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July 25, 2019

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Plains Cotton Growers Commends Trump Administration, USDA for Trade Assistance

Plains Cotton Growers, Inc., expresses gratitude and appreciation to U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue, the USDA, and the Trump Administration for their commitment to assisting farmers bearing the brunt of trade disputes as they announced today details of the 2019 Market Facilitation Program (MFP), a \$16 billion support package.

“Today’s cotton market reflects the uncertainty surrounding trade, and we’ve seen futures fall to levels that are below break-even for many growers,” PCG President Stacy Smith said. “This assistance comes at a critical time as Texas High Plains farmers continue to nurture their crop toward what we hope will be a successful harvest. We greatly appreciate Secretary Perdue, the USDA, and the Trump Administration for honoring their commitment to U.S. farmers and helping keep us in business as we work toward longer-term trade agreements that are fair, free, and open.”

According to a news release from the USDA, signup for the MFP begins Monday, July 29, and runs through Friday, December 6, at local Farm Service Agency offices.

The release states, “MFP payments will be made in up-to three tranches, with the second and third tranches evaluated as market conditions and trade opportunities dictate. If conditions warrant, the second and third tranches will be made in November and early January, respectively. The first tranche will be comprised of the higher of either 50 percent of a producer’s calculated payment or \$15 per acre, which may reduce potential payments to be made in tranches two or three. USDA will begin making first tranche payments in mid-to-late August.”

Assistance through the MFP is based on a single-county payment rate multiplied by a farm’s total plantings of MFP-eligible crops in aggregate in 2019. Those per-acre payments are not dependent on which of those crops are planted in 2019. County payment rates range from \$15 to \$150 per acre, depending on the impact of unjustified trade retaliation in that county. To see MFP county payment rates, visit <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/market-facilitation-program/index>.

For more information on MFP, visit <https://www.farmers.gov/manage/mfp> or visit your local FSA office.