

## **NASS Reduces Texas High Plains Crop; USDA Announces Second MFP Tranche**

Friday, November 8, 2019

By Mary Jane Buerkle

Those who closely monitor the monthly Cotton District Estimates from the National Agricultural Statistics Service during the growing and harvest season generally expect some fluctuation in each report, but an adjustment of production numbers by 740,000 bales from one month to another is rare.

NASS estimates in today's November report that Texas High Plains growers will produce 3.78 million bales of cotton in 2019, down about 16 percent from the October forecast of 4.52 million.

Most of that decrease came from the Southern High Plains, which was reduced from 3.35 million bales in October to 2.65 million bales in November. The Northern High Plains was adjusted downward by 40,000 bales, from 1.17 million to 1.13 million.

Harvested acres were adjusted only slightly in the Southern High Plains, by 30,000 acres, but those numbers likely will be further refined in future reports. The drop came primarily through yield per acre. The Northern High Plains decreased from 739 pounds per acre in the October report to 714 in November. However, the Southern High Plains dropped from 581 pounds in October to 464 in November.

Statewide, the production number dropped from 7.8 million bales in October to 7.1 million in November. Adjustments were made in the Rolling Plains and a few other regions in Texas. The nationwide estimate for upland cotton decreased by 4 percent from the October report to 20.1 million bales, but that still is up 18 percent from 2018.

Relatively widespread rainfall put the brakes on harvest again late this week, just as many growers were drying out from the last round of precipitation. However, except for a chance of light wintry showers on Monday, the rest of the week looks to be sunny with only very slight rain chances.

Even with the significant reduction in production, markets didn't respond much on Friday, likely due in part to the lack of activity on a trade deal with China. December futures were in the 64-65 cent range at press time.

Growers did receive a bit of good news late in the week as USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue announced that the second tranche of the Market Facilitation Program payments would be funded as early as the end of this month or early December.

Per the trade mitigation final rule that was implemented for MFP 2.0, the second tranche will be up to 75 percent of the total calculated payment less the amount received in the first payment. If the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) determines that a third and final payment is warranted, it will be for up to the remaining amount of the total calculated payment, unless otherwise adjusted by CCC, and the last payment period will begin in early 2020.

"As the second tranche is rolled out, PCG will continue our steadfast efforts in DC with USDA and Congress to ensure that

they fully understand the third and final tranche is necessary and warranted and should be provided to assist producers who have and continue to suffer market and price loss from damage due to unjustified trade retaliation by China," Kody Bessent, PCG Vice President of Operations and Legislative Affairs, said in response to the news.

## **Texas Water Development Board Approves HPWD 2019-2024 Management Plan**

Wednesday, November 6, 2019 From High Plains Water District

The High Plains Underground Water Conservation District's (HPWD) amended management plan (2019-2024) was certified "administratively complete" and approved by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) on Oct. 25.

All groundwater conservation district management plans must address the following goals, if applicable.

- Providing the most efficient use of groundwater;
- Controlling and preventing waste of groundwater;
- Controlling and preventing subsidence;
- Conjunctive surface water management issues;
- Natural resource issues;
- Drought conditions;
- Conservation, recharge enhancement, rainwater harvesting, precipitation enhancement or brush control, where appropriate and cost-effective; and
- Desired future conditions of aquifers adopted by the District under Chapter 36.108 of the Texas Water Code.

The HPWD Board of Directors must review and readopt the management plan, with or without revisions, every five years as required by Texas Water Code Chapter 36.1072(e). The next plan is due to the TWDB on Oct. 25, 2024.

The revised plan is available for viewing/downloading at <http://www.hpwd.org/rules>. Just follow the link, "Revised Management Plan (10-2019)."

## **Voting Begins for 2019 Farm Service Agency County Committee Elections**

Monday, November 4, 2019

From Farm Service Agency

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will begin mailing ballots on November 4 to eligible farmers and ranchers across the country for the Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committee elections.

"Our county committee members play a key role in our efforts to provide assistance to producers," said FSA Administrator Richard Fordyce. "We value the local input of the over 7,000 members nationwide who provide their valuable knowledge and judgment as decisions are made about the services we provide, including disaster and emergency programs."

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To be counted, ballots must be returned to the local FSA county office or postmarked by December 2.

