

Classing Activity Winds Down; Texas High Plains Producers Prepare for 2017 Crop

Friday, March 31, 2017

By Mary Jane Buerkle

The 2016 crop is all but in the books, save for final production numbers from the National Agricultural Statistics Service to be released in May, and surveys show that area producers are planning to plant even more cotton in 2017.

The USDA issued their annual Prospective Plantings Report today, estimating that Texas growers will plant 6.9 million acres of upland cotton in 2017, a 22 percent increase from the 5.65 million acres planted in 2016.

Nationwide, USDA predicts a 21 percent increase to just more than 12 million planted acres of upland cotton. The only state with an expected decrease, according to the USDA report, is Florida. Kansas is expected to plant 75 percent more cotton than in 2016.

“This is very much in line with what we have been hearing from producers, ginners, and industry experts,” PCG Executive Vice President Steve Verett said. “Seed booking appears to be strong, based on reports, and should continue over the next few weeks as producers prepare for planting.”

To help with variety decisions, the 2017 version of the Plains Cotton Growers, Inc. Seed Cost Calculator is ready and available for download from the PCG website at <http://www.plainscotton.org>.

The PCG seed cost calculator is an interactive Microsoft Excel spreadsheet that allows producers to calculate an estimated cost per acre, for both seed and technology, based on published suggested retail prices.

The calculator has become a popular tool among producers interested in comparing seed and technology prices as they work to finalize their cotton variety selections.

The 2017 version of the spreadsheet includes listings for more than 100 conventional, Roundup Ready FLEX, XtendFlex, GlyTol, Bollgard II, TwinLink, Enlist and Widestrike varieties, including numerous stacked gene versions of these technologies that will be available for sale in West Texas in 2017.

Earlier in the week, many producers received much-needed precipitation, with more than 3 inches of rain falling in some locations. However, the significant rainfall events were not widespread, so producers still are holding out hope for the month of April to bring some good precipitation. Forecasts for next week include slight chances of rain.

Meanwhile, the Lubbock classing office had processed 3,930,510 samples as of Thursday. Lamesa has completed their season, having classed 1,618,885 samples for the 2016 crop. Abilene is still operating and had classed 1,655,112 samples as of Thursday.

Want the facts about the U.S. agriculture and farm policy?

<http://www.farmpolicyfacts.org>

Rush, Kitchings, Conaway to Speak at PCG 60th Annual Meeting on April 7

Friday, March 31, 2017

By Mary Jane Buerkle

Plains Cotton Growers, Inc., will host their 60th Annual Meeting on Friday, April 7, 2017 in the Banquet Hall of the Lubbock Memorial Civic Center.

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m., and the program will start promptly at 9 a.m. The meeting is held in conjunction with the Texas Cotton Ginners' Association Annual Meeting and Trade Show, April 6-7, 2017, in Lubbock. For more information on the TCGA Annual Meeting and Trade Show, visit <http://www.tcga.org/>.

Current PCG president Johnie Reed, who farms near Kress, Texas, will preside over the meeting and PCG Executive Vice President Steve Verett will report on the status of PCG operations and activities. An award recognizing the 2016 High Plains Cotton Agent of the Year also will be presented at the meeting.

The keynote speaker, sponsored by Farmers Cooperative Compress, will be Matt Rush. Matt is the fourth generation in his family to be a New Mexico farmer and cattle rancher. He and his dad partner on a farming and ranching operation and to support his farming habit, Rush travels the country as a professional speaker conducting leadership and motivational seminars. The Zig Zigar Corporation recently recognized his talent and skill as a speaker and trainer inviting him to become one of their first ever Platinum Level speakers. He also is the Executive Vice President of the New Mexico Farm & Livestock Bureau.

House Agriculture Committee Chairman Mike Conaway and Kim Kitchings, Senior Vice President, Consumer Marketing for Cotton Incorporated, also are scheduled to speak. The program will feature an update on the Plains Cotton Growers, Inc. PAC and an announcement about the 2017 Celebrate Cotton Game.

Breakfast will be served at 7:30 a.m., sponsored by Monsanto/Deltapine. Lunch, sponsored by Bayer CropScience/FiberMax/Stoneville, will follow the meeting.

There is no charge to attend and no RSVP is necessary. Additional information about PCG and the Annual Meeting can be found at <http://www.plainscotton.org>.

EPA Administrator Pruitt Denies Petition to Ban Widely Used Pesticide

Wednesday, March 29, 2017

From EPA

Today, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt signed an order denying a petition that sought to ban chlorpyrifos, a pesticide crucial to U.S. agriculture.

“We need to provide regulatory certainty to the thousands of American farms that rely on chlorpyrifos, while still protecting human health and the environment,” said EPA Administrator Pruitt. “By reversing the previous Administration’s steps to ban one of the most widely used pesticides in the world, we are returning to using sound science in decision-making – rather than predetermined results.”

