

Senator Ted Cruz Visits West Texas

Friday, October 14, 2016

By Mary Jane Buerkle

West Texas agriculture was the highlight of a visit from U.S. Senator Ted Cruz and his staff earlier this week as they had the opportunity to tour farms and agribusinesses across the Panhandle and South Plains.

"Texas is blessed with a diverse and dynamic agriculture industry that feeds the American people, provides quality jobs for hardworking Texans, and serves as a strong foundation for our nation's economy," Sen. Cruz said in a news release about the tour. "Each of our state's farmers and ranchers face unique challenges and opportunities. We should be doing everything in our power to get the federal government out of the way and ensure that each of Texas' distinct agriculture industries are able to expand and prosper."

Their trip began Sunday afternoon with a cotton farm tour at Dahlen Hancock's family farm near Ropesville. Monday morning, the group toured Meadow Farmers Cooperative Gin and Sen. Cruz visited with manager Dan Jackson and several of the gin's board members.

After leaving the gin, Sen. Cruz and his staff visited the Bingham Family Vineyards and Farm before departing for Muleshoe, where they toured Del Rio Dairy. Other tours on Monday included Hi-Pro Feeds in Friona and a grain sorghum harvest at the Jason Wright Family Farm in Friona.

Tuesday, Sen. Cruz and his staff toured Hilmar Cheese Company in Dalhart, saw corn harvest at the Robert H. Gordon Family Farm in Dalhart, and visited Cactus Feeders in Cactus.

"This was an unprecedented opportunity to visit with Senator Cruz and his staff as they got to see and experience the very best of Texas High Plains agriculture, and we appreciate them for taking the time to come to our area," PCG Executive Vice President Steve Verett said. "We have some significant challenges and opportunities in agriculture, particularly in the cotton industry, and we look forward to working with Senator Cruz as we face those."

2016 High Plains Cotton Harvest-Aid Guide
Now Available at <http://www.plainscotton.org>

High Plains Production Estimate Down Slightly

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By Mary Jane Buerkle

The National Agricultural Statistics Service decreased High Plains upland cotton production estimates by 45,000 bales from their September report, projecting that area growers will produce 4,100,000 bales this season.

The decrease came from the Southern High Plains area, which was reduced to 2,950,000 bales. Northern High Plains estimates held steady at 1,150,000.

Projected yield per acre decreased slightly in both regions. The Northern High Plains went from 746 pounds in the

September estimate to 741 pounds in the October estimate, and the Southern High Plains went from 540 to 530.

Harvested acres were adjusted slightly upward from the September report. Growers on the Northern High Plains are projected to harvest 745,000 acres of cotton, while Southern High Plains growers are expected to harvest 2,670,000 acres. Abandonment rate for the High Plains region is projected to be 8.2 percent.

Statewide, the production number dropped to 6.5 million bales, down 100,000 from the 6.6 million in the September report. The nationwide estimate for upland cotton is 15.5 million bales, down from an estimated 15.6 million in the September report but up 24 percent from 2015. December futures were trading around 70 cents at press time.

Some areas received up to an inch of rain on Thursday, delaying harvest for the time being. However, the 10-day outlook calls for warm, dry weather early next week before cooling into the mid-60s with slight chances of rain. Lows are expected to dip in the lower 40s in Lubbock by next Thursday. Lubbock's first freeze usually occurs around October 31.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service has made their 2016 High Plains Cotton Harvest-Aid Guide available. A link to the guide is at <http://www.plainscotton.org>.

At the USDA cotton classing office in Lubbock, 8,199 samples were classed this past week bringing the season total for this office to 8,876. Almost 78 percent of the bales classed for the week are color grade 21 and better. Average leaf for the week is 2.28 and average length 35.52. Average micronaire for the week is 4.46.

In Lamesa, 9,709 samples were classed this past week bringing the season total for this office to 13,434. Exactly 72 percent of the bales classed for the week are color grade 21 and better. Average leaf for the week is 2.41 and average length 35.21. Average micronaire for the week is 4.71.

Classing office reports can be viewed at <http://www.plainscotton.org/qualityreports2016.html>.

COTTON USA Quality Conference in China Promotes U.S. Cotton Fiber and Yarns

Friday, October 14, 2016

From Cotton Council International

Cotton Council International launched its first COTTON USA Quality Conference in Shanghai, China, on Oct. 10 to promote U.S. cotton fiber and cotton yarns as key ingredients in manufacturing high quality textile products. The event brought together some 80 leaders from the U.S. and Chinese cotton textile industries to discuss the importance of consistent, high quality supplies of raw fiber for mills. China is the world's largest textile producer, consuming 35 million bales of cotton in 2015. China yarn imports reached an equivalent of 9 million bales of raw cotton in 2015.

