

HARVEST IS WRAPPED IN A BOW – FOR MOST

Friday, December 18, 2020

By Whitney Curry

For most we look back at this past year and are glad to see it coming to an end. Although many farmers and gin employees are usually not spending the holidays around the tree with their families, after this year, they are grateful to be able to do just that. While this year did not turn out as many had hoped, we can only hang our hats and move forward to 2021.

With the exception of the northern producers who saw snow earlier this week, the PCG service area is virtually complete with harvest at this time and have been for a few weeks. Many of the area gins are wrapping up ginning for the season or will be in the next few weeks as well.

Currently March 2021 cotton futures are trading in the 76.93 to 77.40 range at press time.

COTTON NEWS will not be published next week.

All of us at PCG wish you a
Merry Christmas!

TDA EXTENDING CEU REQUIREMENTS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Friday, Dec. 11, 2020

By Texas Department of Agriculture

During the COVID-19 pandemic and the rise of positive cases across the state, the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) is extending the exemption of agriculture Continuing Education Unit (CEU) requirements. To address the CEUs and licensure requirements for Ag Pesticide applicators, the TDA will work with the ag pesticide applicators and CEU course providers of Texas during this critical time.

Licensed applicators with expiring licenses or needing CEUs will be allowed to renew their license even if they have not met their CEU requirement for their current licensing period through December 31, 2021.

Many CEU events have been canceled over the past year, due to the pandemic and restrictions around the state, and because of this the TDA will work to insure all the state's pesticide applicators are able to acquire their licenses and required continuing education courses in a safe and effective manner during this time frame. Once the restrictions have been lifted and courses are scheduled again, **applicators will be required to obtain their required CEUs for their respective license classification for each licensing period.**

By allowing a CEU exemption, this will allow the applicators to maintain their ability to perform pesticide applications for pests, weeds, insects, etc., without disrupting daily business functions. *Applicators are still encouraged to complete online courses even if online course were completed the previous licensing period.*

COMMERCIAL, NON-COMMERCIAL AND NON-COMMERCIAL POLITICAL APPLICATORS: For licenses expiring in 2021 ONLY: TDA will exempt commercial, non-commercial and non-commercial political applicators who have taken online correspondence courses within the last year. The TDA Rule 7.24(t) (2) does not allow for online or correspondence courses to be taken two years consecutively. However, in light of the unusual circumstances, due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), the TDA will allow online or correspondence course to be taken in consecutive years. *This exemption will be for the current 2021 licensing period.* Commercial, non-commercial and non-commercial political pesticide applicators are required to obtain five CEUs per licensing period.

PRIVATE APPLICATORS: For licenses expiring in 2021 ONLY: The TDA will also exempt private applicators from the TDA rule 7.24(t) (5). This rule does not allow a private applicator to acquire more than 10 CEUs through correspondence courses. During this quarantine time frame, private applicators will be allowed to acquire ALL of their CEUs through correspondence courses (online). Private applicators are required to obtain 15 CEUs per 5-year licensing period.

CEU COURSE PROVIDERS: For CEU course providers, live courses that have already received TDA approval may continue to be offered via live web-based courses. These courses must have the capability for the audience to ask questions and/or interact with the speaker. Course providers are asked to notify TDA of interactive course dates so that applicators can attend available courses during this period. TDA will update their website with course dates. Course providers are asked to continue to offer courses and may submit new CEU courses for approval by emailing a completed PA-409 to recertcourses@TexasAgriculture.gov. The TDA request that providers contact TDA prior to any course given via a live, web-based program (Zoom, Facebook Live, etc.) so that staff can monitor / participate in the course. All courses will be posted on the TDA website (<https://ceusearch.texasagriculture.gov>).

TESTING: Testing is currently being offered by the TDA's third party testing company, PSI, LLC. The testing centers have been modified to safely accommodate in person testing with COVID-19 safety protocols in place.

For assistance or questions regarding CEU certifications or pesticide license contact **Perry Cervantes**, Director for Environmental and Biosecurity Programs at the Texas Department of Agriculture (Perry.Cervantes@TexasAgriculture.gov).

Find us on the web!

<https://plainscotton.org>