Each committee has three to 11 elected members who serve three-year terms of office. One-third of county committee seats are up for election each year. Newly elected committee members will take office January 1, 2020. County committee members help FSA make important decisions on its commodity support programs, conservation programs, indemnity and disaster programs, and emergency programs and eligibility.

Producers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program to be eligible to vote in the county committee election. Producers who supervise and conduct the farming operations of an entire farm, but are not of legal voting age, also may be eligible to vote.

Producers can find out if their local administrative area is up for election and if they are eligible to vote by contacting their local FSA county office. Eligible voters who did not receive a ballot in the mail can pick one up at their local FSA county office. Visit [fsa.usda.gov/elections](http://fsa.usda.gov/elections) for more information.

The 10 BWCC cotton technical conferences, which will provide updates on research and current/emerging technologies, will meet concurrently beginning on the morning of January 9 and conclude by noon on January 10.

The Engineering-Systems Conference will offer a panel discussion on sustainability and the Economics Conference will cover such topics as crop insurance, disaster assistance and trade while the Ginning Conference will include the latest on the development of systems to detect and eliminate plastic contamination, fiber quality preservation, the use of RFID technology, and new products from machinery manufacturers.

The Ginning Conference also will feature two panel discussions that include fiber quality and the cotton industry's emphasis on increasing length uniformity as well as a panel discussing methods to transfer technology to the ginning industry. In addition, the National Cotton Ginners Association (NCGA) will hold committee meetings on January 8 and 9. The Ginning Conference reports to be presented and the NCGA meeting schedule are listed on NCGA's website at <https://bit.ly/36Jx5Yw>.

For more information, visit <http://www.cotton.org/beltwide>.

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## Turkish Mills Expect to Purchase More U.S. Cotton after COTTON USA Conference

October 2019 From Cotton Council International  
 The COTTON USA Turkey Conference in Antalya, Turkey, proved to be an effective networking platform for U.S. cotton's customers in Turkey and U.S. cotton exporters. Nearly 110 representatives from 40 of the country's leading cotton spinning mills attended the event, as well as U.S. merchants, cooperatives and agents representing more than 20 companies. Participating mills said they expect to purchase an additional 133,632 bales of U.S. cotton in the next year as a result of the conference.

The program included: a market update on world and U.S. cotton production and demand; extensive information on U.S. cotton quality and ongoing efforts to make U.S. cotton contamination-free; and an overview of the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol and the U.S. industry's programs to ensure production of the world's most sustainable and traceable cotton. In addition, Supima and the International Cotton Association (ICA) provided information on their respective organizations' programs.

Pre- and post-conference survey results confirmed the effectiveness of the conference. Nearly 60% attended the conference to find out what's new in cotton, and 95% of those were satisfied their objectives had been met. More than 4 in 5 participants had a more favorable view of U.S. cotton after attending the conference, with nearly 90% believing U.S. cotton is better quality than cottons from other regions. Some 94% of participants would recommend attending to their colleagues.

## Beltwide Cotton Conferences Set for January 8-10 in Austin

November 2019 From the National Cotton Council  
 Those planning to attend the 2020 Beltwide Cotton Conferences (BWCC), set for January 8-10 at the JW Marriott in Austin, TX, are encouraged to pre-register and secure housing via the BWCC website, <http://www.cotton.org/beltwide/>.

Registration fees before December 16 are: \$200 for NCC/Cotton Foundation members, university and USDA researchers, extension personnel, associations and consultants; \$400 for U.S. non-members of NCC or the Cotton Foundation; \$500 for international participants; and \$80 for students. To guarantee the special conference room rate, all reservations must be made on or before December 16. The rates: \$199 single/double plus 6% sales tax and 9% occupancy tax (subject to change).

The BWCC will begin at noon on January 8 with the half-day Cotton Consultants Conference - open to all attendees. Among topics selected by the consultant community for consideration on the 2020 forum's program are: an expert panel of entomologists to discuss timely topics ranging from Bt resistance to results of testing Bollgard 4. Other key issues will be water restrictions, including the status of aquifers across the Cotton Belt; an update on precision agriculture technology; a discussion of EPA's role in the plant protection chemicals' review and registration processes; and a briefing on a multi-state potash study.

**Check out PCG's NEW website!**

[www.plainscotton.org](http://www.plainscotton.org)

**We'd love to hear your feedback!**

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)