

Oilseeds production estimated at 4.1 million tonnes as of October 1 is a net decline from 1988 (-16%). This decline concerns rapeseed which, with a basically unchanged yield, saw its acreage reduced by 22% and sunflower whose acreage (-7%) and yield (-11%) declined. As for soybeans, increased acreage meant that production maintained its growth (+22%) despite a drop in yields compared to 1988.

Acreage under high-protein oilseed crops is estimated to be 630,000 ha as of October 1, maintaining its growth again this year (+22%). Acreage in horse beans is basically unchanged, whereas acreage in peas is up 120,000 ha and now reaches practically 600,000 ha. Pea crops have, however, recorded yields 12% lower than those of 1988, which limits pea production increases to 9% (2.7 million tonnes).

Seeded Acreage: Thousands of hectares

<u>Commodity</u>	<u>1989/90</u>	<u>1988/89</u>	<u>1987/88</u>
Wheat	4,741	4,519	4,613
Durum	301	288	313
Barley	1,822	1,862	1,967
Corn	1,865	1,995	1,737
Sorghum	59	41	37
Oats	257	255	267
Rye	74	75	75
Soybeans	133	95	79
Rapeseed	650	830	737
Sunflower	890	955	1,044
TOTAL	10,792	10,915	10,869

2. Foreign Exchange Situation

France is one of the five most powerful economies in the industrialized world. In addition, it is part of the European Monetary System. At the current time, the only threat is from its foreign trade deficit. After the United States, France is the world's largest exporter of agri-food products. Its sizeable export surplus (C\$8 billion in 1988) in this sector is a very important asset in the minds of French citizens.

3. Fertilizer Situation

Sales of fertilizer in France may be reaching their peak. The EC budgetary stabilizers are reducing the price of grains, oilseeds and pulse. The natural products are gaining momentum. Pressure based on environmental concerns is beginning to threaten the widespread use of chemical products in the agricultural sector.