

PCG Annual Meeting Scheduled for April 7

Friday, March 3, 2017

By Mary Jane Buerkle

Plains Cotton Growers, Inc., will host their 60th Annual Meeting on Friday, April 7, 2017 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 6-7, 2017, in Lubbock. For more information on the TCGA Annual Meeting and Trade Show, visit <http://www.tcg.org/>.

Current PCG president Johnie Reed, who farms near Kress, Texas, 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 2016 High Plains Cotton Agent of the Year also will be presented at the meeting.

The keynote speaker, sponsored by Farmers Cooperative Compress, will be Matt Rush. Matt is the fourth generation in his family to be a New Mexico farmer and cattle rancher. He and his dad partner on a farming and ranching operation and to support his farming habit, Rush travels the country as a professional speaker conducting leadership and motivational seminars. The Zig Ziglar Corporation recently recognized his talent and skill as a speaker and trainer inviting him to become one of their first ever Platinum Level speakers. He also is the Executive Vice President of the New Mexico Farm & Livestock Bureau.

House Agriculture Committee Chairman Mike Conaway and Kim Kitchings, Senior Vice President, Consumer Marketing for Cotton Incorporated, also are scheduled to speak. The program will feature an update on the Plains Cotton Growers, Inc. PAC and an announcement about the 2017 Celebrate Cotton Game.

Breakfast will be served at 7:30 a.m., sponsored by Monsanto/Deltapine. Lunch, sponsored by Bayer CropScience/FiberMax/Stoneville, will follow the meeting.

There is no charge to attend and no RSVP is necessary. Additional information about PCG and the Annual Meeting can be found at <http://www.plainscotton.org>.

**Upcoming Area Meetings
and Ag Conferences**
See the list at plainscotton.org

2017 PCG Seed Cost Calculator Now Available

Friday, March 3, 2017

By Mary Jane Buerkle

The 2017 version of the Plains Cotton Growers, Inc. Seed Cost Calculator is ready and available for download from the PCG website at <http://www.plainscotton.org>.

The PCG seed cost calculator is an interactive Microsoft Excel spreadsheet that allows producers to calculate an estimated cost per acre, for both seed and technology, based on published suggested retail prices.

The calculator has become a popular tool among producers interested in comparing seed and technology prices as they work to finalize their cotton variety selections.

The 2017 version of the spreadsheet includes listings for more than 100 conventional, Roundup Ready FLEX, XtendFlex, GlyTol, Bollgard II, TwinLink, Enlist and Widestrike varieties, including numerous stacked gene versions of these technologies that will be available for sale in West Texas in 2017.

PCG Participates in "Cotton Day at the Capitol"

Friday, March 3, 2017

By Mary Jane Buerkle

More than 40 cotton producers and industry leaders from across the state converged on the Texas State Capitol in Austin on Thursday for "Cotton Day at the Capitol," an event held each legislative session.

The goal of "Cotton Day at the Capitol" is to visit with legislators and agency leaders and extend the industry's appreciation for their support of cotton, which is the No. 1 cash commodity crop grown in Texas.

Issues discussed included water, boll weevil eradication, research and other topics of importance to the Texas cotton industry that are handled by the Texas Legislature or state agencies.

The event was led by Texas Cotton Producers, which is comprised of nine regional certified cotton grower organizations including PCG; El Paso Valley Cotton Growers Association; Trans Pecos Cotton Growers Association; St. Lawrence Cotton Growers Association; Rolling Plains Cotton Growers Association; Southern Rolling Plains Cotton Growers Association; Blackland Cotton and Grain Producers Association; South Texas Cotton and Grain Association; and Cotton and Grain Producers of the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

Coalition of Property Rights Advocates Applaud Latest Eminent Domain Legislation

Thursday, March 2, 2017

From Texans for Property Rights

The Texans for Property Rights Coalition applauds the filing of HB 2684 aimed at eminent domain reform. Authored by state Representative DeWayne Burns, the legislation will help level the playing field for property owners who confront corporations and government entities with deep pockets and skilled legal teams.

Reps. Trent Ashby (R-Lufkin), Kyle Kacal (R-Bryan) and Justin Holland (R-Rockwall) will also carry legislation offering significant improvements to current eminent domain laws.

"I know what it's like to face the threat of an eminent domain taking and understand the burden it places on landowners, which is why I am fighting to ensure property owners are in the best possible position when faced with the taking of their property," Burns said. "In Texas, private property rights are sacred, and I am proud to file HB 2684 to preserve that right while providing for the growth of our great state."

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“This legislation is a tremendous step toward fixing a faulty process that places landowners at a huge disadvantage when navigating the eminent domain process,” added Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association President Richard Thorpe. “We are grateful to have strong allies in the legislature like Rep. Burns who are committed to defending the rights of private landowners and preserving our future.”

A growing state with a strong appetite for new development has put a target on Texas private property, leaving landowners searching for a fair offer and process in eminent domain cases.

