

NASS Projects Texas High Plains Production at 5.2 Million Bales in 2017

Friday, August 11, 2017

By Mary Jane Buerkle

In their first official crop production estimates for the area this season, the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service pegged the 2017 High Plains upland cotton crop at 5.23 million bales, harvested from 3.325 million acres. Planted acres are estimated at 4.05 million, reflecting a projected 18 percent abandonment rate, which is right at the area's average of 18 to 20 percent.

Yield per acre is estimated at 946 pounds per acre in the northern counties of the PCG service area, and 662 pounds per acre in the southern counties.

Statewide, the NASS report estimates that Texas growers will produce 8.8 million bales of upland cotton from 5.7 million acres harvested. Statewide yield is estimated to be 741 pounds per acre, down slightly from 748 last year. In 2016, 8.1 million bales of cotton were produced in Texas on 5.2 million harvested acres.

NASS estimates that the United States will produce 19.8 million bales of upland cotton, up 19 percent from 2016.

"This initial production report certainly gives us a benchmark," PCG Executive Vice President Steve Verett said. "It's important to note, though, that we have well over a month to go before we begin to realize the full potential of the 2017 crop, and these next few weeks will be especially critical for many growers who have yet to experience a timely rainfall."

6th Annual
Celebrate Cotton Game
Saturday, Sept. 16
7 p.m.
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Arizona State Sun Devils

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COTTON17

Plains Ginners Association Sets Annual Meeting, Golf Tournament for August 21

Friday, August 11, 2017

By Mary Jane Buerkle

U.S. Rep. Jodey Arrington will be the keynote speaker at the Plains Ginners Association's Annual Meeting on Monday, August 21, at the Bayer Museum of Agriculture in Lubbock.

Registration for the meeting begins at 7:30 a.m., and the program begins shortly after 8 a.m. In addition to Rep. Arrington, speakers include Shelley Heinrich with The Cotton Board; Greg

Holt with the USDA Ginning Lab; and Kody Bessent with Plains Cotton Growers, Inc. Lunch will be served at noon.

Association dues are \$60 annually, and members are encouraged to bring a dues check or mail it to Plains Ginners Association, P.O. Box 25, Ropesville, TX 79358.

Please RSVP for lunch to Julie Wheeler at Plains Cotton Growers by Wednesday, August 16, by calling (806) 792-4904 or emailing julie@plainscotton.org. For more information on the meeting, call Tony Newton at (806) 787-6114.

Registration for the golf tournament begins at 1:30 p.m., with a shotgun start at 2 p.m. at Meadowbrook Golf Course, 601 Municipal Drive in Lubbock. To sign up for the golf tournament, call Darryl Dawson at (806) 763-4371 or email darryl.dawson@adm.com.

Farmers to Host Farm Bill Discussion Meeting

Friday, August 11, 2017 By Julie Tomascik, Texas Farm Bureau

The 2018 Farm Bill is on the horizon, and Texas farmers and ranchers are gearing up for a national debate. The Lubbock and Lynn-Garza County Farm Bureaus want to be part of that conversation and are hosting a farm bill discussion meeting Aug. 17 at the Bayer Museum of Agriculture in Lubbock.

"It's open to everyone—civic leaders, farmers, ranchers, those in agricultural businesses and more," Walt Hagood, Lynn-Garza County Farm Bureau president, said. "The farm bill reaches beyond the field, so everyone needs to be familiar with it."

On the South Plains of Texas, cotton is one of the top commodities. Grains—like corn, wheat and sorghum—are also grown, and livestock are raised. Each commodity has its issues in farm policy, Hagood said, and that can make it difficult to stay current on all legislation.

"The farm bill is so complex. We find out certain things work and others don't in our farm policy. We need to have these discussions to talk about what works for agriculture as a whole," Hagood said. "But it can be tough sometimes to devote the time to studying all of the farm bill. Meetings like this help us bring up those discussions and focus on a better understanding of the bill and what we need going forward."

A strong safety net, according to the county Farm Bureau leaders, is needed for agriculture.

"The only way you can make a good living by farming right now is through a really good crop or a bumper crop. These prices just won't sustain you with any less than that," Doug Hlavaty, Lubbock County Farm Bureau president, said.

Growers need a farm bill to help counter volatile markets and Mother Nature, while consumers need it to help maintain food and nutrition programs.

