

## **Conaway to NCC: Cottonseed Fight Not Over**

Friday, February 12, 2016

By Mary Jane Buerkle

House Ag Committee Chairman Mike Conaway urged National Cotton Council delegates and cotton industry leaders last weekend at the NCC's Annual Meeting to keep up the fight for cottonseed to be designated as an "other oilseed" under the 2014 Farm Bill.

Conaway, speaking during a general session, said that the Committee would continue conversations with U.S. Secretary Tom Vilsack, who said last week that he did not have the legal authority to make the designation. He urged meeting attendees to stay involved.

"Keep doing what you're doing," Conaway said. "Write letters, communicate and pass any suggestions you have to us. We need action."

PCG will continue to work with the NCC, the House Ag Committee and others over the coming weeks to arrange visits, write letters, and help organize other advocacy efforts toward the designation, which undoubtedly would bring stability and support to cotton producers and the entire cotton industry.

For more information on how to get involved, or where to send a letter, please contact PCG. A complete rundown of last week's events regarding the cottonseed designation can be found at <http://bit.ly/PCGCottonNews020516>.

In other news from the NCC Annual Meeting, U.S. cotton producers intend to plant 8.9 million acres of upland cotton in 2016, up 5.7 percent from 2015, according to the NCC's 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Early Season Planting Intentions Survey. More than half of that will be in Texas, where survey results indicate growers intend to plant 5.066 million acres, an increase of 5.6 percent from 2015. Complete information on the NCC's survey results is available at <http://bit.ly/NCC16PlantingSurvey>.

Ropesville/New Home-area grower Dahlen Hancock became Board Chairman of Cotton Council International at CCI's board meeting over the weekend. Hancock has served as CCI's president for the past year. Keith Lucas, a cooperative official from Garner, N.C., will serve as CCI's president for 2016.

Shane Stephens, a warehouseman from Greenwood, Miss., was elected NCC Chairman for 2016. The NCC's vice chairman for 2016 is Ronnie Lee, a Bronwood, Ga., producer. Elected as the NCC's secretary-treasurer was Barry Evans, a producer from Kress, Texas. Robert Lacy with PYCO Industries in Lubbock was elected as a NCC vice president.

Ron Craft, manager of New-Tex Gin in Plains and a member of the PCG board of directors, was named president of the National Cotton Ginners Association.

Robstown, Texas cotton grower Jimmy Dodson received the 2015 Harry S. Baker Distinguished Service Award.

The following PCG-area industry leaders were elected to the NCC Board: Shawn Holladay, producer, Lubbock; Craft of Plains; Brett Underwood, The Trinity Company, Lubbock; Ron Harkey, Farmers Cooperative Compress, Lubbock; Ronnie

Gilbert, PYCO Industries, Lubbock; and Sam Hill, Plains Cotton Cooperative Association, Lubbock.

Holladay was re-elected to represent the Southwest on the American Cotton Producers board as a producer director. Craig Heinrich, a cotton grower in the Slaton area, will serve as an ACP state producer chairman for Texas in 2016.

NCC state unit officers for 2016 from Texas are Doyle Schniers, producer, San Angelo; Jim Bradford, North Gin, Dimmitt; and Toby Robertson, producer, Corpus Christi.

## **PCG Annual Meeting Scheduled for April 8**

Friday, February 12, 2016

By Mary Jane Buerkle

Plains Cotton Growers, Inc., will host their 59th Annual Meeting on Friday, April 8, 2016 in the Banquet Hall of the Lubbock Memorial Civic Center.

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. with registration, and the program will start promptly at 9 a.m. The meeting is held in conjunction with the Texas Cotton Ginners' Association Annual Meeting and Trade Show, April 7-8, 2016, in Lubbock.

Current PCG president Shawn Holladay will preside over the meeting and PCG Executive Vice President Steve Verett will report on the status of PCG operations and activities. An award recognizing the 2015 High Plains Cotton Agent of the Year also will be presented at the meeting.

Keynote speaker will be David Wasserman, House Editor for The Cook Political Report, where he is responsible for handicapping and analyzing U.S. House Races.

David has served as an analyst for the NBC News Election Night Decision Desk in 2014, 2012, 2010, and 2008, and has appeared on NBC Nightly News, ABC World News, C-SPAN Washington Journal, CNN, and NPR. He is a frequent contributor to FiveThirtyEight.com and his commentary on House races has been cited in numerous print and online publications including Politico, The New York Times, The Washington Post, USA Today, The Wall Street Journal, The Economist, and RealClearPolitics.com.

A native of New Jersey, he holds a B.A. in Government with distinction from the University of Virginia and was awarded the 2006 Emmerich-Wright Outstanding Thesis prize for his study of congressional redistricting standards.

Reece Langley, Vice President of Washington Operations at the National Cotton Council, also is scheduled to speak. Reece is responsible for coordinating the Washington activities of the Council, including working with Congress and the Administration, with the overall mission of helping each of the U.S. cotton industry's seven segments compete effectively and profitably in a global market.

Langley was raised on his family's farm in Athens, Alabama, where he remains involved. He earned a bachelor's degree in agricultural economics, followed by an MBA, both from Auburn University.

Additional information about PCG can be found at <http://www.plainscotton.org>.