

HARVEST PROGRESS NEARING 75% AS HIGH PLAINS RECEIVES FIRST FREEZE

November 19, 2021

By Shawn Wade

The High Plains has finally recorded its first, widespread freeze, which will set the stage for producers to make their final push toward completing the 2021 harvest.

According to reports gathered from around the area it appears the region is rapidly closing in on the finish line and could be as much as 75-80 percent finished by Thanksgiving. Favorable weather has been a primary reason for the rapid progress that growers achieved over the past few weeks.

Even though this most recent cold front dropped nighttime temperatures below freezing this week it did not bring a significant chance for rainfall that would slow harvest activities. Near-term forecasts indicate dry conditions through the Thanksgiving holiday which should allow producers to maintain a good pace.

With the rapid progress that is being made by producers in the field, area cotton gins are also running at a furious pace. The pace of the harvest and ginning is beginning to create some bottlenecks in regard to getting cotton classed as producers and area gins are reporting they are not getting grades back as quickly as they have in past years.

To address these concerns PCG and officials with USDA AMS's Cotton Division have discussed the situation and alternatives are being weighed and implemented in an effort to relieve current backlogs and reduce the time between when a bale is ginned and when the producer receives the classing results.

Among the alternatives that are being considered is whether or not some of the workload at higher volume locations can be redirected to other cotton classing offices with less activity to return grades more readily.

"Producers need to receive grades in a timely manner, especially to be able to capture current strong market prices" stated PCG CEO Kody Bessent. "PCG will continue to work with local classing offices to address this concerning issue."

Crop quality continues to be good overall, as the majority of bales classed to date continue to exhibit high quality attributes.

Perhaps the only disappointing results that can be dissected from the Lubbock and Lamesa Cotton Classing office reports to date at this point are that just under 23 percent of the bales classed at the Lubbock office and almost 11 percent of the bales classed in Lamesa are returning micronaire readings below 3.5, which is the bottom of the base range for micronaire.

Breaking the Lubbock office's micronaire results down further shows that 2.9 percent of the bales have received micronaire measurements below 3.0; 9.1 percent of the bales had micronaire between 3.0 and 3.2; and 10.8 percent of the bales measured between 3.3 and 3.4 micronaire.

Micronaire readings from Lamesa show that only one percent of the bales classed have been below a 3.0 micronaire, and the majority of the lower micronaire bales have been between 3.0 and 3.4 micronaire.

A full rundown of the latest classing results from the Lubbock and Lamesa Cotton Classing offices are included in the tables below.

The complete weekly Classing Office reports for Lubbock, Lamesa and Abilene are available on the PCG website at: <https://plainscotton.org/quality-reports/>

2021 High Plains Cotton Quality Summary

Week Ending: 11/18/2021

Office	Bales	Color	Leaf	Staple
Lamesa	113,524	21+ - 91.5%	1.84	35.71
		31 - 2.7%		
		12 - 2.6%		
Lubbock	199,767	21+ - 87.1%	2.29	36.27
		31 - 3.2%		
		12 - 6.1%		
	<i>Mike</i>	<i>Strength</i>	<i>Uniformity</i>	<i>Bark</i>
Lamesa	3.92	30.53	79.92	3.3%
Lubbock	3.82	30.65	80.46	6.1%

Season Totals To Date:

Office	Bales	Color	Leaf	Staple
Lamesa	413,041	21+ - 88.1%	1.83	35.94
		31 - 1.2%		
		12 - 6.2%		
Lubbock	868,790	21+ - 79.5%	2.31	36.20
		31 - 2.2%		
		12 - 11.3%		
	<i>Mike</i>	<i>Strength</i>	<i>Uniformity</i>	<i>Bark</i>
Lamesa	3.98	30.85	80.10	3.2%
Lubbock	3.80	30.90	80.42	6.8%

Source: USDA AMS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ADVANCES \$1.7 TRILLION BUILD BACK BETTER ACT

November 19, 2021 By Kody Bessent

This morning, the U.S. House of Representatives on a party line vote of 220-213 advanced the Build Back Better Act (BBB). The House's ability to move the bill forward prior to a lengthy filibuster from Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) hinged on the release of the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimate of the legislation's impact on the national deficit. Moderate Democrats during procedural negotiations on the recently passed and enacted infrastructure package had demanded that a vote be put off until the CBO analysis was released. According to CBO's official fiscal score, the BBB would increase the national deficit by nearly \$800 billion over the next five years.

Now that the legislation has cleared the House, it will likely be at least two weeks before the Senate considers the legislation. Even then, the bill's chance of passage is still narrow and the legislation is likely to undergo high-level changes to ensure it can conform to Senate rules as well as win support from all 50 Democrats, including Senators' Joe Manchin (D-WV) and Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ) who have yet to give their support of the legislation.

Agriculture related provisions currently included in the BBB largely remain uncontroversial. If the BBB is eventually enacted, approximately \$28 billion would be appropriated as new conservation funding to enact key provisions including a producer and non-operating landowner cover crop program. Payments to producers who establish a cover crop would be equal to \$25 per-acre, up to 1,000 acres per producer and non-operating landowners could receive \$5 per-acre, up to 1,000 acres to encourage or permit the operator to establish cover crops on rented land.

UPDATE: OSHA COVID ETS CONSOLIDATED TO SIXTH CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS

November 19, 2021 By Kody Bessent

This week, the Sixth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati, OH was randomly selected by the U.S. Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation to consolidate all litigation regarding Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA's) Covid Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) which applies to private businesses with at least 100 employees or more.

Almost simultaneously, OSHA suspended its implementation and enforcement proceedings on the ETS, saying it "remains confident in its authority to protect workers in emergencies, OSHA has suspended activities related to the implementation and enforcement of the ETS pending future developments in the litigation."

On November 6, the Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals [temporarily suspended](#) the ETS rule from taking effect while the court considered a challenge brought by multiple petitioners including the Attorney General of the State of Texas. Furthermore, on November 12, the Fifth Circuit Court [reaffirmed the stay and further ordered OSHA](#) to take no steps to implement or enforce the mandate until further court order, citing "the mandate at issue here is anything but a *delicate exercise* of this *extraordinary power*. Quite the opposite, rather than, a delicately handled scalpel, the mandate is a one-size-fits-all sledgehammer that makes hardly any attempt to account for differences in workplaces (and workers) that have more than little bearing on workers' varying degrees of susceptibility to the supposedly *grave danger* the mandate supports to address."

The litigation could ultimately make its way to the U.S. Supreme Court, however, in the immediate term, it will be left to the Sixth Circuit to decide whether to extend or dismiss the Fifth Circuit's current stay order. Once a decision has been determined on the stay order, the Sixth Circuit Court can then review the merits of the ETS.

Based on the courts review of the merits, the ETS could be upheld, dismissed, or sent back to OSHA to make more or less restrictive changes to the ETS.

If the court upholds OSHA's rule, it presumptively is expected to impact more than 80 million private employees. As court proceedings progress in the coming weeks, PCG and others will continue to monitor the outcome and keep you informed. If you have questions regarding the status of the mandate or its potential impact on you or your business, please contact us anytime.

PCG Cotton News
will not be published next week.
We wish you a Happy Thanksgiving!

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: website@plainscotton.org