

NASS Projects Texas High Plains Production at 3.975 Million Bales in 2018

Friday, August 10, 2018

By Mary Jane Buerkle

In their first official crop production estimates for the area this season, the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service pegged the 2018 High Plains upland cotton crop at 3.975 million bales, harvested from 2.388 million acres. Planted acres are estimated at 4.55 million, reflecting a projected 52 percent abandonment rate, the highest since 2013.

Yield per acre is estimated at 916 pounds per acre in the northern counties of the PCG service area, and 723 pounds per acre in the southern counties.

Statewide, the NASS report estimates that Texas growers will produce 6.5 million bales of upland cotton from 4.3 million acres harvested. Statewide yield is estimated to be 726 pounds per acre, down slightly from 809 last year. In 2017, 9.27 million bales of cotton were produced in Texas on 5.5 million harvested acres.

NASS estimates that the United States will produce 18.5 million bales of upland cotton, down 9 percent from 2017.

"This initial production report certainly gives us a benchmark," PCG Executive Vice President Steve Verett said. "However, we still have several weeks to go before anything is ready to harvest. These recent rains likely helped most of the crop that's still viable, although those rains did come with some hail. If we can continue to get additional timely rainfall, we could see an increase in yield potential for this season."

Conaway, speakers include U.S. Rep. Jodey Arrington; Shelley Heinrich with The Cotton Board; Dr. Darren Hudson with the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics at Texas Tech; and Kody Bessent with Plains Cotton Growers, Inc. Lunch will be served at noon.

Association dues are \$60 annually, and members are encouraged to bring a dues check or mail it to Plains Ginners Association, P.O. Box 25, Ropesville, TX 79358.

Please RSVP for lunch to Julie Wheeler at Plains Cotton Growers by Thursday, August 23, by calling (806) 792-4904 or emailing julie@plainscotton.org. For more information on the meeting, call Chris Berry at (806) 893-2783.

Registration for the golf tournament begins at 1:30 p.m., with a shotgun start at 2 p.m. at Meadowbrook Golf Course, 601 Municipal Drive in Lubbock. To sign up for the golf tournament, call Darryl Dawson at (806) 763-4371 or email darryl.dawson@adm.com.

Upcoming Crop Tours, Field Days, and Seed Cotton Program Meetings
See the list at www.plainscotton.org

West Texas Agricultural Chemicals Institute Annual Conference Set for September 11 *Pre-Registration Deadline is August 31*

Friday, August 10, 2018

From WTACI

The West Texas Agricultural Chemicals Institute will host their annual conference on Tuesday, Sept. 11, at the Bayer Museum of Agriculture, located at 1121 Canyon Lake Drive in Lubbock.

This year represents the 66th meeting of WTACI, an unincorporated organization of dealers, industry representatives, agricultural producers, scientists, educators, and agribusiness members who support education and research programs promoting safe and effective use of agricultural chemicals and protection and preservation of the area's natural resources.

Topics to be discussed at the conference include ag and regulatory policy, pesticide training and certification, pest management, chemical application, cotton quality and irrigation management, crop management challenges, weed control across Texas, and legal issues in herbicide and pesticide application. A detailed list of presentations and speakers soon will be available at <http://wtaci.tamu.edu>.

A total of at least 6 Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) CEUs are pending at this time.

Pre-registration is available online at <http://wtaci.tamu.edu/Registration.html>. On-line registration fees are \$75 for conference attendees and must be completed or postmarked by August 31. Booth fees start at \$300. On-site registration will begin at 7 a.m. the day of the conference and

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TICKETS AVAILABLE

7th Annual
Celebrate Cotton Game
Saturday, Sept. 15
3 p.m.
Texas Tech Red Raiders
Houston Cougars



Special Promo Code
<http://bit.ly/TTUCottonGameTickets>
COTTON18

Plains Ginners Association Sets Annual Meeting, Golf Tournament for August 30

Friday, August 10, 2018

By Mary Jane Buerkle

House Agriculture Committee Chairman Mike Conaway will be the keynote speaker at the Plains Ginners Association's Annual Meeting on Thursday, August 30, at the Bayer Museum of Agriculture in Lubbock.

Registration for the meeting begins at 7:30 a.m., and the program begins shortly after 8 a.m. In addition to Chairman

will cost \$95 for attendees and \$325 for booth sponsors. Lunch will be provided as part of the registration fee.

