

USDA Announces Trump Administration Plan for Trade Assistance to Growers

Friday, July 27, 2018

By Mary Jane Buerkle

The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Trump Administration announced on Tuesday a plan to authorize up to \$12 billion in programs to help farmers and ranchers impacted by unjustified retaliation by foreign countries against U.S. agriculture exports.

According to the USDA, the \$12 billion aid will come in one of three programs:

- The Market Facilitation Program will provide payments incrementally to producers of soybeans, sorghum, corn, wheat, cotton, dairy, and hogs, based on production.
- The USDA will implement a Food Purchase and Distribution Program through the Agricultural Marketing Service to purchase unexpected surplus of affected commodities such as fruits, nuts, rice, legumes, beef, pork and milk for distribution to food banks and other nutrition programs.
- The Foreign Agriculture Service will administer a Trade Promotion Program to assist in developing new export markets for U.S. agriculture.

"We thank Secretary Perdue, the USDA, and the Trump Administration for honoring their commitment to U.S. farmers and ranchers and making sure that we do not bear the brunt of these trade disputes," PCG President Stacy Smith said. "For a long time now, we've had to deal with countries around the world, including China, who do not play by the rules when it comes to trade, which puts our farmers at a competitive disadvantage."

PCG Executive Vice President Steve Verett expressed appreciation to the Trump Administration and Secretary Perdue for creating a short-term solution to help at least partially offset the impacts of trade negotiations until a long-term agreement for fair, open and reciprocal trade can be reached.

House Ag Committee Chairman Mike Conaway visited with President Trump on Wednesday and thanked him and Secretary Perdue for their support.

"For years, our committee has highlighted that the U.S. is living up to its trade commitments even as foreign countries double-down on predatory trade practices that hurt America's farmers, ranchers, businesses and workers," Chairman Conaway said in a news release from the HAC. "And for years, these concerns have largely been swept under the rug for fear that negative publicity might undermine support for free trade. Calling out our trading partners for failing to live up to the commitments they have made is not protectionism – it's common sense. This task is made even harder by foreign countries that are now sanctioning unjustified tariffs against U.S. agricultural exports to pressure the administration to back off and simply accept the status quo."

Conaway noted that President Trump reiterated that he "expects Congress to send him a strong, new farm bill on time," according to the HAC release.

Matt Huie, president of the Southwest Council of Agribusiness, said the following in a news release from SWCA:

"Farm and ranch families are hurting right now due to unjustified retaliation by foreign countries against U.S. agriculture exports so the help announced today by President Trump and Secretary Perdue is very welcome. U.S. farmers and ranchers are the most efficient and productive in the world so we fully understand the value of truly free trade and open markets. American farmers and ranchers also play by the rules and expect that others should do the same. The SWCA supports a free and fair trade agenda. We commend President Trump and Secretary Perdue for their strong leadership and real demonstration that our nation will stand by her farm and ranch families through hard times as we seek a free, fair, transparent, and rules-based trade environment."

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Intense Heat, Lack of Rainfall Further Deteriorates Texas High Plains Dryland Crop

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Although it still is too early to place actual numbers on abandonment across the Plains Cotton Growers service area, it is likely that a significant portion of the region's dryland crop will not make it to harvest.

A string of days well above the 100-degree mark coupled with the continued lack of measurable rainfall caused conditions to worsen in already-suffering dryland fields. Although there are some pockets within the region that have received timely rains and the dryland crop is at least fair, that certainly isn't the case for most of the PCG service area. Some fields already have reached the cutout stage, which means the plant will not put on any more fruit.

Irrigated cotton, however, still is hanging on and is in relatively fair to good condition for the most part. Rain over the northern and western High Plains certainly was welcome, although it could have been too late to benefit some dryland acreage. Insect pressure is low, although IPM agents have reported finding some aphids, Conchuela stink bugs, bollworms and webworms in cotton. Agents noted that webworms are mostly showing up in field with lots of pigweed.

Growers are reminded to follow the label when applying herbicides and communicate with neighbors as much as possible about application. Herbicide label and use reminders are available on the PCG website at <http://www.plainscotton.org>.

