

## **Obstacles Continue to Plague Texas High Plains Cotton Crop**

Friday, June 12, 2020

By Mary Jane Buerkle

Challenges continue to mount for this year's Texas High Plains cotton crop, as many growers, including those in the northern Panhandle, saw their young plants burn and wither away earlier this week under a canopy of blowing dust.

Extremely high winds – reportedly more than 40 mph for extended periods of time – caused blowing sand to scorch fields in several counties, and the wind itself was instrumental in harming plants. Although high winds are common with severe storms, it is not near as common that they persist for hours at this point in the season. Growers and ginner report that a significant amount of acreage was affected, and it likely will be difficult to replant back to cotton in those areas.

"It's the worst wind event anyone can remember in June," Leighton Stovall, manager of Moore County Gin near Dumas, said Friday, noting that all the dryland acreage in his area is gone and possibly half of the irrigated acreage. "We had 45 mile per hour sustained winds out of the northwest gusting to 70 that lasted from 10 in the morning until 6 in the evening."

Other parts of the PCG service area remain extremely dry, and time will tell how much dry-planted cotton acreage actually will emerge.

"There's no doubt the situation is pretty dire in a lot of areas," PCG CEO Steve Verett said. "Unless we can get a good rain here pretty quickly, the acreage picture is going to be shaken up significantly. In another two weeks we'll have a better idea."

Add to that the continued uncertainty around last week's news of the United States Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals' order to vacate the registration of three dicamba-based herbicides, including XtendiMax, FeXapan, and Engenia – not to mention a depressed market – and it becomes apparent that growers are facing many challenges all at once that are out of their control.

The Environmental Protection Agency issued a cancellation order on Monday that addresses the sale, distribution and use of the affected dicamba products. The EPA says that "Growers and commercial applicators may use existing stocks that were in their possession on June 3, 2020, the effective date of the Court decision. Such use must be consistent with the product's previously-approved label, and may not continue after July 31, 2020," according to a news release from the agency.

The order can be seen in its entirety here: [https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-06/documents/final\\_cancellation\\_order\\_for\\_three\\_dicamba\\_products.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-06/documents/final_cancellation_order_for_three_dicamba_products.pdf)

However, plaintiffs for the original case already have filed an emergency motion challenging the cancellation order, even going so far as to asking the judges to hold EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler and the agency in contempt of court. Also, the same plaintiffs have a pending lawsuit against Enlist Duo, Corteva Agriscience's 2,4-D-choline and glyphosate blend

herbicide.

PCG has submitted a request to TDA for immediate consideration of a Section 18 Emergency Use label for XtendiMax, FeXapan, and Engenia in Texas.

"The recent vacating of the EPA-approved labels for these products as a result of court action is a significant economic threat to producers and has put at risk millions of acres of dicamba-tolerant cotton planted in Texas," PCG's Verett said in the letter. "The unexpected removal of these products places our membership and other cotton producers in Texas in dire circumstances."

### **Important Program Deadlines**

#### **U.S. Department of Agriculture Key Programs**

ARC-CO and PLC Election and Contract 2020 Crop Year

**June 30**

Crop Acreage Certification Deadline

**July 15**

Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) Application

**August 28**

Yield Update for PLC Program

**September 30**

Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program+ (WHIP+) Application

**December 31**

*(program funds will remain available until expended or December 31)*

#### **Small Business Administration Key Programs**

Paycheck Protection Program

**Signup Ends June 30**

Economic Injury Disaster Loan

**Signup Ends December 31**

### **June 30 Last Day to Complete Enrollment for 2020 ARC, PLC Programs**

Thursday, June 11, 2020 From USDA Farm Service Agency

Agricultural producers who have not yet enrolled in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for 2020 must do so by June 30. Although program elections for the 2020 crop year remain the same as elections made for 2019, all producers need to contact their local USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) office to sign a 2020 enrollment contract.

"The Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage programs are critical safety-net programs for farmers, helping producers weather market distortions resulting from natural disasters, trade disruptions and, this year, a pandemic," said FSA Administrator Richard Fordyce. "Contact your FSA county

office today to complete enrollment before June 30. This can be done in concert with filing your acreage report and applying for other FSA programs.”