"Only about 2 percent of the population are farmers and ranchers," Hlavaty said. "So, we need to tell our story. We need to talk about farm policies with others. We need more people to add to agriculture's voice in these decision-making situations."

("COTTON NEWS" continued on Page 2)

Hlavaty noted that the amount of money farmers spend in the local economy is driven by their crop year.

“It’s important that local leaders understand the situation farmers are facing,” Hlavaty said. “Unless they’re a banker dealing with a farmer, they don’t always feel the effects of low farm income until a little later. We support their local businesses, but farmers don’t spend as much when they’re just trying to break even each year.”

That low farm income will likely factor into the discussion, as will the need for assistance for cotton farmers.

“We need cotton listed as a Title I commodity. That will probably be a large part of our discussion—getting help for cotton farmers,” Hagood said. “But it’s not about just one commodity. It’s about agriculture, and the businesses that agriculture touches.”

The meeting will start at 1:30 p.m. Speakers will include Texas Farm Bureau Vice President Michael White; Dr. Darren Hudson, professor of Agriculture and Applied Economics at Texas Tech University; U.S. Rep. Jodey Arrington, House Agriculture Committee member; and Eddie McBride, president and CEO of the Lubbock Chamber of Commerce.

A panel discussion moderated by Tom Sell of Combest, Sell and Associates will follow.

The Bayer Museum of Agriculture is located at 1121 Canyon Lake Drive near Mackenzie Park.

Julie Tomascik is Editor of Texas Agriculture Daily, a Texas Farm Bureau publication.

QuickBooks Pro is a double-entry business accounting program often used by agricultural lenders and producers, Jones said. During the two-day course, participants will learn to enter transactions into the program and analyze costs and profits. No prior computer experience is necessary.

Registration is \$150 and includes computer use and teaching materials. Couples are encouraged to attend and will be charged only one registration fee if they share a computer.

Class size is limited to 15 people to provide a hands-on experience for all participants. Those planning to attend should RSVP by Aug. 24 for Amarillo and by Sept. 8 for the session in Lubbock. Payment is due upon arrival on the first day of the course.

The class will be taught by Jones and Will Keeling, AgriLife Extension risk management specialist in Lubbock.

For more information or to RSVP for either location, contact Jones or Kim Garcia at 806-677-5600.

Want the facts about the U.S. agriculture and farm policy?
<http://www.farmpolicyfacts.org>

'Focus on Cotton' Webcast Outlines Proper Cleaning Procedures for Sprayer Systems

Thursday, August 3, 2017

From The Cotton Board

Inadequate or improper cleaning of sprayer systems can often cause contamination issues and costly damage to plant foliage.

A new Focus on Cotton webcast titled “Tank Cleaning” helps cotton growers, consultants, and other industry experts properly remove all unwanted residue from equipment and prevent the unintentional introduction of herbicides to sensitive or non-labeled cotton crops.

This 29-minute talk by Fred Whitford, Clinical Engagement Professor at Purdue University, provides information that helps users:

- Thoroughly check sprayer systems for herbicide residue
- Avoid common cleaning mistakes and residue build-up
- Develop a comprehensive step-by-step cleanout procedure

This presentation is freely available through the 'Focus on Cotton' webcast resource located at the Plant Management Network.

“Focus on Cotton” contains over 50 webcasts on various aspects of cotton crop management. These talks – accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – cover agronomic practices, crop protection, and ag engineering.

The site also features Cotton Cultivated, a new resource from Cotton Incorporated that helps users quickly find the most current cotton production information available.

These and other resources are freely available courtesy of Cotton Incorporated at <http://www.plantmanagementnetwork.org/foco>.

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QuickBooks Training Set for August in Amarillo, September in Lubbock

Thursday, August 3, 2017

From AgriLife TODAY

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service will offer Panhandle District QuickBooks Pro Short Courses Aug. 30-31 in Amarillo and Sept. 12-13 in Lubbock.

The two-day trainings will run from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. each day at the respective Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Centers, located at 6500 W. Amarillo Blvd. in Amarillo and 1102 E. Farm-to-Market Road 1294 north of Lubbock.

DeDe Jones, AgriLife Extension risk management specialist in Amarillo, said through the years, attendees have indicated they’ve seen thousands of dollars in benefit from what they learned.

“During times of low commodity prices, keeping accurate financial records is very important,” Jones said. “Learning QuickBooks will help producers accomplish this goal.”

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