

2021 Planting Season: Slow but Progressing

Friday, May 21, 2021 By Whitney Curry

Planting activity in the Plains Cotton Growers service area has been hit or miss the past few weeks with the main questions of: Do we start and when will we start? The drought conditions in the area have had many producers scratching their heads trying to determine the best course of action to take for the 2021 crop.

This past week, much of the PCG area welcomed very timely rainfall. However, there are still pockets in the area that are desperate for some rain. Though we are not out of the drought, every drop helps, and we will continue to pray for rain.

The general feeling around the Friday morning Plains Cotton Growers Advisory Group roundtable meeting was hope. According to producers this morning, around the PCG service area, the rainfall totals varied from 0.5 inch to upwards of 5 inches in some parts of the area this past week. The northern service area is dealing with colder temperatures mixed with rain, while the southern portion is still hoping for more rain.

According to the West Texas Mesonet in the past five days, Northeast Amarillo has received 2.49 inches of rain, Plainview 0.53, Southeast Lubbock 1.02, and Lamesa has received 1.18 inches.

"It's a great feeling to be in the field and dodging a storm rolling in", said Jeremy Brown, producer in Dawson County and PCG Executive Committee member.

The market demand is holding steady with December futures trading at 82.50 cents at press time, but many around the world continue to watch the West Texas area with additional rain chances over the next week to ten days as the northwest regional planting deadline approaches.

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Cotton Industry Seeks Volunteer Leaders

Friday, May 21, 2021 By Whitney Curry

The success of the High Plains cotton industry, like any group effort, is directly tied to the willingness of qualified individuals to volunteer to serve in various leadership positions.

PCG encourages all qualified individuals interested in representing the High Plains as a representative to the Cotton Board, National Cotton Council, or Cotton Incorporated to contact PCG CEO Steve Verett for more information.

Each year, a variety of volunteer positions within the NCC and Cotton Incorporated are filled directly through the industry's caucus process. In addition to naming representatives to the NCC and Cotton Incorporated, PCG and the Texas cotton industry also work together to identify and nominate qualified individuals to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture for possible appointment as a Member or Alternate on the Cotton Board.

Qualified individuals interested in serving on the Cotton Board, which oversees the highly successful U.S. Cotton Research & Promotion Program, also are encouraged to contact Verett at the PCG office in Lubbock to request additional information. PCG's telephone number is 806-792-4904.

Editor's Note: The Cotton Board seeks to promote diversity and ensure equal opportunity and inclusion for all those who qualify for nomination and appointment to the Cotton Board regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, disability, socio-economic status, religion, or sexual orientation.

REMINDER: There is an EPA Requirement for Paraquat Training

Monday, May 17, 2021 By Dr. Peter Dotray

Paraquat dichloride (*commonly referred to as paraquat*) is classified as a restricted use pesticide (RUP) because of its acute toxicity. Only certified applicators can purchase pesticides classified as EUPs. In March 2019, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced that certified applicators must successfully complete an EPA-approved training

before mixing, loading, and/or applying paraquat. Current labeling of the active ingredient paraquat dichloride (e.g., Gramoxone, Paraquat, Blanco, Bonfire Herbicide, Devour, Firestorm, Helmquat, Para-SHOT, Parazone, and Quik-Quat) will require this additional training.

The newest paraquat dichloride labels state that **products may ONLY be mixed, loaded, or applied by a certified applicator who has successfully completed the paraquat-specific training.** Applications “under direct supervision” of a certified applicator are NO LONGER allowed. Anyone purchasing and using these products must have a private applicator license or a commercial applicator license. If you have been applying under someone else’s license in the past you will need to get your own license before applying these products per the new label statements.

New label changes include improved toxicity communication in English and Spanish, and a “DANGER – ONE SIP CAN KILL” statement. Since 2000, 17 deaths have been caused by accidental ingestion of paraquat. Many of these deaths resulted from people illegally transferring the pesticide to beverage containers and consumed accidentally. A single sip can be fatal. Since 2000, three more deaths and many severe injuries have been caused by the pesticide getting onto the skin, in open wounds, or into the eyes of those working with it.

The only training that meets the requirements is housed on the eXtension website (<http://usparaquattraining.com>). There are both English and Spanish versions available. You will need to create an account if you do not already have one and allow 60 minutes for this training and assessment quiz. Once the training is complete a certificate will be provided. Certificates are valid for three years.

For more information, contact Dr. Peter Dotray at peter.dotry@ttu.edu.

Garrison Fills Multi-County AgriLife Extension Agronomy Agent Position

Thursday, May 20, 2021 By Kay Ledbetter

Lena Garrison is the new Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service agronomy agent serving the Castro, Hale and Lamb counties area. She is based in the AgriLife Extension office in Castro County.

“With Lena’s background and interests related to production agriculture, I’m excited about the AgriLife Extension program opportunities as she steps into her new role,” said Michael Clawson, AgriLife Extension District 2 administrator and her supervisor, Lubbock. “Lena will be a real asset for ag producers in Castro, Hale and Lamb counties. She is an outstanding addition to our team and the services we provide.”

In the multi-county agronomy agent position, Garrison will focus on planning, implementing, and evaluating AgriLife Extension programs that relate to agronomic issues, including crop production decisions and management, water conservation and efficiency, pest issues and emerging needs, and risk management associated with crop production.

A native of Pueblo, Colorado, Garrison has spent the past three years as an intern and crop consultant with Todd Ag Consulting in Plainview.

She also served as a professor’s assistant in the Soils Lab at West Texas A&M University’s Department of Agricultural Science while earning her bachelor’s degree. She is currently working on her master’s degree at West Texas A&M. Both degrees are in plant, soil, and environmental science.

As a crop consultant, Garrison said she worked with corn, cotton, sorghum, alfalfa, and wheat and became proficient in integrated pest management, soil moisture monitoring and identifying various crop stages.

“I look forward to working with the farmers in these three counties, getting to know their programs and being an educational voice for them on any issues or questions they may have,” Garrison said.

She is a member of the National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants.

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Editor’s Note:

“Cotton News”, a weekly service of Plains Cotton Growers to the cotton industry and news media in the 42-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