To date, more than 1.4 million ARC and PLC contracts have been signed for the 2020 crop year. This represents 89 percent of expected enrollment. FSA will send reminder postcards to producers who, according to agency records, have not yet submitted signed contracts for ARC or PLC for the 2020 crop year.

Producers who do not complete enrollment by close of business local time on Tuesday, June 30 will not be enrolled in ARC or PLC for the 2020 crop year and will be ineligible to receive a payment should one trigger for an eligible crop.

ARC and PLC contracts can be mailed or emailed to producers for signature depending on producer preference. Signed contracts can be mailed or emailed back to FSA or, arrangements can be made in advance with FSA to drop off signed contracts at the FSA county office – call ahead for local drop off and other options available for submitting signed contracts electronically.

Producers are eligible to enroll on farms with base acres for the following commodities: barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium- and short-grain rice, safflower seed, seed cotton, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

For more information on ARC and PLC including web-based decision tools, visit [farmers.gov/arc-plc](http://farmers.gov/arc-plc).

USDA Service Centers, including FSA county offices, are open for business by phone only, and field work will continue with appropriate social distancing. While program delivery staff will continue to come into the office, they will be working with producers by phone and using online tools whenever possible. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with the FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service or any other Service Center agency are required to call their Service Center to schedule a phone appointment. More information can be found at [farmers.gov/coronavirus](http://farmers.gov/coronavirus). Visit [offices.usda.gov](http://offices.usda.gov) to find location and contact information for the nearest FSA county office.

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## TALL Program Leadership Selects Cohort XVII

Monday, June 8, 2020 By Blair Fannin, AgriLife TODAY

Twenty-six professionals have been selected for the Governor Dolph Briscoe Jr. Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership Program, or TALL, as Cohort XVII.

TALL is a two-year program led by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and provides an intensive study of agriculture worldwide in order to equip agriculture industry professionals to lead their fields, said Jim Mazurkiewicz, Ph.D., program director, College Station.

“TALL is a competitive leadership development program that includes seminars with experts, on-site visits, meetings with business and government leaders, international study and personal skills improvement,” Mazurkiewicz said.

With the agriculture industry constantly facing new and unique challenges, Mazurkiewicz said TALL graduates provide a pool of proven leaders who can provide leadership, insight, knowledge and direction to ensure agriculture is viable in the future.

“The program invests 470 hours of intensive training per person through seminars, speakers and domestic and international study trips over two years,” he said. “It’s equivalent to class time spent obtaining a master’s degree in agriculture. Former Gov. Dolph Briscoe Jr. always said, ‘at least 10 years’ experience is needed to reach the educational level of TALL graduates.”

Participants are represented from a cross-section of professional interests including traditional crop producers, ranchers, bankers and attorneys, as well those who work in lumber, food processing, agricultural corporations and horticultural industries from all geographic regions of Texas.

TALL XVII Cohort members for 2020-2022 are: Giovana Benitez, Edinburg, Hidalgo County; Randall Carpenter, Earth, Lamb County; Christi Chadwell Short, Rochester, Haskell County; Matt Clifton, Lufkin, Angelina County; Tyler Cross, Corpus Christi, Nueces County; Andrew Dusek, Bryan, Brazos County; Carmen Fenton, Amarillo, Randall County; Kate Fred, Shamrock, Wheeler County; Lance Gilliland, Stephenville, Erath County; Mary Gonzalez, Clint, El Paso County; James “Brennen” Johnson, Ropesville, Hockley County; Katy Kemp, Bridgeport, Wise County; Blair Krebs, College Station, Brazos County; John Leifester, San Antonio, Bexar County; Emily Lochner, Waco, McLennan County; John “Chris” Looney, Gainesville, Cooke County; Stephen Loyd, Mertzon, Schleicher County; Bryson McCarty, Littlefield, Lamb County; Samuel Nesbitt, Wolfforth, Lubbock County; Joe Patranella, College Station, Brazos County; Andrew Polk, Fort Worth, Tarrant County; Charles “Chaz” Rutledge, Canadian, Lipscomb County; Isaac Sulemana, Sullivan City, Hidalgo County; Stefen Tucker, Lubbock, Lubbock County; Travis Ward, Dallas, Denton County; and Steven White, Lubbock, Lubbock County.

### 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](mailto:editor@plainscotton.org)