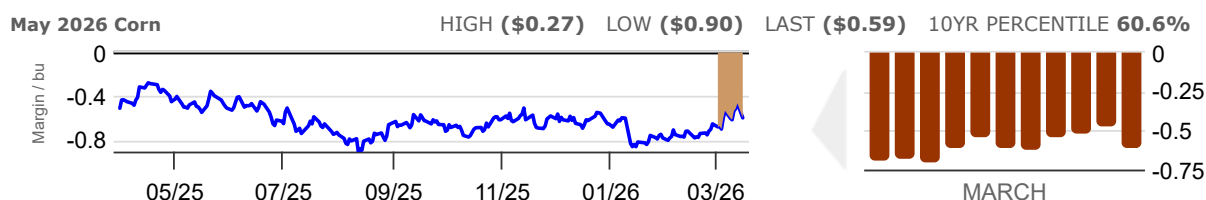
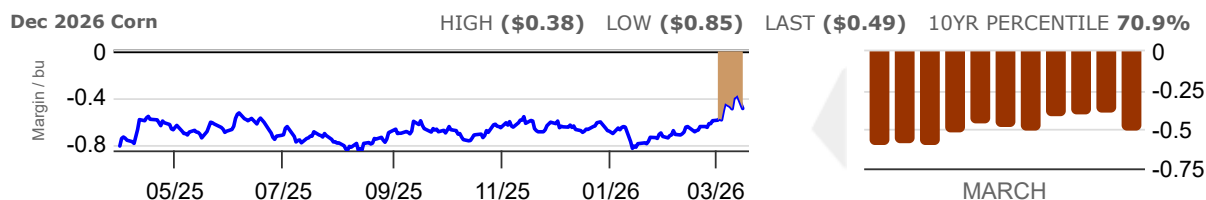


Corn futures strengthened through the first half of March, driven largely by geopolitical tensions in Iran. The closure of the Strait of Hormuz has prompted investors to seek safety in bioenergy crops such as corn and soybean oil. Elevated fuel costs are also pushing grain shipping rates higher. U.S. Gulf-to-Japan freight is up 16% year-to-date at \$58/metric ton, while Pacific Northwest-to-Japan rates have risen 25% year-to-date to \$33/metric ton. The USDA's monthly Supply and Demand report held corn figures unchanged from February. U.S. ending stocks came in at 2,127 million bushels, slightly below trade expectations but within the forecast range. Globally, production increased 1.53 MMT to 1,297.44 MMT, with Brazil's crop revised up 1 MMT (to 132 MMT) and Argentina's revised down 1 MMT (to 52 MMT) due to seasonal dryness. World ending stocks rose 3.77 MMT to 292.75 million, above the average trade estimate, bringing the global stocks-to-use ratio to 22.5%, up from 22.2% in February. Looking ahead, markets will be watching the upcoming Planting Intentions and Quarterly Stocks reports, along with continued developments in Iran. Our clients are evaluating flexible opportunities to scale into new crop coverage on the recent market strength



The estimated yield for the May 2026 crop is 215 bushels per acre and the non-land operating cost is \$768 per acre. Land cost for May 2026 is estimated at \$293 per acre¹. Basis for the May 2026 crop is estimated at \$-0.2 per bushel.



The estimated yield for the Dec 2026 crop is 220 bushels per acre and the estimated operating cost is \$835 per acre. Land cost for Dec 2026 is estimated at \$274 per acre¹. Basis for the Dec 2026 crop is estimated at \$-0.25 per bushel.

¹ The Corn Margin Watch yield, land and non-land operating cost values are based upon central Illinois low productivity farmland crop estimates in the "Historic Corn, Soybean, Wheat, and Double-crop Soybeans" report published by the Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics at the University of Illinois.

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