

NASS Lowers 2017 Cotton Production Estimates for Texas High Plains

Friday, November 10, 2017

By Mary Jane Buerkle

The National Agricultural Statistics Service estimates in their November Crop Production Report that Texas High Plains cotton growers will produce 5,375,000 bales in 2017.

This estimate is down 65,000 bales from their October report, likely reflective of late-season acreage loss to storms and further adjustment from loss of yield potential after a cool, cloudy late September and early October.

The decrease came from the Southern High Plains, where NASS estimated 110,000 fewer bales than their October report, projecting 3,215,000 for that region. Production estimates in the Northern High Plains increased by 70,000 to 2,180,000 bales.

Yield per acre increased for the Northern High Plains from 877 pounds in October to 906 in the November estimate. The Southern High Plains decreased from 689 pounds in October to 665 in November. Harvested acres remained the same as the October report – 1,155,000 in the NHP and 2,320,000 in the SHP. The abandonment rate at about 20 percent, which is near the long-term average.

Statewide, the production number increased by 100,000 bales from October, to 9.1 million bales. The nationwide estimate for upland cotton increased to 20.7 million bales, up slightly from an estimated 20.4 million in the October report and up 24 percent from 2016.

Harvest is in full swing and some areas of quality are improving, with predominate color at the Lubbock classing office grading up at 21 this past week from 31 last week. Average length increased from 36.09 last week to 36.32 this week. However, average micronaire remains in the 34-35 range, indicating impact from less-than-ideal weather conditions to finish out maturity.

In the Lamesa office, predominant color also is 21, with average length for the week at 35.41 and average micronaire at 3.8. Complete quality reports are available at www.plainscotton.org.

December futures were trading between 68 and 69 cents at press time.

Former Yoakum County CED Six Appointed SED for Texas FSA

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By Mary Jane Buerkle

Gary Six, who has served the Farm Service Agency in Yoakum County for more than 30 years as their County Executive Director, is making the move from Plains to College Station after his appointment by the Trump Administration as the new Texas State Executive Director for the FSA.

Six's FSA career began in 1977 as a temporary field assistant, and he worked his way into increasingly responsible positions and became Yoakum County CED in 1979. He then

served as CED for McCulloch County for almost three years before being selected as one of the first Automation Coordinators in Texas. He remained in that position for more than two years before moving back to Plains to serve again as CED for Yoakum County.

"As SED, Six will use his leadership experience to oversee FSA programs in a customer-focused manner to ensure a safe, affordable, abundant, and nutritious food supply for consumers," according to a news release from Texas FSA. "He looks forward to serving the producers and FSA employees throughout Texas as SED."

PCG Executive Vice President Steve Verett said that Six's FSA experience makes him an excellent candidate to lead Texas FSA.

"We could not be more excited for Gary as he takes on this position of leadership," Verett said. "There are few people who know the Farm Service Agency like he does, and his experience is extremely valuable to our producers and the entire Texas agricultural industry. We congratulate him and wish him the best."

Six begins his new duties on Monday.

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Midwest, Western Farmers to See High Plains Cotton Operations

Wednesday, November 8, 2017 From National Cotton Council

Farmers in the nation's Midwest and Western regions will get a unique opportunity to observe cotton and other agricultural operations in West Texas on November 12-16, as part of the National Cotton Council's (NCC) Multi-Commodity Education Program.

Launched in 2006, the MCEP is coordinated by NCC's Member Services and local leaders and organizations. The program is supported by The Cotton Foundation with a grant from Deere & Company.

The exchange is designed to provide the program's participants with: 1) a better understanding of production issues/concerns faced by their peers in another geographic region and 2) an opportunity to observe agronomic practices, technology utilization, cropping patterns, marketing plans and operational structure. Other program benefits are the continuing dialogue among American farmers, regardless of their crops or locations, and the creation of strong and lasting relationships between this nation's current and future producer leaders.

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The 2017 tour's producer participants include: Idaho - Sedar Beckman, Idaho Falls; Scott Brown, Soda Springs; Clark Kauffman, Filer; Cory Kress, Rockland; Justin Place, Hamer; and Lucas Spratling, Declo; Michigan - Dave Milligan, Cass City; Montana - Michael Konen and Mitch Konen, both of Fairfield; and Warren Lybeck, Chinook; North Dakota - Frank Laufer, Regent; Jeff Mertz, Hurdsfield; and Alan Slater, West Fargo. Also participating is Sam Butler, a New Hope, Ala., soybean and cotton producer. John Gibson, director of NCC's Member Services, Memphis; and Susan Everett, a NCC Member Services representative in West Texas, will accompany the group.

