

## **USDA Estimates Texas High Plains Planted Acreage at 4.42 Million**

Friday, July 13, 2018 By Mary Jane Buerkle

The National Agricultural Statistics Service released their June Acreage Report by district earlier this week, estimating planted acreage for the Texas High Plains at 4.42 million acres. This reflects just more than a 1 percent increase from 2017 regionwide.

Planted acreage decreased on the Northern High Plains, from 1,332,000 in 2017 to 1,120,000 in 2018, but increased on the Southern High Plains, from 3,040,000 to 3,300,000. However, a significant portion of the region's dryland crop is planted on the Southern High Plains, and much of that remains at risk of being lost if it hasn't already.

Statewide, Texas farmers are on track to plant 7.4 million acres of upland cotton this year, up 7 percent from 2017. The increase was spread fairly evenly across most production regions, except for a 26 percent increase in acreage in the Southern Low Plains area, which translates roughly into much of the Rolling Plains. Nationwide, the USDA estimates that growers planted 13.3 million acres of upland cotton, up 7 percent from 2017. This means that Texas growers planted almost 56 percent of the nation's acreage, similar to 2017.

On Thursday, the USDA issued their World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates in which they reduced estimated U.S. cotton production by a million bales, to 18.5 million. Domestic and world carryout also were reduced, causing a short market rally; December futures closed on Thursday at 88.54. However, the market settled back down a bit over tariff and weather concerns and December futures were trading at press time at 87.61.

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## **NCC Sets 2018 P.I.E. Program Tour Dates**

Thursday, July 12, 2018 From the National Cotton Council

The National Cotton Council (NCC) has scheduled tour dates and locations for the 2018 Producer Information Exchange (P.I.E.) Program.

Now in its 30th year, the program has enabled more than 1,100 U.S. cotton producers to go to Cotton Belt regions different than their own where they learn about their peers' innovative production practices.

Sponsored by Crop Science, a division of Bayer, through a grant to The Cotton Foundation, the P.I.E. program has a goal of helping U.S. cotton producers maximize production efficiency

and improve yields and fiber quality by: 1) gaining new perspectives in such fundamental practices as land preparation, planting, fertilization, pest control, irrigation and harvesting; and 2) observing diverse farming practices and the unique ways in which other resourceful producers have adopted new and existing technology. A unique program benefit is that the participants get to ask questions of both the producers they visit on the tours but also from producers from their own region that they travel with during the week.

This season, producers from the Far West and Southwest regions will see agricultural operations in the Mid-South states of Arkansas, Missouri and Tennessee on August 5-10; Southeast producers will visit California's San Joaquin Valley on August 12-17; and Mid-South producers will tour two of Texas' cotton production regions on August 19-24.

The NCC's Member Services staff, in conjunction with local producer interest organizations, conducts the P.I.E. program, including participant selection.

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## **ARC and PLC Educational Tool Helps Growers Understand New Seed Cotton Program**

Thursday, July 5, 2018

From FSA

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency is notifying farmers with generic base acres that planted seed cotton that a new tool is available to assist them in understanding how the new seed cotton program may affect their FSA payments. It helps a producer make decisions on how to allocate generic base acres to other covered crops based on a producer's planting history.

The educational tool can be viewed at <http://www.afpc.tamu.edu/tools/cotton-base>.

Developed by Texas A&M University, the tool is for educational purposes only, and by using the tool, it is agreed that the results are not a guarantee of future FSA program parameters or payments. Users also acknowledge that this tool is provided with absolutely no warranty, without even the implied warranty of fitness for a particular purpose.

The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 included seed cotton as a covered commodity under the Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage program effective for the 2018 crop year. The Act also authorizes owners of a farm with generic base acres and a recent history of covered commodities a one-time opportunity to update the farm's payment yield for seed cotton.

Complete details of this decision are available by contacting your State or County FSA office at <http://offices.usda.gov>, or at [https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA\\_Notice/arcplc50.pdf](https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_Notice/arcplc50.pdf).