

THIS REPORT CONTAINS ASSESSMENTS OF COMMODITY AND TRADE ISSUES MADE BY USDA STAFF AND NOT NECESSARILY STATEMENTS OF OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT POLICY

Voluntary _ Public

Date: 10/1/2012

GAIN Report Number: SP1234

Spain

Post: Madrid

MON810 Corn Area Hits New Record in the Iberian Peninsula

Report Categories:

Biotechnology - GE Plants and Animals

Approved By:

Robert Hanson - Agricultural Councilor

Prepared By:

Marta Guerrero and Diogo Machado - Agricultural Specialists

Report Highlights:

Spain remains the leading EU producer of GE corn with 116,307 ha planted in 2012, followed by Portugal with a 9,278 ha. These two countries account for over 90 percent of the total EU-27 area planted to MON810. In Spain and Portugal, the area planted to GE corn grew by 20 percent compared to previous year. An increased total area planted to corn along with farmers' steady support of GE crops have resulted in record GE corn plantings in the Iberian Peninsula for the second consecutive year.

General Information:

Spain

Statistical data recently released by the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment (MAGRAMA) show how total area planted to corn has grown by nearly 5 percent compared to last year, reaching 388,470 ha, up from 369,613 ha in 2011. While area planted to corn has remained fairly stable in most of the regions, it has experienced significant increases in Extremadura (24 percent), Andalucía (16 percent) and Castile-La Mancha (14 percent).

At the same time, a new record has been set in terms of area planted to MON 810, estimated at 116,307 ha, which represents a 20 percent increase compared to 2011 data.

Thus, based on current official estimates of total corn and Bt corn area, MON 810 would represent about 30 percent of total area planted to corn, the largest GE corn share since the beginning of its commercial cultivation in Spain.

Estimated area planted to MON 810 is calculated by MAGRAMA assuming a planting density of 85,000 seeds per hectare, and since 2009, MAGRAMA data include not only corn varieties in the national register in the EU common catalogue, but also those varieties granted with a provisional authorization.

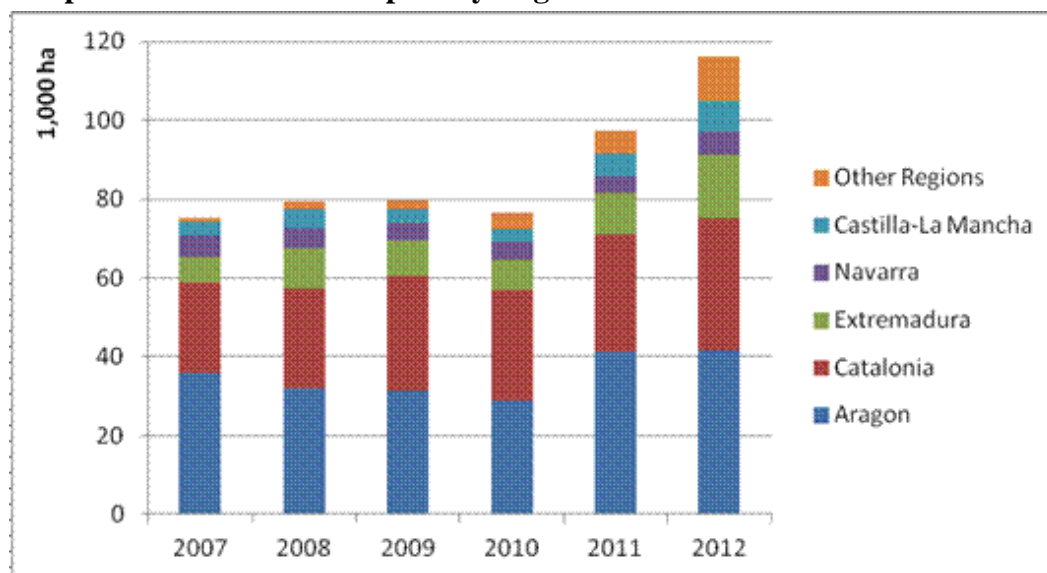
Table 1. Total Corn and GM corn area by Region in Spain

