

Texas High Plains Cotton Conditions Mixed

Friday, August 21, 2020

By Mary Jane Buerkle

With about six to eight weeks before cotton harvest starts ramping up across the Texas High Plains, this year's crop is approaching the home stretch, with most acreage either at or nearing physiological or hard cutout.

Conditions around the region remain mixed, from excellent in irrigated fields that have had some help from Mother Nature, to poor in some fields that have experienced drought, severe weather, or other limiting factors. Rainfall has been spotty. Some growers haven't received much more than a few tenths since before planting time. Others may have gotten a rain, but unfortunately paid the price with accompanying hail.

All of this has contributed to a relatively quiet market. December futures were up Thursday, closing at 64.52, but were trading slightly lower back toward 64 cents on Friday at press time. Some South Texas growers are reporting excellent yields, and other parts of the Cotton Belt appear to be faring well. Two tropical depressions have formed in the Gulf of Mexico and could be headed toward some cotton country. Current 10-day forecasts for the PCG service area include slight chances for rain over the weekend and sunny throughout next week with no rain in sight. Highs are forecasted to be in the mid to upper 90s and lows in the upper 60s to lower 70s.

In other cotton news, the United States Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals – the court that earlier this summer vacated the registration of dicamba-based herbicides XtendiMax, FeXapan, and Engenia – on Monday denied a request from Bayer, BASF and Corteva to rehear the case. While the next step for this case would be an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court, XtendiMax and Engenia technologies currently are under EPA review for re-registration. Although the EPA could issue a decision on that later this fall, it remains to be seen what restrictions the labels could include.

Important Program Deadlines

U.S. Department of Agriculture Key Programs

Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) Application
September 11

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

Economic Injury Disaster Loan
Signup Ends December 31

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ACP Holds Virtual Summer Meeting

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From the National Cotton Council

The American Cotton Producers (ACP), chaired by Mark McKean of California, convened via webinar to receive updates on key industry issues.

Keynote speakers included Aaron Weber, agricultural liaison for Sen. John Hoeven, (R-ND) chair of the Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee and a member of the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry Committee; and Josh Chisholm, a staffer with the House Agriculture Committee which is chaired by Rep. Collin Peterson (D-MN). Both reported that Congress and the Administration remained in a stalemate on COVID relief legislation, but that discussions would continue. Additionally, they reported that both Sen. Hoeven and Chairman Peterson understood the legislation's cotton priorities and would work for inclusion when agriculture provisions were debated.

NCC Chairman Kent Fountain provided an update on a range of NCC activities during 2020, including efforts to secure COVID relief assistance and ongoing initiatives to eliminate contamination in U.S. cotton.

The meeting also included an economic update and Washington update from NCC vice presidents Jody Campiche and Reece Langley, respectively. NCC General Counsel John Gilliland and NCC Integrated Pest Manager Don Parker updated the group on recent legal and administrative challenges regarding pesticides. Cotton Council International (CCI) President Ricky Clarke provided a report on CCI activities and NCC President/CEO Gary Adams, along with NCC Vice Chairman Ted Schneider, reported on recent developments on the implementation of the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol. Patrick Johnson, chairman of the Committee For the Advancement of Cotton (CAC) Steering Committee, reported on CAC fundraising efforts and urged support.

Farm Stress - Help and Hope

Plains Cotton Cooperative Association, Plains Cotton Growers, and experts at Texas Tech have teamed up to provide information about how to get help and have hope. According to the American Farm Bureau Federation, 91% believe that financial stress or fear of losing the family farm impacts mental health. More information can be found at <https://pcca.com/farm-stress-help-and-hope/>.