

2018 County Production Figures In; PCG Area Produced 3.94 Million Upland Bales

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By Mary Jane Buerkle

You could say that 2018 was the year of “what might have been” when it comes to Texas High Plains production, as early-season drought and other adverse weather conditions impacted the crop throughout the year. However, even with Mother Nature’s challenges, cotton growers in the PCG service area produced about 3.94 million bales in 2018, which is around the historical average.

This is a decrease from the 5.39 million 480-pound bales produced during the 2017 growing season, and also less than the 4,085,000 million projected by NASS in their February 2019 report for Districts 1-N and 1-S.

Planted acreage in 2018 was up more than 360,000 acres from the previous year, totaling just less than 4.8 million acres. Both the northern and southern portions of the PCG service area saw increases. However, the abandonment figure for 2018 of almost 50 percent shows that the final production number could have been significantly higher, even though much of it was on dryland acreage.

According to the final county level production estimates released late last week by NASS, the Plains Cotton Growers 41-county service area accounted for about 57 percent of the 9.27 million bales of upland cotton produced in Texas this past season. Statewide production was down 26 percent from 2017, and the average yield per acre statewide was also down just more than 6 percent from last year at 756 pounds per acre.

On a national basis, Texas growers accounted for about 39 percent of the 17.56 million upland bales produced in the United States in 2018, easily maintaining their position as the No. 1 cotton producing state in the nation. Georgia was second with 1.955 million bales, and Mississippi was third with just more than 1.46 million bales. In 2018, 6 of the top 7 cotton-producing counties in the nation were within 80 miles of Lubbock, once again reinforcing the area’s claim as the nation’s largest cotton patch.

Hale County retained their spot as the top-producing county on the High Plains and in the nation in 2018, with 354,600 480-pound bales of cotton and averaging 920 pounds per harvested acre. Lubbock County was second with 284,000 bales, and Floyd County third at 271,700. Overall yield per harvested acre on the High Plains averaged 768 pounds in 2018, down slightly from 795 in 2017.

Joining Hale, Lubbock and Floyd counties in the top ten cotton-producing counties in the High Plains Region (reported in 480-lb bales) were: Hockley, 258,400; Gaines, 247,800; Lynn, 232,300; Crosby, 195,200; Terry, 185,100; Lamb, 167,800; and Hansford, 153,900. This is the first time that a county from north of Texas Interstate 40 has broken the region’s top ten.

As for yield, Hansford County ranked at the top for 2018, averaging 1,237 pounds per harvested acre. Individual counties ranking second and third in yield per harvested acre were Parmer County (1,186

pounds), and Castro County (1,164 pounds). Nine counties in the PCG service area averaged more than 1,000 pounds per acre.

A complete listing of the 2018 upland cotton production totals for Texas and other states is available on the NASS website (<http://www.nass.usda.gov>).

2018-crop Upland Cotton Production Plains Cotton Growers, Inc. 41-County Service Area

County	Planted (Acres)	Harvested (Acres)	Yield per Harv. Acre	Production (Bales)
Andrews	•	•	•	•
Armstrong	•	•	•	•
Bailey	94,100	30,700	894	57,200
Borden	•	•	•	•
Briscoe	44,500	26,700	760	42,300
Carson	104,800	44,800	1,061	99,000
Castro	80,300	43,500	1,164	105,500
Cochran	157,800	62,900	592	77,600
Crosby	230,000	167,500	559	195,200
Dallam	47,600	42,800	597	53,200
Dawson	337,500	92,400	774	149,000
Deaf Smith	53,300	26,200	914	49,900
Dickens	34,600	29,500	384	23,600
Floyd	238,000	156,800	832	271,700
Gaines	331,000	232,200	512	247,800
Garza	49,200	27,600	497	28,600
Hale	311,500	185,000	920	354,600
Hansford	74,600	59,700	1,237	153,900
Hartley	27,600	22,700	1,152	54,500
Hemphill	•	•	•	•
Hockley	303,500	146,700	845	258,400
Howard	•	•	•	•
Hutchinson	35,400	24,800	1,016	52,500
Lamb	215,700	92,800	868	167,800
Lipscomb	•	•	•	•
Lubbock	305,000	182,300	748	284,000
Lynn	346,600	201,200	554	232,300
Martin	188,600	18,600	573	22,200
Midland	•	•	•	•
Moore	42,900	36,900	1,125	86,500
Motley	22,600	14,700	438	13,400
Ochiltree	48,900	45,000	1,158	108,600
Oldham	•	•	•	•
Parmer	85,200	56,600	1,186	139,800
Potter	•	•	•	•
Randall	15,200	4,800	955	9,550
Roberts	•	•	•	•
Sherman	58,200	49,000	1,097	111,980
Swisher	145,900	61,300	926	118,200
Terry	291,500	158,100	562	185,100
Yoakum	165,400	76,900	726	116,300
1-N Combined Co.	63,100	21,000	854	37,370
1-S Combined Co.	191,500	21,200	761	33,600
High Plains Total	4,741,600	2,462,900	768 (weighted)	3,941,200

Source: National Agricultural Statistics Service

• = Zero Production or production aggregated into Combined Counties