

## **Texas High Plains Cotton Harvest Advancing at Rapid Pace**

Friday, December 1, 2017 By Mary Jane Buerkle

Improved harvest weather over the past few weeks have allowed growers across the Texas High Plains to get back into the field after several days of damp, humid conditions that delayed them for quite some time, in some cases.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension cotton specialist Dr. Seth Byrd, who is based in Lubbock, said that overall harvest activity is well past the halfway point, although there are some pockets in northern areas where activity is behind.

PCG Director of Field Services Mark Brown reported that gins generally are pleased with their progress at this point, save for a few mechanical issues that have caused some delays. However, module fires have been an issue this year across the region.

Quality, color-wise, continues to hold at predominate 21 in both the Lubbock and Lamesa USDA classing offices. Micronaire continues to be an issue in the Lubbock office, with the season average at 33. Average length at Lubbock is 36.32 for the season and 35.44 in Lamesa. Combined, as of November 30, the two offices had classed almost 1.9 million bales.

## **Texas FSA Reminds Producers of County Committee Elections Deadline**

Tuesday, November 28, 2017 From Texas FSA

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency State Executive Director for Texas, Gary Six, today reminded farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural producers that FSA County Committee elections began Nov. 6, when ballots were mailed in Local Administrative Areas holding elections. Eligible voters must return ballots to their local FSA offices by Dec. 4, 2017, to ensure their vote is counted. Producers in LAAs holding elections who have not received a ballot can pick one up at their local FSA office.

"Producers only have a few more days until that Dec. 4 deadline," Six said. "I urge all eligible farmers and ranchers, especially minorities and women, to get involved and make a real difference in their communities by voting in this year's elections. This is your opportunity to have a say in how federal programs are delivered in your county."

Ballots returned by mail must be postmarked no later than Dec. 4, 2017. Newly-elected committee members will take office Jan. 1, 2018.

Nearly 7,700 FSA County Committee members serve FSA offices nationwide. Each committee has three to 11 elected members who serve three-year terms of office. One-third of county committee seats are up for election each year. County committee members apply their knowledge and judgment to help FSA make important decisions on its commodity support programs, conservation programs, indemnity and disaster programs, and emergency programs and eligibility.

Producers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program to be eligible to vote in the county committee election. Approximately 1.5 million producers are currently eligible to vote. Farmers and ranchers who supervise and conduct the farming operations of an entire farm, but are not of legal voting age, also may be eligible to vote.

For more information, visit the FSA website at [www.fsa.usda.gov/elections](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections). You may also contact your local USDA Service Center or FSA office. Visit <http://offices.usda.gov> to find an FSA office near you.

## **Walmart Joins Cotton LEADS™ Program**

Thursday, November 30, 2017 From Cotton LEADS™

Walmart has joined the Cotton LEADS™ program supporting responsible production practices by cotton growers.

"Cotton is a major ingredient in many of our apparel and home textile products," explains Ken Lanshe, Walmart's vice president, General Merchandise, Technical, Quality and Sustainability. "Through the Cotton LEADS™ program, Walmart hopes to learn from and collaborate on efforts that U.S. cotton farmers are taking to be responsible and sustainable producers. Our support for the Cotton LEADS™ program aligns with Walmart's goal to sell products that sustain the environment."

Walmart joins more than 480 companies worldwide which recognize both the environmental gains cotton growers in Australia and the United States continue to achieve and their commitment to meeting the challenge of growing sustainable cotton.

"The Cotton LEADS™ program is at the forefront of the world's efforts for sustainably-sourced cotton," says Mark Messura, senior vice president Global Supply Chain Marketing at Cotton Incorporated, a founding member organization of the Cotton LEADS™ program. "Joining with Walmart in the Cotton LEADS™ program brings the scale and commitment of an industry leader together with the leaders in cotton sustainability and responsibly-sourced cotton."

Dr. Jesse Daystar, chief sustainability officer at Cotton Incorporated, notes, "Our leading efforts in the U.S and Australia are rooted in science, measurement and best practices. Companies that join the Cotton LEADS™ program are aligning themselves with an objective and valid approach to the sustainability challenge."

Cotton Australia CEO Adam Kay states, "Whether it's greenhouse gas emissions or soil health, cotton farmers are always looking to implement best practices and technologies so that we can continue to be careful stewards of the natural resources."

The Cotton LEADS™ program is a joint effort of the Australian and U.S. cotton industries. Its founding members are Cotton Australia, the Australian Cotton Shippers Association, the Cotton Foundation, the National Cotton Council of America, Cotton Council International and Cotton Incorporated. The program is designed to raise awareness of the responsible growing practices and commitment to continuous improvement among cotton producers in the member countries. More information on the Cotton LEADS™ program is at [www.cottonleads.org](http://www.cottonleads.org).