Region	2011			2012		
	Total Corn area (ha)	GM Corn (ha)	Share (%)	Total Corn area (ha)	GM Corn (ha)	Share (%)
Aragon	73,285	41,368	56	62,375	41,669	67
Catalonia	37,066	29,632	80	37,190	33,531	90
Extremadura	52,048	10,567	20	60,400	15,952	26
Navarra	13,672	4,096	30	17,095	5,801	34
Castile-La Mancha	34,607	5,817	17	39,727	7,883	20
Other Regions	158,935	5,847	4	171,683	11,471	7
Total	369,613	97,326	26	388,470	116,307	30

Source: FAS Madrid based on MAGRAMA data

The increased acreage planted to Bt corn in Spain has not only taken place due to larger area planted to corn (5 percent increase), but also due to a significant increased use of GE corn varieties. This higher share of GE corn has been registered in both major and less traditional GE corn growing regions (Graph 1).

Graph 1. GE corn area in Spain by Region



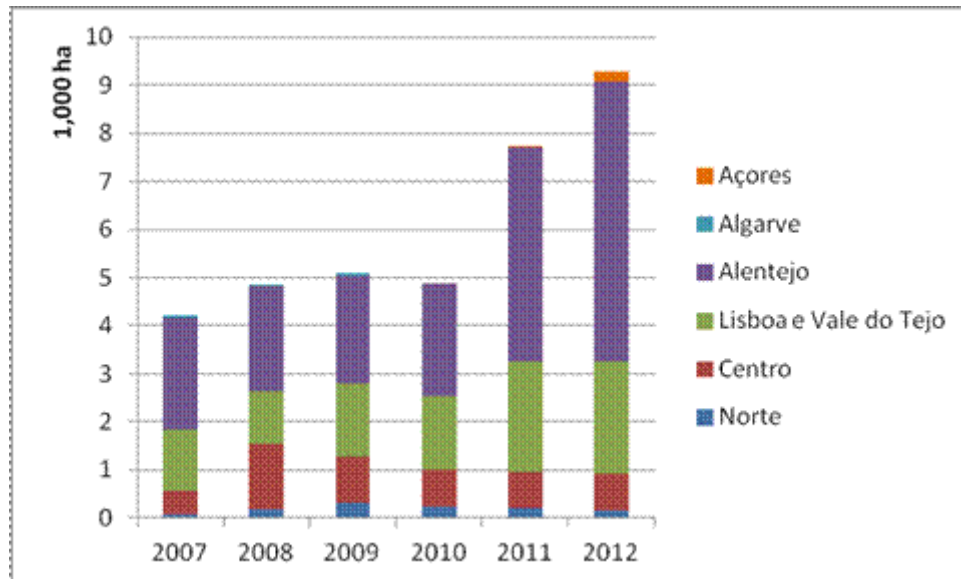
Source: FAS Madrid based on MAGRAMA data

Portugal

Based on the farmers' declarations to the Portuguese Ministry of Agriculture, Sea, Environment and Spatial Planning (MAMAOT) and its own calculations, the National Association of Corn Growers (ANPROMIS) estimates total grain corn area to equal 140,723 ha in 2012 of which 91,678 ha planted with grain corn and 49,045 ha with silage corn. The area under grain corn is thought to have expanded by 4.5 percent which is considerable if we take into account that some irrigation zones were affected by the extreme drought that occurred in 2012. Farmers are thought to continue to react to the good relative prospects for this crop by increasing the area planted with grain corn.

According to MAMAOT the area planted with Bt corn has also increased but by 20.1 percent to 9,278 ha (see Graph 2). According to local sources this reflects in part a precautionary approach by farmers planting corn for the first time in zones covered by the new Alqueva irrigation network, in the Alentejo region, where the corn stalk borer *Sesamia* spp. is endemic. The share of GE corn over the total area planted with corn in Portugal is now approximately 6.6 percent.

Graph 2. GE corn area in Portugal by Region



Source: FAS Madrid based on MAMAOT data

Related Reports:

Report Title	Date Released
Agriculture Biotechnology Annual – EU-27	9/10/2012
Agriculture Biotechnology Annual – Portugal	8/8/2012
Agriculture Biotechnology Annual – Spain	7/23/2012
MON810 Corn Area Reaches Record Level on the Iberian Peninsula	9/8/2011

These reports can be accessed through the FAS website:

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/scriptsw/attacherep/default.asp>