

USDA-NASS: Cotton Acreage Up From 2017

Friday, July 6, 2018

By Mary Jane Buerkle

Texas farmers are on track to plant 7.4 million acres of upland cotton this year, up 7 percent from 2017, according to acreage estimates released late last week from the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

Nationwide, growers are estimated to have planted 13.3 million acres of upland cotton, up 7 percent from 2017. This means that Texas growers planted almost 56 percent of the nation's acreage, similar to 2017.

Actual estimated planted acreage is slightly higher than the 13.2 million acres projected by the USDA in their Prospective Plantings Report in March and also higher than the 12.8 million acres projected by the National Cotton Council in their Annual Early Season Planting Intentions Survey, which was released in early February.

Although planted acreage is higher, it is certain that not all of those acres will be carried to harvest on the Texas High Plains, thanks to drought in some areas and storms in others. A significant amount of loss on dryland acreage is expected to occur in areas that keep missing timely rains. Those areas are primarily south of Lubbock, but not entirely.

Irrigated acreage is hanging on, but will need continued help from Mother Nature to achieve the maximum potential for yield and quality. Some cotton is blooming, but the region likely will not be in full bloom for another couple of weeks.

"Overall, the condition of this crop is mixed across the PCG service area," PCG Executive Vice President Steve Verett said, noting that it still is too early to estimate abandonment for the region. "We have some cotton that's in good shape, some that's in fair shape, and some that is either down for the count or out altogether. Recent showers have helped, though, although spotty, and if we can continue to get timely precipitation, we may see some of this crop recover."

**Hailout-Replant-Late Plant Guide
Herbicide Label and Use Reminders
Available at www.plainscotton.org**

ARC and PLC Educational Tool Helps Growers Understand New Seed Cotton Program

Thursday, July 5, 2018

From FSA

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency is notifying farmers with generic base acres that planted seed cotton that a new tool is available to assist them in understanding how the new seed cotton program may affect their FSA payments. It helps a producer make decisions on how to allocate generic base acres to other covered crops based on a producer's planting history.

The educational tool can be viewed at <https://www.afpc.tamu.edu/tools/cotton-base>.

Developed by Texas A&M University, the tool is for educational purposes only, and by using the tool, it is agreed that the results are not a guarantee of future FSA program parameters or payments. Users also acknowledge that this tool is provided with absolutely no warranty, without even the implied warranty of fitness for a particular purpose.

The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 included seed cotton as a covered commodity under the Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage program effective for the 2018 crop year. The Act also authorizes owners of a farm with generic base acres and a recent history of covered commodities a one-time opportunity to update the farm's payment yield for seed cotton.

Complete details of this decision are available by contacting your State or County FSA office at <http://offices.usda.gov>, or at https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_Notice/arcplc50.pdf.

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Cotton Industry Seeks Volunteer Leaders

Friday, July 6, 2018

By Shawn Wade

The success of the High Plains cotton industry, like any group effort, is directly tied to the willingness of qualified individuals to volunteer to serve in various leadership positions. To identify these volunteers, the High Plains cotton industry caucuses each year with other cotton groups within Texas to identify producers interested in serving as a volunteer leader.

PCG encourages all qualified individuals interested in representing the High Plains as a representative to the Cotton Board, National Cotton Council, or Cotton Incorporated to contact PCG Executive Vice President Steve Verett for more information.

Each year, a variety of volunteer positions within the NCC and Cotton Incorporated are filled directly through the industry's caucus process. In addition to naming representatives to the NCC and Cotton Incorporated, PCG and the Texas cotton industry also work together to identify and nominate qualified individuals to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture for possible appointment as a Member or Alternate on the Cotton Board.

Qualified individuals interested in serving on the Cotton Board, which oversees the highly successful U.S. Cotton Research & Promotion Program, also are encouraged to contact Verett at the PCG office in Lubbock to request additional information. PCG's telephone number is 806-792-4904.

To be a qualified producer nominee for the Cotton Board, an individual should be actively engaged in cotton production at the time of nomination, be committed to the mission of the Cotton Board and the Cotton Research and Promotion Program and have demonstrated leadership skills and experience.

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“Whether it is a nomination to serve on the Cotton Board or appointment to a leadership position within the National Cotton Council or Cotton Incorporated, the membership of Plains Cotton Growers has proven to be fertile ground for leaders within our industry,” Verett said. “Our industry owes much to the dedicated men and women who step forward to serve their fellow producers. We look forward to extending that tradition of leadership in the years ahead.”

