

PCG Participates in “Cotton Day at the Capitol”

Friday, April 26, 2019

By Mary Jane Buerkle

More than 50 cotton producers and industry leaders from across the state converged on the Texas State Capitol in Austin on April 16 for “Cotton Day at the Capitol,” an event held each legislative session.

The goal of “Cotton Day at the Capitol” is to visit with both newly elected and veteran legislators, along with agency leaders, and extend the industry’s appreciation for their support of cotton, which is the No. 1 cash commodity crop grown in Texas.

Issues discussed included water, boll weevil eradication, research and other topics of importance to the Texas cotton industry that are handled by the Texas Legislature or state agencies. One key policy priority is to obtain research funding for the development of an early detection and mitigation program to combat Fusarium Wilt Race 4 (FOV4) in cotton, which is a concern because of its expansion into upland cotton varieties and its appearance in the El Paso area down toward the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

Other topics PCG and the industry continue to monitor include the protection of property rights, eminent domain reform, and property tax reform. PCG also has been active in combating bills that could place additional state restrictions on herbicide and insecticide technologies beyond federal labeling, which PCG believes is sufficient.

Participants included representatives from across multiple segments of the cotton industry. Those participating from PCG included Vice President Brent Nelson of Sudan; Secretary-Treasurer Martin Stoerner of Lockney; Chairman Johnie Reed and his wife Lori of Kress; and PCG staff members Shawn Wade, Kody Bessent, Mark Brown and Mary Jane Buerkle.

The event was led by Texas Cotton Producers, which is comprised of nine regional certified cotton grower organizations including PCG; El Paso Valley Cotton Growers Association; Trans Pecos Cotton Growers Association; St. Lawrence Cotton Growers Association; Rolling Plains Cotton Growers Association; Southern Rolling Plains Cotton Growers Association; Blackland Cotton and Grain Producers Association; South Texas Cotton and Grain Association; and Cotton and Grain Producers of the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

Enrollment Open for

Texas International Cotton School

Friday, April 26, 2019 From Texas International Cotton School

Registration remains open for the 39th session of the Texas International Cotton School, scheduled for August 5-15, 2019, in Lubbock.

The Texas International Cotton School is uniquely structured to provide an integrated understanding of the Texas cotton industry and how it interacts with the global cotton/textile

complex. The intensive two-week program covers all aspects of cotton, from the field to the fabric. Since its inception, the school has been a collaboration between the Texas cotton merchants who make up the Lubbock Cotton Exchange and the faculty and staff of the Fiber and Biopolymer Research Institute of Texas Tech University.

“Our planning committee works diligently to ensure that our curriculum not only includes the fundamentals of the cotton industry, but also examines the latest issues and advancements,” Lubbock Cotton Exchange President Beau Stephenson said.

During the two weeks of the school, more than 30 experts from across the United States teach the students, who learn about the cotton marketing chain – including seed breeding, farm production, harvesting, ginning, warehousing, merchandising, and textile manufacturing. All aspects of U.S. and global trade of cotton are covered, so the students obtain an understanding of what is required to successfully participate in the U.S. cotton market and to deliver the cottons needed in diverse export markets. They learn about the important quality attributes of cotton fibers and how these translate into processing efficiency and textile product quality. Throughout the program, students have repeated opportunities to interact with the cotton merchants of the Lubbock Cotton Exchange and the fiber and textile experts of Texas Tech University.

For more information, including tuition and curriculum, visit <http://www.texasintl cottonschool.com>.

Water Level Measurements Indicate Average Decline of -1.05 Feet Within HPWD Service Area in 2018-2019

Monday, April 15, 2019

From High Plains Water District

An average change of -1.05 feet was noted in the groundwater levels of the Ogallala/Edwards-Trinity (High Plains) Aquifer from 2018 to 2019 within the 16-county High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD).

The 10-year District average change (2009-2019) is -8.83 feet while the five-year District average change (2014-2019) is -2.13 feet. The average saturated thickness of the Ogallala/Edwards-Trinity (High Plains) Aquifer within the District is 56 feet (2018-2019). It remained unchanged from last year.

HPWD staff shared final results of the 2019 water level measurements with the District’s five-member Board of Directors at their April 9 meeting.

Beginning in January, HPWD field personnel made water level measurements in a network of 1,356 privately-owned water wells completed into the Ogallala/Edwards-Trinity (High Plains) Aquifer. In addition, measurements were also made in 31 Dockum Aquifer wells.

(“COTTON NEWS” continued on Page 2)

County wide average declines were recorded in 15 of the 16 counties in the District since the 2018 measurements.

