

Clouds Bring Rain, Some Flooding to Region

Friday, September 2, 2016

By Mary Jane Buerkle

Rainy, cooler weather has blanketed much of the Texas High Plains this past week, with some locations receiving more than nine inches of rain in a period of only a few days.

According to data collected by the West Texas Mesonet, at press time, 9.07 inches had fallen at the Seminole station in the past 96 hours, flooding many fields and roads. The Denver City station, recorded 6.69 inches of rain during the same time frame. Stations near Slaton, Plains, Andrews and Lubbock all recorded more than four inches.

The weather could have an impact on later-planted cotton and also on cotton that already is at cutout, where regrowth could be a concern. Warm weather and sunshine certainly would benefit fields across the region that are trying to dry out from this week's rain and move forward into boll development. Producers should watch for diseases and weeds over the next few weeks.

Events During "Celebrate Cotton" Week

Saturday, September 10

"Cotton: The Natural Choice"

Celebrate Cotton Runway Show

1:00 p.m., South Plains Mall (Grand Court Area)

Tuesday, September 13

West Texas Agricultural Chemicals Institute

Annual Conference

Bayer Museum of Agriculture

<http://wtaci.tamu.edu>

Wednesday, September 14

Texas Ag Industries Association Regional Meeting

<http://www.txag.net>

Thursday, September 15

"Teeing Off For Cotton" Golf Tournament

Hosted by the Lubbock Cotton Exchange, Texas Independent Ginner's Association, Texas Cotton Association

More information: tiga.cotton@verizon.net

Friday, September 16

Texas Cotton Association Flow/Marketing Meeting

Overton Hotel & Conference Center

<http://www.tca-cotton.org/>

Saturday, September 17

Texas Tech Red Raiders • Louisiana Tech Bulldogs

<http://bit.ly/TTUCottonGameTickets>

Promo Code: COTTON16

More information: <http://www.plainscotton.org>

Upcoming Area Field Days

September 7 – Answer Plot by Winfield, east side of the intersection of East Loop 289 and East Fourth Street, Lubbock. 10 a.m.; door prizes and lunch provided. Questions: Tim Cooper, 806-638-5491.

September 8 – PhytoGen/Enlist Field Day, Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center, 1102 E. FM 1294, Lubbock. Two identical sessions; morning tour, 8:30 a.m. registration, ends with lunch; afternoon tour begins with lunch and ends at 4:30 p.m. Questions: Ken Legé, 806-773-7310, or your local PhytoGen sales rep.

September 15 – Americot Field Day, Bob Glodt Research Farm, Edmonson, TX. 9:30 a.m. registration, tour begins at 10 a.m.; ends with lunch. Questions: Gary Sanders, 806-777-4534; or Jerry Montgomery, 806-577-8011.

September 20 – Americot Field Day, Inside 4 Bar K, 302 E. 82nd St, Lubbock. 9:30 a.m. registration, tour of the Heinrich Brothers farms begins at 10 a.m.; ends with lunch at Inside 4 Bar K. Questions: Gary Sanders, 806-777-4534; or Jerry Montgomery, 806-577-8011.

September 22 – Deltapine Field Day, Steve Chapman Farm near Lorenzo. 11 a.m., lunch served. Questions: Eric Best, 806-790-4646.

September 27 – Deltapine Field Day, Nichols Barn in Seminole. 10 a.m., lunch served. Questions: Eric Best, 806-790-4646.

September 29 – Bayer CropScience West Texas Field Day, location in the Lubbock area to be determined. Questions: contact your local Bayer CropScience sales representative.

If you have a field day to add to this list, please email maryjane@plainscotton.org or call (806) 792-4904.

Industry Leaders Updated on Key Issues

Friday, August 26, 2016

From the National Cotton Council NCC officers, directors and advisors, along with other industry leaders who attended the NCC's Mid-Year Board Meeting in Memphis, were updated on the current economic challenges and other issues facing the U.S. cotton industry.

During the Meeting's open session, keynote speaker Rep. Crawford (R-AR), whose Arkansas district includes multiple cotton farms and gins, said he is aware of the economic challenges facing U.S. cotton "including the ripple effect on small towns when gins aren't ginning" - something he said some of those in Washington, DC, don't recognize.

Rep. Crawford, who chairs the House Agriculture Committee's Subcommittee on General Farm Commodities and Risk Management, said cotton farmers should have had "no problem" getting the 'other oilseed' designation for cottonseed under the 2014 farm bill's Price Loss Coverage program when cotton industry leaders went to USDA for the change. Noting the Cotton Ginning Cost Share program will help in the short-term, he said the oilseed designation would have been better.

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He discussed the issues involved in getting the designation enacted into law and talked about Congress' preparations to write the next farm law.

In the NCC Chairman's report, Shane Stephens also discussed the NCC's actions involving the 'other oilseed' designation situation as well as other economic challenges.

