

Late rain causes switch from maize to soya bean

Forecasts for soya bean plantings in Argentina's 2013/2014 season may rise from the current estimate of 20,2 million hectares, due to an extension of planting into fields that had been reserved for other crops, the Buenos Aires Grains Exchange said, according to Reuters.

Winter and the start of spring were dry, and heavy rains in the past weeks were too late for planting maize and sunflower in some regions. These areas could now be replaced by soya beans. Argentina is the world's top soya oil and soya meal exporter, and the third-largest soya bean and maize supplier in the world.

"Our current forecast could see some changes during the next weeks

because of the increase in soya bean planting in fields initially planned for sunflowers," the exchange said in its weekly crop report. It said its sunflower area estimate was cut to 1,48 million hectares for the 2013/2014 season, from the previous 1,63 million.

"Soya could also expand into maize fields that could not be planted in the central agriculture region."

By last week, farmers had only planted about 39% of the 3,46 million hectares intended for commercial-use maize.

Soya bean sowing started a few weeks ago and farmers have planted 10,7% of the intended area. — *Staff reporter*