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“The COTTON USA Quality Conference gave us a unique platform to emphasize U.S. cotton’s quality, responsibility and innovation, as well as exchange dialogue with some of China’s largest mills and manufacturers,” CCI President Keith Lucas said. “It was highly productive to engage with some of our largest customers, learn their needs and exchange information on what the U.S. industry can do to help them meet challenges in manufacturing to maintain high quality standards. We are looking forward to working together in the future for the benefit of all customers of U.S. cotton.”

Keynote speakers include: Sun Huaibin, Vice President, CNTAC; Jon Devine, Senior Economist, Cotton Incorporated; Mike Tate, Chairman, American Cotton Producers; Roger Insley, President, Custom Technical Solutions; Roger Gilmartin, Tri Blend Textiles; and Vaughn Jordan, Deputy Director, CCI. A panel discussion followed, featuring the following participants: Zhou Yejun, General Manager, Wuxi No. 1; Chen Xiachi, General Manager, Texhong Textile Group; Yang Bin, Director and Vice President, Foshan Seazon; and Shu Zonghua, Director and Vice President, Jiangmen Daxing.

Due to changing marketing conditions, the global textile supply chain is evolving across regions. With the need to embrace responsible production practices as a global norm and recognizing consumer markets are gradually producing a larger middle class, CCI works with partners to forge and strengthen business opportunities. Setting the gold standard for global best practices in cotton production, the U.S. is well-placed to continue to offer its valued customers steady supplies of U.S. cotton fiber. In 2015, the value of U.S. raw fiber exports to China was \$852.9 million, while yarn exports totaled \$115 million.

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“Ag in the Bag” Program Teaches Elementary Students About Agriculture

Friday, October 14, 2016

By Mary Jane Buerkle

More than 1,400 fourth-grade students from Lubbock and the surrounding areas watched Diamond the dairy cow being milked, saw how their jeans were made, and learned how agriculture impacts their daily lives at the annual “Ag in the Bag” program, held earlier this week at the Texas Tech Livestock Arena in Lubbock.

Topics included dairy, corn, cotton, peanuts, sorghum, water, beef, sheep, meat science, food science, and various other agricultural concepts. A committee of volunteers plans the event, which is free to the schools because of financial support from sponsors. Students from Lubbock ISD and several area schools attended the program.

“It’s so important to reach out to our kids to teach them where their food and fiber comes from,” spokesperson Lynn Simmons with South Plains Electric Cooperative said.

Program sponsors include Bayer CropScience, FiberMax/Stoneville, the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources at Texas Tech, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Lubbock County Farm Bureau, South Plains Electric Cooperative, Lubbock Chamber of Commerce, AgTexas Farm Credit Services, Capital Farm Credit, City Bank Texas, Deltapine, High Plains Water District, Plains Cotton Growers, Lyntegar Electric Cooperative, Texas Corn Producers, Texas Department of Agriculture, Texas Peanut Producers Board, Cornerstone Group Inc., United Sorghum Checkoff Program, Southwest Dairy Farmers, Gandy’s, Taylor Insurance, Hurst Farm Supply, Farmers Cooperative Compress, and DairyMax.

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<http://www.farmpolicyfacts.org>

NCC's Comments Support Glyphosate

Friday, October 7, 2016

From the National Cotton Council

In comments submitted to EPA, the NCC reiterated its strong support for the re-registration of glyphosate and stated that cotton tolerant to herbicides such as glyphosate has “revolutionized” cotton production.

The comments, on the NCC's website at <http://www.cotton.org/issues/2016/glyco.cfm>, noted that the overwhelming consensus of regulatory agencies and scientific organizations -- such as the EPA, Health Canada, the European Commission and the World Health Organization -- is that glyphosate used according to label directions poses no unreasonable risk to human, wildlife or the environment. The NCC also pointed to EPA's own “Reregistration Eligibility Decision” which concluded that glyphosate was of relatively low oral and dermal acute toxicity, posed minimal human dietary risk, was not expected to pose undue risk to workers/applicators, adsorbed strongly to soil and was readily degraded by soil microbes, and had minimal effects on birds, mammals, fish, and invertebrates.

EPA's recent review of glyphosate, released in September 2016, found that the product was unlikely to cause cancer in humans. This contradicts a 2015 study by the International Agency on Research on Cancer (IARC) that determined glyphosate was a probable human carcinogen. EPA's study precedes an upcoming October 18 meeting of non-agency scientists that will review EPA's findings. EPA is expected to make a final decision regarding the product sometime in early 2017 and at that point hopefully issue a re-registration.

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 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