(COTTON NEWS” continued on Page 2)

“This is a welcome decision grounded in evidence and science,” said Sheryl Kunickis, director of the Office of Pest Management Policy at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. “It means that this important pest management tool will remain available to growers, helping to ensure an abundant and affordable food supply for this nation and the world. This frees American farmers from significant trade disruptions that could have been caused by an unnecessary, unilateral revocation of chlorpyrifos tolerances in the United States. It is also great news for consumers, who will continue to have access to a full range of both domestic and imported fruits and vegetables. We thank our colleagues at EPA for their hard work.”

In October 2015, under the previous Administration, EPA proposed to revoke all food residue tolerances for chlorpyrifos, an active ingredient in insecticides. This proposal was issued in response to a petition from the Natural Resources Defense Council and Pesticide Action Network North America. The October 2015 proposal largely relied on certain epidemiological study outcomes, whose application is novel and uncertain, to reach its conclusions.

The public record lays out serious scientific concerns and substantive process gaps in the proposal. Reliable data, overwhelming in both quantity and quality, contradicts the reliance on – and misapplication of – studies to establish the end points and conclusions used to rationalize the proposal.

The USDA disagrees with the methodology used by the previous Administration. Similarly, the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture also objected to EPA’s methodology. The Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP) also expressed concerns with regard to EPA’s previous reliance on certain data the Agency had used to support its proposal to ban the pesticide.

The FIFRA SAP is a federal advisory committee operating in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act and established under the provisions of FIFRA, as amended by the Food Quality Protection Act of 1996. It provides scientific advice, information and recommendations to the EPA Administrator on pesticides and pesticide-related issues regarding the impact of regulatory decisions on health and the environment.

To view the petition: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticides>.

New ‘Focus on Cotton’ Webcast Illustrates the Importance and Economic Value of Cotton Variety Selections

Friday, March 17, 2017 From The Cotton Board

Variety selection is one of the most important factors impacting the overall growing potential of a cotton production system, with incorrect or uninformed decisions often proving very costly.

A new Focus on Cotton webcast titled “What Does it Cost to Choose the Wrong Cotton Variety?” helps cotton growers, consultants, and other industry experts understand how often and to what severity selecting the wrong variety can impact overall yield, fiber quality, and profits.

This 25-minute talk by Guy D. Collins, Associate Professor and Extension Cotton Specialist at North Carolina State University, provides information that helps users:

- Identify yield limiting factors critical for variety selection
- Properly assess variety comparison data and field observations
- Quantify, in economic terms, the importance of variety decisions

This presentation is available at no charge, courtesy of Cotton Incorporated, through the ‘Focus on Cotton’ webcast resource located at the Plant Management Network, <http://www.plantmanagementnetwork.org/foco>.

“Focus on Cotton” contains more than 35 webcasts on various aspects of cotton crop management. These talks – freely accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – cover agronomic practices, crop protection, and ag engineering. This resource also features a new and improved Cotton Extension Search tool, where users can conveniently search for extension resources across all U.S. land-grant universities serving cotton producers.

Find PCG on Facebook and Twitter
<http://www.facebook.com/plainscottongrowers>
<http://www.twitter.com/PCGNews>

COTTON USA: Travel in Comfort with the Cotton the World Trusts at Intertextile Shanghai

Friday, March 24, 2017 From Cotton Council International
 Cotton Council International, in collaboration with 16 COTTON USA licensees, showcased quality U.S. cotton home textiles and hotel collections at the Intertextile Shanghai Home Textiles trade show.

The COTTON USA booth, themed “COTTON USA: Travel in Comfort with the Cotton the World Trusts,” had four distinct areas designed to simulate a cozy hotel: a reception area, a lobby sitting area, coffee shop and guest room, all outfitted with COTTON USA licensees’ textile products.

“With the rapid rise of China’s economy and tourism in the past decade, the hospitality industry in China and Asia has experienced meteoric growth,” explained Karin Malmstrom, CCI director of China and Northeast Asia. “The hospitality players worldwide are tailoring their offerings to provide hotel guests with familiar comforts by outfitting guest rooms with textile product, such as bedding, curtains, towels, bathrobes, etc., made of natural fibers. Due to the continued strong demand for cotton-rich fabrics in this segment and to capture this market, COTTON USA is introducing our hotel collection to potential partners and licensees in the hospitality industry.”

Hotel partners can benefit by specifying and highlighting their use of U.S. cotton-rich products and their guests can enjoy the safe and comfortable feeling of COTTON USA when staying at a hotel.

CCI’s unique promotions and licensing programs cover the whole U.S. cotton textile supply chain, ranging from cotton fiber to retailers’ shelves. CCI links customers of home textile products with renowned global COTTON USA-licensed suppliers and brands to establish long-term partnerships for effective procurement throughout the cotton supply chain.

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