"This legislation reflects reasonable changes that many states already have in law," Texas Farm Bureau President Russell Boening said. "Texas should be a leader in strong and fair private property rights that allow for continued growth and economic prosperity."

The new legislation will provide for the reimbursement of landowner expenses if they are sued by a condemner and are ultimately awarded significantly more than the final offer. It will also spell out the use and restriction details required within a condemner's "bona fide offer" to ensure the entity will properly use and maintain the property.

These bills provide common sense reforms in several areas of concern for landowners. Additional details on the coalition's initiatives can be found on TexansForPropertyRights.com.

"As a landowner with deep agricultural roots, Representative DeWayne Burns understands the property rights challenges faced by rural Texans. Texas Wildlife Association is thankful for his leadership on pursuing meaningful eminent domain reform," Texas Wildlife Association CEO David Yeates said. "Fair treatment of landowners and respect for property rights are long overdue, and this legislation will advance both."

Approximately 95 percent of state land is privately owned, putting the needs of the public in direct conflict with the rights of Texas property owners. Fair compensation, the groups noted, should be the only option because private property owners find it difficult to face the financial burden of litigation when entities sue them.

Other legislation addressing the broken eminent domain process has also been introduced.

"As lawmakers, we have to ensure that private property owners are given a fair shot when they negotiate a deal for the use their land," said Ashby, who is also introducing legislation. "In a state that takes great pride in defending private property rights, we must take action toward leveling the playing field between a landowner and the entity using eminent domain authority."

"Individual private property rights are intrinsically tied to our Texas values and our legislation is an effort to ensure that we as a state still believe that a private property owner has a right to be treated fairly," said Kacal, who filed HB 2694 to improve the bona fide offer received by landowners. "In Texas, we need to ensure that there is a sincere level of protection for landowners and establish a minimum standard that allows Texans to know what to expect when an entity begins an effort to take their land."

"As a small business owner and real estate broker in Texas, I know firsthand that property rights are one of the most sacred liberties that Texans enjoy," Holland said. "HB 2556, my component of eminent domain reform, will empower property owners and require condemning authorities to extend fair market

value offers to property owners, additionally saving frivolous administrative appeals costs by cutting out the tiresome back-and-forth of the broken process."

Led by the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, Texas Farm Bureau and the Texas Wildlife Association, the Texans for Property Rights Coalition consists of 25 organizations committed to the preservation of Texas' private property rights. The coalition was organized to pursue eminent domain reform during the 2017 Texas legislative session, and will continue to work with legislators to secure the passage of these bills and others proposed in the house and senate that address the need for reform.

The coalition members include: Texas Farm Bureau, Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, Texas Wildlife Association, Texas Association of REALTORS, South Texas' Property Rights Association, Texas Forestry Association, Texas Sheep and Goat Raisers Association, Texas Poultry Federation, Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas, Texas Grain Sorghum Association, Plains Cotton Growers Inc., Texas Land and Mineral Owners Association, Texas Association of Dairymen, Texas Cattle Feeders Association, Corn Producers Association of Texas, Riverside and Landowners Protection Coalition, Texas Grain and Feed Association, Texas Citrus Mutual, Texas Hill Country Heritage Association, Texas Coalition for Conservation, Texas Wheat Producers Association, Texas Agricultural Land Trust, Ranchers and Landowners Association of Texas, Texas Nursery and Landscape Association and the Tax Exchange Institute.

COTTON USA Showcases Quality Cotton at Paris Trade Shows

Friday, February 24, 2017 From Cotton Council International

While continuing to promote U.S. cotton and offer sourcing support to major apparel industry players at the Texworld and Première Vision trade shows in Paris, COTTON USA provided information on responsibly-produced U.S. cotton and global cotton market developments.

COTTON USA exhibited with Supima at Texworld and jointly exhibited with Cotton Incorporated at Première Vision. The shows – representing the largest combined exhibition of the world's apparel manufacturers – provided a venue for COTTON USA to promote U.S. cotton and its global marketing and licensing program. Thirteen companies from China, India, Turkey and Bangladesh expressed interest in becoming COTTON USA licensees.

International brands and retailers visited the booths, including: Marks and Spencer, La Redoute, John Lewis, Gerry Weber, Artsana and Wolford. Approximately 69,810 visitors from 124 countries attended both fairs, with a total of 2,885 exhibitors from more than 60 countries.

In addition to sourcing support and COTTON USA licensing, the booths also supplied information on the Cotton LEADS™ program and global developments in the cotton and apparel sectors. Various segments of the cotton textile supply chain met at the booths, and COTTON USA helped buyers and manufacturers looking for cotton garments and cotton yarn suppliers to identify new business contacts.

Editor's Note:

"Cotton News", a weekly service of Plains Cotton Growers to the cotton industry and news media in the 41-county High Plains area, is mailed from Lubbock each Friday. Its contents are confined to news items and comments pertaining to the High Plains cotton industry which is so vital to U.S. all. Anyone interested in making comments about the contents of this column can call 806-792-4904 or Email editor@plainscotton.org