Opportunities also exist to contribute to the WTACI Scholarship Fund, which has provided more than \$60,000 in scholarships to students majoring in agricultural fields at many Texas universities.

Contact Shawn Wade at (806) 792-4904 or shawn@plainscotton.org for questions about the program and CEU's. If you have trouble or questions regarding registration contact David Pointer, 806-746-4021 or dlpointer@ag.tamu.edu.

Want the facts about the U.S. agriculture and farm policy?
<http://www.farmpolicyfacts.org>

NRCS to Host Local Working Group Meetings

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and local Soil and Water Conservation Districts are hosting conservation planning meetings through local work groups across the state.

The purpose of the Local Working Group Meetings is to collect input from farmers, ranchers, federal, state and local agencies, agricultural leaders, organizations, businesses and other individuals who have an interest in natural resource conservation.

LWG meetings are established processes for Soil and Water Conservation Districts and NRCS to engage the local community and stakeholders to develop conservation needs assessment and to assist NRCS to develop local conservation programs and program delivery strategies.

Input is needed to help determine local natural resource priorities and criteria for USDA conservation activities and program planning in 2019.

Meeting recommendations are provided to and reviewed by the State Technical Advisory Committee which advises the State Conservationist on the conservation programs offered by NRCS.

For more information, contact the local USDA-NRCS office in your county, listed under USDA in the Yellow Pages.

Persons with disabilities who require special accommodations and/or alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, Large print, audiotape, etc.) associated with this meeting should contact the local NRCS office in their county.

Area meetings coming up are as follows:

August 13 – 9 a.m., Randall County USDA Service Center Meeting Room, 2315 11th Avenue, **Canyon**

August 13 – 9 a.m., Western State Bank, 5009 College Avenue, **Snyder**

August 14 – 8 a.m., USDA Service Center, 909 West 9th, **Spearman**

August 14 – 6:30 p.m., Pioneer Memorial Museum - Parker Room, 101 W. Main, **Crosbyton**

August 15 – 1:00 p.m., National Ranching Heritage Center, 3121 4th St., **Lubbock**

August 16 – 7:30 a.m., USDA Field Office Meeting Room, 221 Euclid, **Panhandle**

August 21– 7:30 a.m., NRCS Service Center, 122 Waters St, **Miami**

August 21– 8:00 a.m., USDA Service Center 111 E Avenue D, **Muleshoe**

August 21– 1:45 p.m., USDA Field Office, 1301 S. Main St., **Seminole**

August 21– 6:00 p.m., USDA Service Center, 814 South 2nd St., **Canadian**

USDA to Realign ERS with Chief Economist, Relocate ERS & NIFA Outside DC

Thursday, August 9, 2018

USDA News Release

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue today announced further reorganization of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, intended to improve customer service, strengthen offices and programs, and save taxpayer dollars. The Economic Research Service, currently under USDA's Research, Education, and Economics mission area, will realign once again with the Office of the Chief Economist under the Office of the Secretary. Additionally, most employees of ERS and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture will be relocated outside of the National Capital Region. The movement of the employees outside of Washington, DC is expected to be completed by the end of 2019. Moving ERS back together with OCE under the Office of the Secretary simply makes sense because the two have similar missions. ERS studies and anticipates trends and emerging issues, while OCE advises the Secretary and Congress on the economic implications of policies and programs. These two agencies were aligned once before, and bringing them back together will enhance the effectiveness of economic analysis at USDA.

New locations have yet to be determined, and it is possible that ERS and NIFA may be co-located when their new homes are found. USDA is undertaking the relocations for three main reasons:

--To improve USDA's ability to attract and retain highly qualified staff with training and interests in agriculture, many of whom come from land-grant universities. USDA has experienced significant turnover in these positions, and it has been difficult to recruit employees to the Washington, DC area, particularly given the high cost of living and long commutes.

--To place these important USDA resources closer to many of stakeholders, most of whom live and work far from the Washington, DC area.

--To benefit the American taxpayers. There will be significant savings on employment costs and rent, which will allow more employees to be retained in the long run, even in the face of tightening budgets.

No ERS or NIFA employees will be involuntarily separated. Every employee who wants to continue working will have an opportunity to do so, although that will mean moving to a new location for most. Employees will be offered relocation assistance and will receive the same base pay as before, and the locality pay for the new location. For those who are interested, USDA is seeking approval from the Office of Personnel Management and the Office of Management and Budget for both Voluntary Early Retirement Authority and Voluntary Separation Incentive Payments.

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