

Texas Tech's Hequet Receives 2018 Cotton Genetics Research Award

Thursday, January 10, 2019 From the National Cotton Council

Dr. Eric Hequet, a former cotton breeder and current chair of Texas Tech University's Plant & Soil Science Department in Lubbock, has been selected by the Joint Cotton Breeding Committee as the recipient of the 2018 Cotton Genetics Research Award.

The announcement was made here today during the 2019 Beltwide Cotton Improvement Conference, which convened as part of the National Cotton Council-coordinated 2019 Beltwide Cotton Conferences. Hequet received a plaque and a monetary award.

Hequet, who co-developed and co-released 21 improved germplasm lines of upland cotton and two cultivars, has served the cotton genetics community as a breeder, textile engineer, department chairman, and collaborator with cotton breeders in Texas, other states, and worldwide.

According to one of his nominators, Dr. Wayne Smith, professor and associate head of Texas A&M University's Soil and Crop Sciences Department, Hequet has 1) conducted research into the use of high volume instrument and Advanced Fiber Information System data as selection criteria for breeders across the United States and 2) encouraged breeders to utilize these parameters in the development of improved cotton germplasm and cultivars.

"Eric has provided leadership in research on the measurement of cotton fiber properties and contaminants and their impact on textile processing performance," Smith said. "He has been in the forefront of advocating that breeders consider more than just micronaire, length, and strength in their plant and row selections and has provided guidance in the value of fineness, maturity, length uniformity, and fiber elongation."

Smith noted that Hequet also has been a terrific collaborator in evaluating the exceptional fiber quality material and how these improvements can lead to better yarns that will lead to better textiles for maintaining cotton as a fiber of choice."

Another nominator, Dr. Jane K. Dever, a professor and cotton breeder at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research Center in Lubbock, agreed saying that Hequet "instilled conscientiousness about the importance of fiber quality in the U.S. breeding community at a crucial time in the industry, as U.S. raw cotton exports soared from 20 percent to 80 percent of production."

Hequet has received multiple awards and honors. Among those are being named in 2014 the J.A. Love Endowed Chair for Sustainable Agriculture at Texas Tech as well as being named in 2015 as a Horn Endowed Professor – Texas Tech's highest honor for a faculty member.

After earning his Ph.D. in Engineering Sciences at the Université de Haute Alsace (France), Hequet worked at the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development. He came to Texas Tech in 1997 where he served five years as assistant director of the Fiber and Biopolymer Research Institute before being

named the Institute's associate director – a post he still holds. In 2006, he became a research associate and professor in Tech's Plant & Soil Science Department.

The annual cotton Genetics Research Award was established in 1961 by U.S. commercial cotton breeders to recognize and encourage basic research in cotton genetics, cytogenetics and breeding. It is administered by the Joint Cotton Breeding Committee consisting of representatives of the NCC, the USDA, state experiment stations, Cotton Incorporated and commercial breeders.

Dr. James Olvey also was honored by the Joint Cotton Breeding Committee during the Improvement Conference.

Olvey, president/cotton breeder of O&A Enterprises, Inc. in Maricopa, Ariz., was recognized, in part, because of his work to identify Pima and Upland germplasm demonstrating resistance to the FOV4 race of fusarium. In 2016 he realized that FOV4, a highly virulent race of the soil-born fusarium pathogen previously confined to California, had spread to the cotton growing areas near El Paso, Texas.

Dr. Don Jones, director, Agricultural Research for Cotton Incorporated, said Olvey promptly alerted his organization and the larger cotton community and volunteered to assist public-sector researchers on a strategy to screen germplasm to identify resistance to FOV4 which, once identified, could in turn be utilized in breeding programs to develop FOV4 resistance varieties.

"Those strategy sessions culminated in a massive 2018 field screening effort that he (Olvey) conducted on behalf of the public sector using his own proprietary 'calibration' checks to gauge the level of pathogen load across the field," Jones said. "These checks are a unique and vital resource and were previously unavailable to the public sector."

Olvey's contributions in designing and conducting the screening for resistance as well as his volunteering the use of his "calibration" checks are considered critical for the nation's upland production regions to survive the spread of this fatal cotton pathogen.

Blue Jeans Go Green™ Program Announces Partnership, Collection Points

Tuesday, January 8, 2019

From The Cotton Board

PhytoGen, the U.S. cottonseed brand of Corteva Agriscience™, Agriculture Division of DowDuPont, is partnering with Cotton Incorporated's Blue Jeans Go Green™ denim recycling program to help bring cotton's sustainability message full circle. PhytoGen is the first cottonseed partner with the Blue Jeans Go Green™ program to organize denim collection drives in targeted cotton-producing communities. By recycling worn denim into housing insulation, the Blue Jeans Go Green™ program keeps textile waste out of landfills and helps with building efforts in communities around the country. PhytoGen will be collecting used denim at various events throughout 2019.

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“The collaboration with PhytoGen illustrates the full circle of U.S. cotton sustainability,” Stacey Gorman, Director of Communications for The Cotton Board, said. “New seed technologies and the commitment of U.S. cotton growers continue to make sustainable production gains, while the Blue Jeans Go Green™ denim recycling program addresses end-of-product-life sustainability.”

To raise awareness for the program, PhytoGen and Corteva Agriscience first hosted internal denim drives at their corporate offices and seed production locations. The internal drives took place last November, collecting over 2,000 pieces of denim. And the PhytoGen effort is just getting started.

