

## First Cold Snap Arrives Early in PCG Region

Friday, September 11, 2020

By Mary Jane Buerkle

In yet another occurrence that can be described as “very 2020,” the first cold snap of the fall arrived swiftly earlier this week, sending temperatures plummeting to record levels and plentiful rainfall off the Caprock.

Early forecasts showed potential for a freeze and even snow in the northern Panhandle, which already has been rocked by adverse weather events throughout the season. What cotton remains could have been drastically affected, but it appears that the snow eluded most of the region. Temperatures stayed in the upper 30s, except for areas near Dalhart that dipped to 33.

Time will tell how much of an effect the weather had on acreage that is in the final stages of development before preparation for harvest. Quentin Shieldknight, a grower near Spearman, said they missed the snow and freezing temperatures, but he is concerned about how maturity was impacted. However, he said they have dryland acreage they plan to defoliate next week and is encouraged about its potential.

Ryan Williams, whose family has acreage near Dalhart, said they had light snow but no accumulation, and temperatures in the lower 30s.

“I think it could hurt some of the later cotton,” Williams said. “Three days in the 30s wasn’t really what it needed to finish and mature bolls.”

Dr. Murilo Maeda, Extension cotton agronomist in Lubbock, said there isn’t much research data to determine just how much of an effect temperatures hovering in the 30s without freezing would have on cotton at this stage because those temperatures at this time of year are so rare.

“I am concerned about cotton acreage particularly in the northern Panhandle, and also later-planted cotton in other areas where the temperatures were around 40,” Maeda said, noting that he and fellow Extension agronomist Dr. Jourdan Bell along with Dr. Brendan Kelly at Texas Tech’s Fiber and Biopolymer Research Center will be studying the effects with regard to fiber maturity once cotton finishes in several of their trial fields.

Most of the PCG service area received only light rain and drizzle this week, but the front brought significant rainfall off the Caprock. Some areas around U.S. Highway 277 from south of San Angelo all the way up to Seymour received in excess of seven to eight inches of rain over two to three days.

Overall, cotton acreage in the area continues to progress and conditions generally range from fair to excellent overall. December futures are still in the 64 to 65 cent range at press time, but today’s World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates report from the USDA could cause some movement in the market.

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## Farm Stress: Help and Hope

<https://pcca.com/farm-stress-help-and-hope/>

## USDA Reminds Farmers of September 30 Deadline to Update Safety-Net Program Crop Yields

*Don’t Miss This One-Time Opportunity - First Since 2014*

Thursday, September 10, 2020

From USDA

USDA’s Farm Service Agency reminds farm owners that they have a one-time opportunity to update Price Loss Coverage program yields for covered commodities on the farm. The deadline is September 30, 2020, to update yields, which are used to calculate the PLC payments for 2020 through 2023. Additionally, producers who elected Agriculture Risk Coverage should also consider updating their yields.

“The last time farmers could update yields for these important safety-net programs was in 2014,” said FSA Administrator Richard Fordyce. “It is the farm owner’s choice whether to update or keep existing yields. So, if you rent, you’ll need to communicate with your landlord who will be the one to sign off on the yield updates.”

Updating yields requires the signature of one owner on a farm and not all owners. If a yield update is not made, no action is required to maintain the existing base crop yield on file with FSA.

For program payments, updated yields will apply beginning with the 2020 crop year which, should payments trigger, will be paid out in October of 2021.

### Determining Yield Updates

The updated yield will be equal to 90% of the average yield per planted acre in crop years 2013-2017. That excludes any year where the applicable covered commodity was not planted and is subject to the ratio obtained by dividing the 2008-2012 average national yield by the 2013-2017 average national yield for the covered commodity.

The chart at this link provides the ratio obtained by this calculation: <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/Texas/texas-news-releases/2020/usda-reminds-farmers-of-september-30-deadline-to-update-safety-net-program-crop-yields->

If the reported yield in any year is less than 75 percent of the 2013-2017 average county yield, the yield will be substituted with 75 percent of the county average yield.

### More information

PLC yields may be updated on a covered commodity-by-covered commodity basis by submitting FSA form CCC-867 to include a farm owner’s signature.

For more information, reference resources, and decision tools, visit <http://www.farmers.gov/arc-plc>. Contact your local FSA county office for assistance at <http://www.farmers.gov/service-center-locator>.