

## **NASS Projects Texas High Plains Production at 4.93 Million Bales in 2019**

Friday, August 16, 2019

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 2019 High Plains upland cotton crop at 4.93 million bales, harvested from 3.63 million acres. Planted acres are estimated at 4.44 million, reflecting a projected 18 percent abandonment rate, which is about average.

Yield per acre is estimated at 831 pounds per acre in the northern counties of the PCG service area, and 601 pounds per acre in the southern counties.

Of particular interest in this report is the significant decrease in planted acreage in the northern portion of the PCG service area. NASS projects growers in the Northern High Plains planted 1.28 million acres of cotton, down 241,000 acres from 2018. Further, of that 1.28 million acres planted, NASS expects only 800,000 of that to be harvested, although most of that is irrigated.

In 2018, the Southern High Plains experienced more than a 50 percent abandonment rate. However, in 2019, growers in that area are expected to be able to hang on to more acreage (2.83 million acres), although the yield potential will come into question if Mother Nature doesn't cooperate, since much of the production in that area is dryland.

Statewide, the NASS report estimates that Texas growers will produce 8.4 million bales of upland cotton from 6.1 million acres harvested. Statewide yield is estimated to be 661 pounds per acre, down slightly from 756 last year. In 2018, 6.85 million bales of cotton were produced in Texas on 4.35 million harvested acres.

NASS estimates that the United States will produce 21.7 million bales of upland cotton, up 24 percent from 2018.

"A crop of this size would have been attainable had we received a good general rain two weeks ago, but dryland acreage is suffering, and the yield potential is uncertain," PCG Executive Vice President Steve Verett said. "This report is a benchmark for the year, and NASS will continue to revise these numbers as the season progresses."

## **Our View: Trade Aid Appreciated as Farmers Seek Trade Truce**

Wednesday, August 14, 2019

From Farm Policy Facts

As China continues to raise barriers blocking the import of American farm products, the USDA recently announced registration for the second round of Market Facilitation Payments (MFP).

President Trump has authorized up to \$14.5 billion in MFP payments, meant to help mitigate the negative effects of retaliatory tariffs stemming from ongoing trade disputes.

The program is open to a selection of non-specialty and specialty crops as well as dairy and hog producers. For non-specialty crops – such as cotton, wheat, soybeans, rice and corn –

payments will depend on the calculated impact of trade retaliation in each county.

As Farm Policy Facts has previously reported, a healthy farm economy depends on the export of high-quality American products abroad. For perspective, the agriculture sector produces around \$400 billion worth of crops and livestock per year, and exports near \$150 billion worth of agricultural goods.

As the "tip of the spear" in this trade war, and already reeling from a prolonged rural recession, America's farmers and ranchers have been deeply injured, and are therefore thankful that the Administration has taken action to help our rural communities during a particularly hard time.

"Farmers and ranchers are going through our 6th straight year of severe recession and unjustified foreign retaliatory tariffs are making already tough times even tougher," said Matt Huie, President of the Southwest Council of Agribusiness. "Thankfully, the MFP-II announced by Secretary Perdue throws us a vital life-line to help ensure that we can make it through this year and hopefully secure the credit we need to return to the fields for the next growing season."

Joe Mencer, chair of the USA Rice Farmers and an Arkansas rice farmer, noted that MFP payments will help rice farmers as they deal with the fallout from not only trade wars, but low commodity prices and extreme weather. "While these payments won't make us whole, they will provide some much needed relief financially for rice producers across the country," he said.

America's cotton farmers pointed to China's tariffs as a key reason for the declining health of the cotton industry as cotton exports lag and U.S. cotton loses market share to competitors in China. NCC Chairman Mike Tate, an Alabama cotton producer himself, expressed gratitude to the USDA for recognizing the trade pressures faced by farmers and taking action to provide assistance through MFP payments.

Brian Thalmann, President of the Minnesota Corn Growers Association, said that Minnesota's "corn farmers appreciate the quick rollout of the MFP program and USDA's efforts to better reflect the impact of ongoing trade disputes," but also emphasized that corn growers are focused on developing long-term solutions to support farmers.

This sentiment was echoed by the National Association of Wheat Growers.

"NAWG appreciates the Administration recognizing the impact the current trade war with China is having on farmers," stated National Association of Wheat Growers President and Lavon, Texas, farmer Ben Scholz. "However, this is a band-aid when we really need a long-term fix. NAWG understands holding China accountable for its WTO violations and unfair trade practices but a trade war is not the solution especially when farmers are the casualties. We continue to urge the Administration to quickly resolve the ongoing trade dispute with China and to negotiate new trade agreements, and Congress to act quickly on USMCA."

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

This reality that the greater hope lies not in the trade aid – though that is important – but in the prospect of achieving a freer and more accountable international marketplace for the future is captured well in the conclusion of SWCA President Huie’s statement:

“The MFP-II also buys some time for Congress to pass USMCA this year and for the U.S. and China to successfully conclude trade negotiations to end the current dispute so we can achieve a truly free and fair global market where foreign countries are expected to play by the same set of rules that we do. On behalf of the SWCA, I commend the President and Secretary Perdue and his team at USDA for their hard work in developing an MFP-II package that provides real help to farmers and ranchers when we need it most.”

Agribusiness Insurance; Texas Cotton Ginners Trust; Titan Trucking; Triangle Insurance Co.; Trinity Compress; W&R Industrial Servicing, Inc.; and Windmark Insurance Agency.

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**Plains Ginners Association Sets Annual Meeting, Golf Tournament for August 29**

Friday, August 16, 2019 By Mary Jane Buerkle

Plains Ginners Association will host their Annual Meeting on Thursday, August 29, 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. Speakers include U.S. Rep. Jodey Arrington; Bill Beam, USDA Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs; Greg Holt, USDA Gin Lab; Dr. Gary Adams, National Cotton Council; and Douglas Conley, Action Visa Assistance, LLC, who will discuss the H2-A Program. Lunch will be served at noon.

Association dues are \$25 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 Dava Robinson at Plains Cotton Growers by Thursday, August 22, by calling (806) 792-4904 or emailing [dava@plainscotton.org](mailto:dava@plainscotton.org). For more information on the meeting, call Willis Taubert at (806) 292-0242.

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](mailto:darryl.dawson@adm.com).

Sponsors include Allenberg Cotton Company; BC Supply; Cape and Son; Caprock Metal Works; Cargill Cotton; Farmers Cooperative Compress; Fiber Brite; Goetz Fibers; Hi-Plains Bag & Bagging Co.; Indeco Products, Inc.; K-Link; KS Supplies Inc.; Kimbell Gin Machinery; L.P. Brown Company; Lone Star Bearing; Lone Star Commodities; Lubbock Electric; Lummus Corporation; Module Truck Systems; Olam Cotton Co.; Plains Cotton Cooperative Association; Penny Nieman Co.; Plains Cotton Growers; PYCO Industries; RSM Company; Samuel Jackson, Inc.; Samuel Strapping Systems; Southern Cotton Oil Co.; Stover Equipment Co.; T J Beall Co.; Telmark, Inc.; Texas

**West Texas Agricultural Chemicals Institute Annual Conference Set for September 11**

*Pre-Registration Deadline is August 31*

Friday, August 16, 2019

From WTACI

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

This year represents the 67th 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, pest management, crop protection research, the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol, crop management challenges, and weed management issues. A detailed list of presentations and speakers soon will be available at <http://wtaci.tamu.edu>.

A total of 5.5 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 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](mailto: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](mailto:dlpointer@ag.tamu.edu).

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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](mailto:editor@plainscotton.org)