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For Immediate Release

Midwest Crop Tour Pegs the Impact of Historic Drought

Cedar Falls, IA (August 24, 2012) – Professional Farmers of America, a division of Farm Journal Media, today reported its production estimates for the 2012 U.S. corn and soybean crops. In a highly challenging crop production year, the organization's Pro Farmer Midwest Crop Tour saw record attendance of 2,600 guests at its evening meetings this week, and garnered substantial national and international news coverage.

Crop Tour field scouts gathered more than 2,300 corn and soybean samples across seven Midwest states August 20-23. The area surveyed accounts for about 70 percent of U.S. corn and soybean production. As expected, measurements of the samples showed dramatic declines in yield potential for both corn and soybeans across the drought stricken region.

"We found hard-hit fields throughout each of the seven states," said Chip Flory, editor of the *Pro Farmer* newsletter. "Unfortunately, yield declines of 20 percent or more will be common for many growers this year."

Based on Midwest Crop Tour data and other sources, *Pro Farmer* estimates that overall production will decline by about 15 percent for both corn and soybeans for 2012 compared to 2011. The 2012 U.S. corn crop is estimated to be 10.478 billion bushels, yielding 120.25 bushels per acre. For soybeans, the production estimate is 2.6 billion bushels (34.8 bushels per acre).

"Our scouts were in many corn fields that were heavily stressed by this summer's drought and heat," Flory explained. "The weather stress and other disease and pest problems have weakened stalk strength. Farmers must figure out which fields they need to harvest first before stalk lodging results in even more lost yield."

He added, "The soybean crop needs a rain right now. Without that much-needed water, yield potential will be even lower than we estimated."

More than 2,600 people attended Crop Tour's seven evening meetings sponsored by DuPont Pioneer, SFP (Specialty Fertilizer Products); RCIS (Rural Community Insurance Services); Farm Credit Services of America, Gavilon, and Chevy Truck. The final evening report and meeting, at Ritchie Brothers Auction Theatre near Owatonna, Minn., attracted more than 600 attendees. The panel's report will be featured this weekend on Farm Journal Media's nationally syndicated television program "U.S. Farm Report." Extensive coverage will also appear in a special insert within the September issue of *Top Producer*.

Participating in the 2012 Tour were more than 100 volunteer scouts from five continents including growers, agribusiness, media, government, and financial firms.

About Professional Farmers of America

Professional Farmers of America, based in Cedar Falls, Iowa, publishes the nation's largest news and market advisory newsletter, *Pro Farmer*. The company also publishes a seven-times-daily email market advisory service, *Pro Farmer Today*, the *LandOwner* newsletter and several voice and text alert services. The Midwest Crop Tour, conducted by *Pro Farmer* since 1993, is the largest private crop report of its kind. Covering seven states representing over 70 percent of the nation's corn and soybean acres, the Midwest Crop Tour annually gathers qualitative and quantitative data about each year's corn and soybean production potential.

About Farm Journal Media

Farm Journal Media is the nation's leading agricultural media company. Its magazines are the 135-year-old flagship FARM JOURNAL, TOP PRODUCER, BEEF TODAY, DAIRY TODAY and IMPLEMENT & TRACTOR. The company produces and distributes the "AgDay," "U.S. Farm Report," "Corn College TV" and "Leave a Legacy TV" national TV programs and produces the industry-leading website *AgWeb.com* and the syndicated radio show "Consumer Ag Connection." Farm Journal Media also licenses detailed industry data through its FarmReach™ database, publishes the *Pro Farmer* and *LandOwner* newsletters, produces numerous large-scale live events and provides extensive custom publishing services.