After an orientation on the NCC on November 12, the participants will spend the next day in Lubbock at Plains Cotton Growers, Inc. for an overview of that organization and of High Plains cotton production. They also will visit the USDA Agricultural Research Service's Ginning Laboratory and the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service's Cotton Division facility, get a presentation on cotton trait introgression during a tour of Bayer's greenhouse and laboratory facilities; and hear a presentation on cotton sustainability and marketing at Plains Cotton Cooperative Association. They will end the day with a visit to Verett Farms in Ralls for a look at spindle picker cotton harvesting.

On November 14, the participants will get a briefing on cottonseed processing and products at PYCO Industries in Lubbock before traveling to Brownfield where they will see peanut harvesting and then get a look at High Plains farm equipment at the B.E. Implement company. The group then will go to Meadow for a tour of Seaton Farms and observing custom wine grape crushing, fermentation and barrel aging at the Texas Wine Company.

The next day, the group will travel to Plainview to hear a presentation on High Plains water conservation and watering systems at the Texas Alliance of Water Conservation and then learn about soil health and fertilization techniques at Olson Farms. That day's activities conclude with a briefing on stripper harvesting and ginning at the Carson County Gin in White Deer.

On the 16th, the group will travel to Amarillo for a tour of the Amarillo Cotton Warehouse and to hear presentations on cotton warehousing, shipping and permanent bale identification. The tour concludes with visits to the Adobe Walls Gin in Spearman and Howard Farms in Dumas.

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<http://www.farmpolicyfacts.org>

TAWC, Wrangler Announce Partnership

Friday, November 10, 2017

From TAWC

Iconic denim brand Wrangler and The Texas Alliance for Water Conservation announced a partnership to promote best-in-class techniques and technologies for efficient water use among cotton growers.

Under a memorandum of understanding, TAWC will serve as advisors to Wrangler's U.S. sustainable cotton program, and Wrangler will help raise awareness for best practices produced by TAWC's on-farm research.

About 50 percent of the cotton in Wrangler's products is grown domestically, and the brand is committed to working with U.S. growers to maintain the profitability of the industry, while improving its resilience and reducing environmental impacts. Wrangler has formed a coalition of industry, academic and nonprofit partners (including TAWC) that is focused on soil health practices as the key to producing more sustainable cotton in the U.S.

The MOU between Wrangler and TAWC focuses on sharing best practices for efficient water use and the building of healthy soils, which contributes to water retention, higher yields, fewer agricultural inputs, and other long-term environmental and social benefits. Wrangler is scheduled to participate in TAWC's Water College, an educational event for Texas growers, scheduled for Jan. 24 at the Lubbock Civic Center.

Elevating Efficiency Is 2018 Beltwide Cotton Conferences' Goal

Friday, Nov. 10, 2017

From the National Cotton Council

The 2018 Beltwide Cotton Conferences, set for January 3-5 at the Marriott Rivercenter in San Antonio, Texas, will provide insight on current research and emerging technology – to help attendees improve production, processing and marketing efficiency.

The 2018 BWCC will begin at noon on January 3 with the half-day Cotton Consultants Conference – open to all attendees. Among scheduled topics selected by the consultant community are: looking ahead to Bollgard III use, a review of year one of Dicamba use, thrips control, bacterial blight, nematodes, cotton root rot and fungicide seed treatments. Also included will be a regulatory update and presentations on growing cotton economically and on contamination prevention.

The 2018 Beltwide also will feature a special workshop, "Risk & Reward: Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) for Agricultural Producers." The session is supported by a grant from the Southern Extension Risk Management Education Center and the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

The BWCC cotton technical conferences, which will provide updates on research and a look into the technology pipeline, will meet concurrently beginning on the morning of January 4 and conclude by noon on January 5.

The Ginning Conference, for example, will include several presentations critical to cotton quality and efficient processing. Included will be updates regarding ongoing ginning research, new equipment, and lint contamination research/prevention. Results of the 2016 Gin Cost Survey also will be presented. Beginning on the afternoon of January 3, the National Cotton Ginners Association will hold several committee and subcommittee meetings. A schedule of those meetings is at www.cotton.org/ncga/index.cfm.

Registration costs for the 2018 BWCC before December 15 are: \$200 for NCC/Cotton Foundation members, university and USDA researchers, Extension personnel, associations and consultants; \$400 for non-NCC/Foundation members; and \$80 for students. Information on the 2018 BWCC is at www.cotton.org/beltwide/.

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 PCG at: editor@plainscotton.org