"With the 2015 U.S. cotton acreage being the lowest in more than 30 years, exports being the smallest in 15 years and cotton prices at their lowest level since the 2009 recession," Stephens said, "we concentrated our efforts on USDA, seeking secretarial designation of cottonseed as an 'other oilseed,' for eligibility under the 2014 Farm Bill's ARC and PLC programs." He said the NCC continues to work with key Congressional Members in seeking this designation. He also shared that while the ginning cost-share program provides much needed short-term assistance, "there's still a need for additional support to bridge the gap until the next farm bill."

The NCC has been very active, Stephens noted, in seeking appropriations for the industry's priorities, among them an increase in gin laboratory funding and work to address the Food & Drug Administration's (FDA) rules that would apply new food safety regulations to gins and cottonseed storage facilities.

Trade front efforts, Stephens stated, have ranged from the Turkish anti-dumping case to maintaining close communications with U.S. representatives and World Trade Organization (WTO) officials to ensure they are "informed on developments in the cotton policies of other countries and key factors impacting the global cotton market."

He reviewed the NCC's work on bale packaging experimental test programs and contamination prevention education, which has gained oversight from the NCC's Quality Task Force.

"Contamination is a serious threat to our reputation and the premium that U.S. cotton enjoys," Stephens stated. "I cannot overstate the importance of the U.S. cotton industry doing all that can be done to eliminate this threat."

Stephens told attendees that Cotton Council International's (CCI) message about the U.S. cotton industry's continued commitment to quality and timely delivery was reinforced during a leadership exchange trip he led to China. Thanks to the vital financial support from a number of industry groups, CCI continues to play a pivotal role in expanding foreign demand for U.S. cotton.

CCI President Keith Lucas later reported on two CCI-coordinated overseas activities in which he participated this year that enabled him to feel the energy, enthusiasm, support and trust in U.S. cotton. Through his involvement in CCI's "Cotton Day" events in Korea, Japan, Taiwan and Thailand, as well as the first ever Cotton Day in Bangladesh, Lucas said he saw how Asian consumers clearly loved their cotton. He noted that it is impressive to see events like Cotton Days, which bring together the entire cotton supply chain from spinners to manufacturers to consumers at one time and in one place to celebrate U.S. cotton.

NCC General Counsel John Gilliland provided attendees further insight into trade issues the industry faced in 2016. Although Turkey announced in April a final determination in its antidumping duty investigation against U.S. cotton, imposing a

3% duty on all U.S. exports, the U.S. industry has yet to make a decision on a possible appeal. He said the industry is currently taking a wait-and-see approach as NCC staff - coordinating closely with the American Cotton Shippers Association and AMCOT - monitor U.S. export levels to assess whether or not an appeal is in the industry's best interests.

Elsewhere, he said the WTO convened another round of "dedicated discussions" on cotton in Geneva this past July, following on last year's Nairobi Ministerial. Negotiators considered the possibility of further reductions in domestic support and also discussed the pressures on global prices from man-made fibers and large cotton reserves, particularly in China. NCC staff engaged with U.S. trade officials in advance of the negotiations and will remain in contact as negotiators make plans to reconvene in October. He said there are reports that the U.S. government is taking a close look at China's agricultural subsidy programs, especially for wheat. It is not yet clear whether the United States will file a challenge in the WTO against China's subsidy programs or import barriers, but tensions between the two governments are rising.

Reece Langley, NCC's vice president for Washington Operations, updated attendees on key issues, among them the cotton ginning cost-share program, cottonseed policy, crop insurance issues, average costs to market survey changes, new crop traits and chemistries awaiting approval for the 2017 crop, efforts to preserve access to pesticides currently under review or in lawsuits, and the Food & Drug Administration's animal feed rule impact on gins and cottonseed storage facilities. He also provided an election outlook for congressional races in Cotton Belt states.

In her economic update, Jody Campiche, NCC's vice president, Economics & Policy Analysis, told attendees that while world cotton acreage is projected to be slightly lower in 2016-17, world production is expected to be higher due to higher yields. She said USDA has projected an increase in world mill use for 2016-17, due to Chinese reserve sales.

"At this point, the increase in world mill use seems optimistic given the trend in recent years and the uncertainty in the global economy," she said. "Competition from manmade fibers remains strong, and global GDP growth faces a challenging environment in the coming year."

Regarding China, Campiche said that country's cotton production has been reduced due to further declines in cotton area while expectations for China's mill use have increased as its stocks have declined due to the success of that country's auction series being conducted through September. As of August 17, 8.5 million bales of China's stocks have been sold, about 84% domestic and 16% imported. She said China's stocks continue to remain a question mark but if they continue at the same pace, stocks could be significantly lower in two to three years.

Although world mill use has escalated in 2016 due to increased China consumption, the economist said China's cotton policy has been of great benefit to manmade fiber -- with internal prices of cotton at twice the price of manmade fiber. She reminded attendees that due to the lower price of manmade fiber, higher cotton prices can result in a further shift to manmade fibers.

Editor's Note:

"Cotton News", a weekly service of Plains Cotton Growers to the cotton industry and news media in the 41-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 us all. Anyone interested in making comments about the contents of this column can call 806-792-4904 or Email PCG at: editor@plainscotton.org