“This can probably be attributed to the fact that the area received about half the rainfall in 2018 as it did in 2017. A large amount of irrigation was needed up until the time that it rained toward the end of the growing season,” said HPWD Field Technician Supervisor Keith Whitworth.

Whitworth shared the following statistics for observation wells with publishable measurements.

- 234 observation wells with increases ranging from 0.1 to 5.41 feet.
- 518 observation wells with decreases ranging from 0 to -.99 of a foot.
- 279 observation wells with decreases ranging from -1 to -1.99 feet.
- 173 observation wells with decreases ranging from -2 to -2.99 feet.
- 58 observation wells with decreases ranging from -3 to -3.99 feet.
- 26 observation wells with decreases ranging from -4 to -4.99 feet.
- 29 observation wells with decreases ranging from -5 to -12.98 feet.

“Each year, there are wells that show water level rises and others that show water level declines. The largest water level rise was 5.41 feet in a Lynn County well and the largest water level decline was -12.98 feet in a Floyd County well,” Whitworth said. “Groundwater recharge occurs quickly in Lynn County due to sandier soils and a shallow water table. The area in Floyd County where the large decline is shown takes much longer to recover from the previous irrigation season,” he said.

Results of the 2019 water level measurements and updated saturated thickness information are now available on the interactive map on the HPWD website (map.hpwd.org). Those who want printed information should contact Jed Leibbrandt at (806) 762-0181 or email him at jed.leibbrandt@hpwd.org. He can provide print copies of water level measurement data for an individual county or specific counties of interest.

Producers Discuss Key Issues at American Cotton Producers Meeting

Friday, April 19, 2019 From the National Cotton Council

The American Cotton Producers, chaired by Shawn Holladay, a Lubbock, TX, producer, met recently for their Spring meeting. In addition to economic and Washington, D.C., briefings from NCC staff, the meeting included discussions on the impact of plastic lint contamination in the marketing chain and on a sustainability initiative.

A private merchant, cooperative merchant and domestic yarn manufacturer panel reviewed how their companies dealt with contaminated bales classed as 71/72. They stated their concerns about the narrowing price gap for U.S. cotton and foreign growths due to lint contamination. The manufacturing representative documented the cost impact to his mill from bales containing plastic. Chairman Holladay stated that these presentations would

assist producer leadership in upcoming discussions within the NCC on lint contamination prevention.

NCC President/CEO Gary Adams explained the background and rationale for the NCC's sustainability initiative, the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol. Protocol Executive Director Ken Burton demonstrated the Protocol process including registration, the self-assessment questionnaire and use of data tools.

The attendees also were updated on Committee for the Advancement of Cotton collections and the need for adequate political recourses.

Cotton Board Hires David Miller as Mid-South Regional Communication Manager

Monday, April 22, 2019 From The Cotton Board

The Cotton Board has hired David Miller as its new Mid-South Regional Communication Manger (RCM). Miller's territory includes Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri & Tennessee.

The Cotton Board's RCMs work to ensure that stakeholders of the Cotton Research and Promotion Program in their respective territories are informed of the activities stemming from the Program as conducted by Cotton Incorporated and administered by the Cotton Board. The RCMs visit producers in the field, speak at industry meetings, participate in trade shows, and coordinate producer tours of Cotton Incorporated.

Before joining the Cotton Board, Miller worked as Syngenta's AgriEdge Specialist in Louisiana. In his role with Syngenta, Miller assisted cotton growers with data collection and record keeping software. Miller, a Mississippi-native, obtained his degree from Mississippi State University.

“I have grown up around cotton all my life and I'm excited to step into my new role as Mid-South RCM for The Cotton Board. I look forward to working with the cotton producers in my region and giving them insight into the groundbreaking research and promotion being done by the Cotton Research and Promotion Program,” said Miller.

The Cotton Board's other RCMs include Monty Bain, Southeast RCM covering Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia; Shelley Heinrich, Southern Plains RCM covering north Texas, Kansas, and Oklahoma; and Christi Chadwell, Southwest RCM covering east, central and south Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California.

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Upcoming Area Auxin Trainings

May 2 - Auxin Training, 9 a.m., Hockley County AgriLife Extension Office, 1212 Houston St., **Levelland**

May 3 - Auxin Training, 10 a.m., Lamb County AgriLife Extension Office, 100 6th Drive, Room B-5, **Littlefield**

May 10 - Auxin Training, 9-11 a.m., Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center, 1102 E. FM 1294, **Lubbock**

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