Editor’s Note: The Cotton Board seeks to promote diversity and ensure equal opportunity and inclusion for all those who qualify for nomination and appointment to the Cotton Board regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, disability, socio-economic status, religion or sexual orientation.

Connecting Agriculture to Human Health Mission of New Texas A&M Vice Chancellor

Friday, June 29, 2018 By Kay Ledbetter, AgriLife TODAY

Most people don’t understand the role agriculture plays in their health and daily lives, but Texas A&M University’s new vice chancellor for Agriculture and Life Sciences is ready to change that.

Dr. Patrick Stover, who is also Texas A&M AgriLife Research’s acting director in College Station, visited the Amarillo and Lubbock area to discuss a new path forward in reconnecting people to agriculture.

Stover not only visited with employees of the Texas A&M University System – AgriLife Research, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, West Texas A&M University, Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory and Texas A&M Forest Service – but also with commodity and industry leaders.

“Nobody can afford health costs anymore,” Stover said. “Diet-related chronic disease costs the economy \$1 trillion a year. That frightens people, because somebody has to pay that bill.”

Stover said the problem is not just the food grown or how it is processed or how consumers make their choices.

“It’s the whole system,” he said. “What we need to understand across the board: if we want better agriculture and an appreciation of agriculture, we have to be able to demonstrate to people how food is produced and how food really promotes their health and well-being.”

Stover said the evidence base that ties food to health requires research, both in terms of producing food that is more healthful and how dietary patterns can lower chronic disease.

“We don’t have the data right now, and the approach we use to collect that data is flawed, because we assume that everybody is the same and we use population averages,” he said. “But, there is no average person. Individuals respond differently to diets, and it is modified by all sorts of factors. We have to understand individuals and where they are in their stage of life.”

Texas is the ideal place to do that research, Stover said. It is heavily invested in food and fiber in its agriculture, plus has areas of population in public health crisis and has a commitment to make changes at the highest levels.

“We have the opportunity to do something really special,”

he said.

Stover said Texas A&M is committed to having a strong presence in the High Plains because of its importance to the Texas economy – agriculture contributes \$7.2 billion to the state’s economy, and this region plays an important role in that contribution.

He outlined a three-part approach to be used moving forward, including responsive agriculture – listening and reacting to the needs of the producer; precision agriculture – focusing on individual plants and animals; and collecting big data for decision-making.

These are the tools he plans to direct agencies to use to better align agriculture with a health focus to benefit producers, consumers, the environment and the economy.

It is critical that the support for the agricultural and rural culture is not eroded as more urbanization takes place, Stover said, so “we need to better align what the consumers want with what agriculture is providing.”

In the future, researchers will continue to have to worry about drought resistance and higher yields, but also about flavor and nutrient content and other qualities that will gain popularity with the general public and also meet society needs, such as health costs.

“As Texas becomes increasingly urban, we need to be sure people appreciate the value of food in their lives; appreciate food as a national security issue,” Stover said. “We need a way to ensure that all Texans, whether they are urban or rural, have a firm appreciation of the role of agriculture in their life.”

“We have to make a better case for more investment in agriculture research, because what we do has a direct impact on quality of life, the economy, and to our health and welfare and national security.”

Deadline Approaching For Texas International Cotton School

Friday, July 6, 2018 From Texas International Cotton School

Registration remains open through July 15 for the 38th session of the Texas International Cotton School, scheduled for August 6-16, 2018, in Lubbock.

Since its inception, the school has been a collaboration between the Texas cotton merchants who make up the Lubbock Cotton Exchange and the faculty and staff of the Fiber and Biopolymer Research Institute of Texas Tech University.

During the two weeks of the school, more than 30 experts from across the United States teach the students, who learn about the cotton marketing chain – including seed breeding, farm production, harvesting, ginning, warehousing, merchandising, and textile manufacturing. All aspects of U.S. and global trade of cotton are covered, so the students obtain an understanding of what is required to successfully participate in the U.S. cotton market and to deliver the cottons needed in diverse export markets. Throughout the program, students have repeated opportunities to interact with the cotton merchants of the Lubbock Cotton Exchange and the fiber and textile experts of Texas Tech University.

For more information, including tuition and curriculum, visit <http://www.texasintlcottonschool.com>.

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 editor@plainscotton.org