

January 5, 2018

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Ag Secretary Perdue Names Harris, Williams to FSA Texas State Committee

Thursday, January 4, 2018

Information from USDA FSA

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue on Thursday announced a slate of Farm Service Agency State Committee Appointees. State committees are selected by the Secretary, serve at the pleasure of the Secretary, and are responsible for carrying out FSA's farm programs within delegated authorities.

"The State Committees will help to ensure USDA is providing our farmers, ranchers, foresters, and agricultural producers with the best customer service," Secretary Perdue said.

"They serve as a liaison between USDA and the producers in each state across the nation by keeping them informed and hearing their appeals and complaints. The committees are made up mostly of active farmers and ranchers, representing their peers and ensuring USDA's programs are supporting the American harvest."

Those selected from Texas are Jerry Harris, Dawson/Gaines County (Committee Chairman); Juan Garcia, Willacy County; Rodney Schronk, Hillsboro; Michael Skalicky, Ganado; and Linda G. Williams, Dumas. State committees are appointed for a one-year term which began on January 1, 2018.

"Secretary Perdue has announced the appointment of a great group of folks to serve on our state committee," Texas FSA State Executive Director Gary Six said in a statement to PCG. "As committee members, they have a tremendous responsibility in the oversight and administration of the Agency's commodity, conservation, credit and disaster assistance programs that greatly benefit Texas' agricultural producers.

"The committee's contribution to the Agency has a positive impact on our programs, producers and employees," Six said. "Together, we will realize great successes in the delivery of federal farm programs in Texas. I'm really looking forward to working with this state committee."

A list of all state committee appointees is at <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDAOC/bulletins/1cf47d9>.

Mandatory Auxin-Specific Herbicide Trainings Scheduled for Dicamba Applicators

January 2018 Information from Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

The Texas Department of Agriculture requires special training in 2018 for new auxin herbicides applied under a Section 3 approval on dicamba-tolerant cotton.

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service will be hosting several of these training opportunities. Following is a list of those coming up in the next few weeks. A complete list is available at <http://www.plainscotton.org/agconferences.html>.

January 11 – Texas A&M AgriLife Research & Extension Center, 1102 E. FM 1294, Lubbock. 10-11 a.m.

January 12 – Texas A&M AgriLife Research & Extension Center, 6500 W. Amarillo Blvd., Amarillo. 8:30-9:30 a.m.

January 24 – Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office – Hockley County, Levelland, 10-11 a.m.

January 26 – Littlefield Show Barn, 10-11 a.m.

February 7 – Attebury Grain office, 1201 NW 5th St., Tulia. 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Lunch provided. RSVP by February 2 to the Swisher County Extension office, 806-995-3726.

February 9 – Texas A&M AgriLife Research & Extension Center, 6500 W. Amarillo Blvd., Amarillo. 8:30-9:30 a.m.

February 12 – Texas A&M AgriLife Research & Extension Center, 1102 E. FM 1294, Lubbock. 10-11 a.m.

February 21 – Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office – Hockley County, Levelland, 9-10 a.m.

February 21 – Littlefield Show Barn, 1-2 p.m.

February 22 – Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office – Cochran County, Morton, 10-11 a.m.

There is no registration fee on any of these training programs and each class will provide one TDA continuing education unit in laws and regulations.

Dicamba tolerant cotton and soybean varieties were brought to the market in 2015 and 2016, respectively, and were followed in 2017 by the newly registered dicamba herbicides formulated specifically to have lower volatility. Following a challenging launch in 2017 of these newly registered herbicides in some states, the EPA worked with companies registering the new dicamba formulations to make revisions to those product labels in an effort to reduce incidence of off-target movement during application. In mid-October, revised labels for XtendiMax® with VaporGrip® Technology, Fexapan Plus VaporGrip® Technology, and Engenia® herbicide were approved and released by the EPA and the corresponding companies, Monsanto, DuPont and BASF, respectively.

Notable revisions include the addition of new restrictions as well as clarifications to previous label language. New restrictions include the following:

- Classification of these three products as Restricted Use Pesticides
- Required record keeping of all applications for 2 years
- Annual mandatory auxin-specific training for every person that will be applying the product to any crop.

While restricted use classification and record keeping are currently in effect for these products in Texas, the mandatory auxin-specific training for all applicators is a new change that applies to not only those with an applicators license but also to those making applications under someone else's license. This requires awareness for all applicators to ensure their ability to use these herbicides in 2018 and in subsequent years.

Clarifications to label language include but are not limited to what qualifies as a "susceptible" or "sensitive" crop, requiring the use of downwind buffers, clarification around temperature inversions and restricting the application time to only include sunrise to sunset, tightening the windspeed window from 3-15mph down to 3-10mph, and amplifying the language on sprayer cleanout to prevent cross-contamination. (*COTTON NEWS continues on Page 2*)

The Texas Department of Agriculture has approved the auxin-specific herbicide training for applicators that will be provided through Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and allied industry. This training aims to educate applicators on the requirements and practices for keeping these dicamba based products on-target and will satisfy the newly mandated auxin-specific training requirement.

PCG Board Meets January 10

Friday, January 5, 2018

By Mary Jane Buerkle

The next regular meeting of the Board of Directors for Plains Cotton Growers, Inc. will begin at 2:00 p.m. Wednesday, January 10, at the Bayer Museum of Agriculture in Lubbock.