(*"COTTON NEWS" continued on Page 2*)

COTTON USA Special Trade Mission from Vietnam Tours U.S. Cotton Belt

Friday, July 27, 2018 From Cotton Council International
A 17-member COTTON USA Special Trade Mission (STM) delegation from Vietnam concluded its tour of the U.S. Cotton Belt with a seminar in Phoenix, Ariz. During its U.S. tour from July 22-27, the group traveled to New York, N.Y.; Cary, N.C.; Memphis, Tenn.; McAllen and Lubbock, Tex.; and Phoenix, Ariz.; to meet with U.S. cotton producers, industry organizations and exporters for the purpose of increasing U.S. cotton exports to these manufacturers.

The group kicked off the tour in New York with a briefing session and ICE Futures seminar. They then saw cotton research in North Carolina, toured the USDA cotton classing office in Tennessee, and toured a cotton farm and gin in South Texas.

"After seeing a U.S. cotton farm, gin and warehouse during the COTTON USA Special Trade Mission, I was very impressed," Morgan Chen, President of Tainan Spinning Co., Ltd., said. "That night, I placed an order for more U.S. cotton (500 MT) as its high quality will benefit my spinning mill and add value to our products."

The group also met with representatives in the Cotton Belt's four major regions and with these industry organizations: AMCOT, American Cotton Producers, American Cotton Shippers Association, Cotton Incorporated, Lubbock Cotton Exchange, National Cotton Council, Plains Cotton Growers, Inc., Southern Cotton Growers, Texas Cotton Association, Western Cotton Shippers Association and Supima.

Vietnam is currently the largest importer of U.S. raw cotton. The companies represented on the STM were: Dong Khanh Textile Corporation, Ha Nam Textile Company, Hanoi Textile-Garment Joint Stock Corporation, Phong Phu Corporation, Phu Bai 2 Spinning Joint Stock Corporation, Phu Cuong Spinning Mill, Tainan Spinning Co., Ltd., Texhong Renze Textile Joint Stock Company, Thin Nam Development & Investment Joint Stock Company and Vietnam Textile and Apparel Association.

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Mark Your Calendars!

West Texas Agricultural Chemicals Institute
Annual Conference

Tuesday, Sept. 11, 2018

Bayer Museum of Agriculture, Lubbock

Program Available Soon at wtaci.tamu.edu

Tickets Available for Celebrate Cotton Game

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By Mary Jane Buerkle

Individual tickets are available for the seventh annual Celebrate Cotton game, which will be Saturday, September 15, as the Texas Tech Red Raiders host the Houston Cougars at Jones AT&T Stadium in Lubbock. Kickoff is at 3 p.m.

Game tickets can be purchased by visiting <http://bit.ly/TTUCottonGameTickets> and entering COTTON18, or calling the Texas Tech Ticket Office at (806) 742-TECH (8324) and asking for the Cotton Game special pricing. Individual tickets start at just \$35 each with the promo code. Season tickets also are still available for purchase.

PCG and other ag industry supporters proudly have partnered with Texas Tech Athletics to establish this fun event that puts the High Plains cotton industry on a national stage. Cotton will be everywhere before and throughout the game, from displays around the stadium to promotion, special graphics and fun cotton facts during the game.

Special gameday T-shirts, sponsored by PCG and Scarborough Specialties, will be distributed (first-come, first-serve!) and cotton bales will line each entrance to the stadium, each with signage talking about what the cotton in that bale can make or how it impacts our economy. Farmers Cooperative Compress assists with providing the bales.

The Celebrate Cotton Runway Show, featuring cotton products, will be held Thursday, September 13, at South Plains Mall. Sponsorships are available for that event.

Gameday partners include Nutrien Ag Solutions; Cavender's; BASF; City Bank; FiberMax; AgTexas Farm Credit Services; Netafim; NexGen; Winfield United; Hurst Farm Supply; and Wylie Implement and Spray Centers.

A complete list of additional events during Cotton Game week will be online soon at plainscotton.org. If you have an event to add to Cotton Game week, or for more information on any of these events, please call PCG at (806) 792-4904 or email maryjane@plainscotton.org.

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