

## **Kody Bessent to Join PCG Staff**

Friday, January 15, 2016

By Mary Jane Buerkle

As Plains Cotton Growers continues to expand its program of work, the organization announced formally on Wednesday that Lubbock-area native Kody Bessent is set to join the PCG staff, effective February 1.

As Vice President of Operations and Legislative Affairs, Bessent's primary responsibilities will be with the administration and development of the newly formed Plains Cotton Growers, Inc., Political Action Committee.

"We are pleased that Kody is joining our team," PCG Executive Vice President Steve Verett said. "His experience and skills fit perfectly into our goals as an organization, and we look forward to cultivating new opportunities for PCG to be even more effective in meeting the needs of our cotton growers."

Bessent has a background in production agriculture and his family continues to produce cotton, wheat and grain sorghum on their family farming operation in Acuff. He comes to PCG from the High Plains Underground Water Conservation District, where he served as Legislative Affairs Director. Prior to working for HPWD, Bessent was Vice President of Legislative Affairs and Producer Relations for the Texas Wheat Producers Board & Association.

Bessent attended West Texas A&M University, where he obtained a bachelor's degree in agriculture education and a master's degree in agriculture with an emphasis in business and economics. He is active in several community initiatives and is a graduate of Class XIII of the Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership Program.

## **NASS Adjusts Texas High Plains Crop Estimates**

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The 2015 crop year has yet to come to a complete close on the Texas High Plains, but if all goes as the National Agricultural Statistics Services predicts it will, growers in this region will produce right at 4,000,000 bales of cotton.

The January estimate is down 30,000 bales from their December report. Of the 4,000,000 bales, 640,000 will come from the Northern High Plains - up 30,000 from December - and 3,360,000 from the Southern High Plains, down 60,000.

Yield per acre for the Northern High Plains is 749 pounds, up from 714 in December, and 645 for the Southern High Plains, down slightly from 657. Harvested acres remain at 410,000 in the NHP and 2,500,000 in the SHP, and the abandonment rate still stands at 7.4 percent.

Statewide, the production number dropped slightly from 5.8 million bales in December to 5,750,000 bales in January. The nationwide estimate for upland cotton dropped slightly to 12.5 million bales, down from an estimated 12.6 million in the December report.

Fields across the region still were drying out after another round of precipitation over the weekend, on top of the historic blizzard that dumped up to 20 inches of snow on some parts of the PCG service area in late December. Based on reports from growers and ginners, cotton on the stalk and modules in the field could make up about 350,000 remaining bales. Some gins already have completed operations for the year.

Looking ahead to 2016, Reuters and Cotton Grower magazine released results from their respective acreage surveys. The Reuters poll of primarily traders and economists showed that growers in the United States would plant 9.7 million acres this year, up 13 percent from 2015. Their poll also took the Cotton Grower survey number into consideration, which was 9.085 million acres. Cotton Grower surveys primarily U.S. cotton producers.

The National Cotton Council will release their acreage estimates on February 6, at their Annual Meeting.

### **Save the Date!**

#### **PCG's 59<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting Friday, April 8**

Lubbock Memorial Civic Center • 9 a.m.-Noon

**Keynote Speaker: David Wasserman**  
*The Cook Political Report*

### **Upcoming Area Ag Conferences**

**January 19** – Southern Mesa Ag Conference, Forrest Park Community Center, Lamesa. Tentative 6 CEUs. Contact Gary Roschetzky, CEA-AG, 806-872-3444.

**January 20** – South Plains Ag Conference & Trade Show, 7:45 a.m.-4:15 p.m., American Legion Hall, Brownfield. \$15 registration fee with lunch included. 5 CEUs. Contact Zach Bradshaw, CEA-AG, 806-637-4060.

**January 20** – Texas Alliance for Water Conservation Water College, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m., Bayer Museum of Agriculture, Lubbock. No cost, lunch provided. CEUs available. <http://www.tawcwatercollege.com>

**January 22** – Caprock Crop Production Conference, 7 a.m.-5:30 p.m., Floyd County Friends Unity Center, Muncy. 9 CEUs, 11 CCAs. \$35 registration fee, \$45 at the door. Contact Caitlin Jackson, Crosby CEA-AG, 806-675-2347 or Cristen Brooks, Floyd CEA-AG, 806-983-4912.

**January 29** – Llano Estacado Cotton Conference, Bailey County Electric Cooperative, Muleshoe. 4 CEUs. Contact Curtis Preston, CEA-AG, 806-272-4583.

**February 9** – Hale/Swisher County Crops Conference, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Ollie Liner Center, Plainview. 5 CEUs. Contact Jason Miller, Hale CEA-AG, at 806-291-5267 or John Villalba, Swisher CEA-AG, at 806-995-3721.

This list also can be found on the PCG website at <http://www.plainscotton.org/agconferences.html>.