The agenda includes a cotton market report from Dr. John Robinson with Texas A&M's Department of Agricultural Economics and a Washington Update from Tom Sell with Combest, Sell & Associates. Two TDA-approved pesticide applicator CEUs will be offered at this meeting as Dr. Peter Dotray, Dr. Seth Byrd, and Dr. Jason Woodward, all with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, will give a 2017 Crop Year in Review report.

For more information, contact PCG at (806) 792-4904.

Upcoming Area Ag Conferences

January 12 – West Plains Ag Conference, **Levelland**, South Plains College in the Sundown Room, 7:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Info: Kerry Siders, County Extension Agent-IPM, 806-894-3150.

January 16 – Southern Mesa Ag Conference, Forrest Park Community Center, 814 S. Houston, **Lamesa**. Registration at 7:45 a.m. Info: Gary Roschetzky, CEA-Ag/NR, 806-872-3444.

January 18 – Area AgriLife Extension Agronomics Meeting, Moore County Community Building, 1600 S. Maddox Ave., **Dumas**. Registration at 8:30 a.m. \$10 fee, lunch provided. Info: Marcel Fischbacher, CEA-Ag/NR, 806-935-2594 or Mike Bragg, CEA-Ag/NR, 806-244-4434.

January 18 – South Plains Ag Conference, The 380 Event Center, 2149 Tahoka Road, **Brownfield**. Registration at 8:30 a.m. \$10 fee, lunch provided. 5 CEUs. Info: Lynn County Extension Office, 806-561-4562; Terry County Extension Office, 806-637-4060; or Yoakum County Extension Office, 806-456-2066.

January 19 – Caprock Crop Production Conference, Floyd County Friends Unity Center at **Muncy**. Registration at 7 a.m., \$35 in advance, \$45 at the door. 10 CEUs, 10 CCAs. Info: Caitlin Jackson, CEA-Ag/NR, 806-675-2347 or Cristen Brooks, CEA-Ag/NR, 806-983-4912.

January 19 – Northeast Panhandle Crop Profitability Conference, Ochiltree County Expo Center, 402 Expo Drive, **Perryton**. Registration at 9 a.m., \$10 fee. Info: Scott Strawn, CEA-Ag/NR, 806-435-4501.

January 23 – Seeking Solutions: Managing Economic Risks, Cagle Steaks, 8732 Fourth St., **Lubbock**. Registration at 8:30 a.m., \$30 fee. Pre-registration encouraged. Info: Crosby County Extension Office, 806-675-2347.

January 24 – Texas Alliance for Water Conservation's 4th Annual Water College, Lubbock Memorial Civic Center, **Lubbock**. Registration at 8:30 a.m., no fee. Breakfast and lunch provided. CEUs available. Info: <http://www.tawcwatercollege.com>.

PCG EDITOR'S NOTE: A complete list is available at <http://www.plainscotton.org/agconferences.html>. Please submit any additions/edits to maryjane@plainscotton.org.

Our View: A Presidential Start to 2018

January 3, 2018

From Farm Policy Facts

More than 21 million Americans have jobs because of our nation's farm and ranch families, who take big risks each and every year to feed, clothe and fuel the United States.

Yet, it has been a quarter century since an American president has addressed a leading U.S. farm organization, the American Farm Bureau Federation. The last was President George H.W. Bush in 1992.

That's about to change when President Donald J. Trump takes the podium at the American Farm Bureau Federation's annual convention in Nashville, Tennessee, next week.

"Farmers and ranchers and our rural communities are the bedrock of our nation. President Trump knows that, and his willingness to devote his time to talk directly with Farm Bureau members will be a memorable occasion," said Farm Bureau President Zippy Duvall.

Truly a memorable occasion. It will be one in which American agriculture takes center stage in the national discussion as our great nation continues unprecedented economic growth.

Trump's decision to start the year by speaking directly to many of the nation's farmers and ranchers shows the importance his administration is seeking to put on rural America and U.S. agriculture.

We applaud him for doing so.

The coming year is a big one for America's heartland. Farm incomes are down 53 percent from just three years ago. Farmers are still picking up the pieces from disastrous hurricanes, droughts and wildfires in 2017. Subsidized foreign industries continue to put U.S. farmers and ranchers at a great disadvantage. And opponents of American agriculture are already fighting farmers and ranchers and using misleading attacks on U.S. farm policy.

But we have a chance in 2018 to give rural America a boost that the rest of the nation has begun to experience as it continues to recover from the Great Recession.

Fixing cotton and dairy policies and completing a disaster bill is a key place to start. And, then, by passing a strong 2018 Farm Bill, Congress will help ensure that our farmers and ranchers have the tools they need to weather distorted global markets marked by high and rising foreign subsidies, tariffs and other predatory trade practices.

A lot has changed since President Bush addressed the American Farm Bureau Federation. But one thing has not: American farmers and ranchers deserve our backing with a strong and sensible U.S. farm policy.

President Bush captured it well back in 1992.

"Put these initiatives together, and you get a farm policy that lets farmers do what they do best: Farm and compete all over the world. Our policies reflect the values that we all cherish: Self-reliance, generosity, family, community. They draw upon your strengths, your intelligence, diligence, determination, and faith."

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