“We are thrilled to partner with Cotton Incorporated and Blue Jeans Go Green™ to essentially bring cotton full circle,” Derek Racca, PhytoGen Brand Manager, said. “This program helps the communities in which we and our customers live and work by keeping denim out of landfills as well as playing a role in donating insulation to charities, such as Habitat for Humanity.”

“The U.S. cotton industry is a proud one, composed of passionate growers who recognize the limitless potential of one of America’s most cherished crops. The Blue Jeans Go Green™ program is a great way to connect with the cotton growing community and give them a way to divert textile waste from landfills,” Gorman said.

With the support of the National FFA Foundation and local FFA chapters, PhytoGen is coordinating denim collection drives across the Cotton Belt in early 2019. In addition to collection at local cotton grower meetings, PhytoGen denim drop-off locations will be at:

- World Ag Expo, Feb. 12-14, Tulare, CA
- Mid-South Farm & Gin Show, March 1-2, Memphis, TN
- Texas Cotton Ginners' Association tradeshow, April 4-5, Lubbock, TX
- Sunbelt Field Day, July 25, Tifton, GA

“PhytoGen is proud to partner with the Blue Jeans Go Green™ program in the continuing effort to help communities – and FFA chapters – thrive. Whether it’s denim jeans, jackets, shirts or skirts, every piece of denim makes a difference,” Racca said.

Since its inception in 2006, the Blue Jeans Go Green™ program has collected more than 2 million pieces of denim and over 3.9 million square feet of insulation has been upcycled from worn denim. More than 40 Habitat for Humanity affiliates have received denim insulation and more than 1,000 tons of textile waste have been diverted from landfills. Corporate partnerships with the Blue Jeans Go Green™ program predominately have been with retailers and brands who offer a sales incentive for recycling used denim. Past partners include: Wrangler, Gap, American Eagle, J. Crew and Madewell. For more information visit BlueJeansGoGreen.org.

Want the facts about the U.S. agriculture and farm policy?

<http://www.farmpolicyfacts.org>

Upcoming Area Ag Conferences

January 15– Ochiltree Crop Profitability Meeting, 10 a.m.-Noon, Ochiltree County Expo Center, 402 Expo Drive, **Perryton**. More info: Scott Strawn, CEA-AG/NR, (806) 435-4501.

January 15 – Southern Mesa Ag Conference, 7:45 a.m., Forrest Park Community Center, **Lamesa**. CEUs available. More info: Tommy Doederlein, EA-IPM, or Gary Roschetzsky, CEA-AG/NR, (806) 872-3444.

January 16 – SE Panhandle Ag Conference, 8 a.m.-3 p.m., Kathy Fowler Insurance Ball Room, **Memphis**. CEUs available, cost \$10 at the door. More info: Josh Brooks, CEA-AG/NR, (806) 259-3015.

January 17 – Texas Alliance for Water Conservation “Water College,” 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Lubbock Memorial Civic Center. No fee to attend, lunch provided, CEUs available. More info: <http://www.tawc.us>

January 17 – South Plains Ag Conference, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Texas Red Wine Event Center, 2127 US 380, **Brownfield**. CEUs available, including auxin training. Cost \$10 at the door. More info: Geoff Cooper, CEA-AG/NR, (806) 637-4060.

January 23 – NW Panhandle Cotton Conference, 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Rita Blanca Coliseum, **Dalhart**. Three CEUs in IPM available. No cost. More info: Mike Bragg, CEA-AG/NR, (806) 244-4434.

January 25 – Caprock Cotton Conference, 7 a.m.-5:30 p.m., Floyd County Friends Unity Center, **Muncy** (between Floydada and Lockney on U.S. Highway 70). CEUs available. More info: Cristen Brooks, Floyd County CEA-AG/NR, (806) 983-4912, or Dr. Caitlin Jackson, Crosby County CEA-AG/NR, (806) 675-2347.

January 28 – Top of Texas Cotton Conference, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., M.K. Brown Auditorium, 1100 W. Coronado Drive, **Pampa**. Three CEUs in IPM available; no cost. More info: Jody Bradford, Carson County CEA-AG/NR, (806) 537-3882.

January 28 – Cotton Pre-Plant Meeting, 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Happy State Bank Conference Room, 500 Main St., **Silverton**. More info: Mason Carter, CEA-AG/NR, (806) 823-2522.

January 29 – Llano Estacado Cotton Conference, 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Bailey County Electric Cooperative, 610 E. American Blvd., **Muleshoe**. CEUs available. More info: John David Gonzales, EA-IPM or Curtis Preston, Bailey County CEA-AG/NR, (806) 252-4583, or Sergio Mendez, Parmer County CEA-AG/NR, (806) 251-5120.

January 29 – West Texas Cotton Research Update hosted by The Cotton Board, exact time TBD, USDA Plant Stress Lab, 3810 Fourth St., **Lubbock**.

January 30 – Pre-Plant Producers Meeting, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Kuhlman Extension Center, 200 N. Brown Road, **Canyon**. More info: Dr. J.D. Ragland, CEA-AG/NR, (806) 468-5543.

February 12-13 – No-Till Texas Soil Health Symposium, Amarillo Civic Center North Exhibit Hall, **Amarillo**. Registration \$60. More info: <https://www.no-tilltexas.com>.

To see a complete list of upcoming conferences, visit <http://www.plainscotton.org/agconferences.html>.

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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