 61% more on average than the US. World shares of production are 54% for South America, 37% for Brazil, 34% for the US, 13% for Argentina, and 4% for the rest of South America.

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Corn: South America produces only about half as much corn as the US (see Figure 2). However, Brazil produces 68% more corn on average than Iowa, the largest US corn state; while Argentina produces more corn than every state except Iowa and Illinois. Corn production in the rest of South America is just outside the top 10 US corn states. World shares of production are 31% for the US, 15% for South America, 9% for Brazil, 5% for Argentina, and 1% for the rest of South America.



Summary

South America now has a greater presence in the world soybean market than the US. Understanding soybean production in South America is as important, maybe more important for American farmers and agribusinesses than understanding soybean production in the US.

The US remains the world's leading producer of corn, but understanding South American corn production has become important to being an informed producer and marketer of corn.

Understanding Brazilian corn and soybean production is not the same as understanding South American corn and soybean production. Argentina and the rest of South America notably impact US corn and soybean prices and profitability.

South America's potential for multiple cropping is another reason to become knowledgeable about South American corn and soybean production. Brazilian farmers, in particular, are double and even triple cropping. For more discussion of multiple cropping in Brazil, see the *farmdoc daily* articles of [January 12, 2022](#) and [August 29, 2022](#), as well as [this farmdoc webinar](#).

References and Data Sources

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