

PCG Participates in Roundtable with Perdue, Cornyn, Ag Organizations

Friday, July 17, 2020

By Mary Jane Buerkle

Steve Verett and Kody Bessent with Plains Cotton Growers and Tom Sell and Matt Huie with Southwest Council of Agribusiness joined representatives from Texas Farm Bureau, Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, and Texas Cattle Feeders Association for a roundtable discussion with U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue and U.S. Senator John Cornyn near Austin on Thursday.

They communicated gratitude for assistance received via the CARES Act and other programs, and also the challenges growers are facing, highlighting the need for continued assistance going forward, especially with the pandemic significantly affecting demand and subsequently, market prices.

“We appreciate the opportunity to have this time with Secretary Perdue and Senator Cornyn, and thank them for coming to Texas to hear directly from ag leaders,” Verett said. “It was a productive discussion and we look forward to continuing our work with them and their staff as we develop solutions to help growers.”

“One of our goals in developing the Trust Protocol is to give brands and retailers greater confidence when including U.S. cotton in their sourcing mix,” said Ken Burton, Executive Director of the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol. “Participating brands and retailers will now be able to demonstrate measurable progress in reducing their environmental footprint and in achieving sustainability targets.”

The Trust Protocol underpins and verifies sustainability progress through sophisticated data collection and independent third-party verification. By working with Field to Market: The Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture and Control Union Certifications North America, the Trust Protocol enables brands and retailers to better track the cotton entering their supply chain. Brands who become members of the Trust Protocol will have access to aggregate year-over-year data on water use, greenhouse gas emissions, energy use, soil carbon and land use efficiency.

“At Levi Strauss & Co., the quality and sustainability of the cotton we use is critical to our business and important to our customers. We are deeply committed to sourcing sustainable cotton and reducing water usage, carbon emissions, and chemical usage,” said Liza Schillo, Senior Manager, Global Sustainability Integration, Levi Strauss & Co. and Trust Protocol Board Member. “We are therefore in strong support of the introduction of standards — including the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol — that champion sustainably grown cotton and drive wider adoption over the long-term of sustainable cultivation practices.”

The Trust Protocol is a complement to existing sustainability programs and is designed from the ground up to fit the unique cotton mass-growing environment of the United States. “We are engaged in an open dialogue with existing standards in the cotton industry, and open to are exploring future collaboration,” added Burton.

Last month, the Trust Protocol was added to Textile Exchange’s list of 36 preferred fibers and materials that more than 170 participating brands and retailers can select from as part of Textile Exchange’s Material Change Index program.

About the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol

In a period of ever greater supply chain scrutiny and a growing demand for transparency, the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol will set a standard for more sustainably grown cotton. It brings quantifiable and verifiable goals and measurement to the issue of responsibly-grown cotton production and drives continuous improvement in key sustainability metrics.

The Trust Protocol underpins and verifies U.S. cotton’s progress through sophisticated data collection and independent third-party verification. Choosing Trust Protocol cotton will give brands and retailers the critical assurances they need that the cotton fiber element of their supply chain is more sustainably grown with lower environmental and social risk. Brands and retailers will gain access to U.S. cotton with sustainability credentials proven via Field to Market, measured via the Fieldprint Calculator and verified with Control Union Certifications.

For more information, visit <https://TrustUsCotton.org>, or find them on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram or LinkedIn.

Important Program Deadlines

U.S. Department of Agriculture Key Programs

Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) Application
August 28

Yield Update for PLC Program
September 30

Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program+ (WHIP+) Application
December 31

(program funds will remain available until expended or December 31)

Small Business Administration Key Programs

Paycheck Protection Program
Signup Extended Through August 8
Economic Injury Disaster Loan
Signup Ends December 31

U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol Welcomes Brands and Retailers

Wednesday, July 15, 2020

From U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol

Starting today, brands and retailers can join the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol, a new system for responsibly grown cotton that will provide annual data for six areas of sustainability in line with the U.N. Sustainability Goals. This year-over-year data, available for the first time, will allow brands and retailers to better measure progress towards meeting sustainability commitments.