

A Dream that Spanned Two Decades

Friday, July 2, 2021

By Whitney Curry

On Wednesday, June 30, 2021, Steve Verett officially retired as the Chief Executive Officer of Plains Cotton Growers, Inc., after 24 years of dedicated service to the High Plains cotton industry. Though now retired from PCG, he will remain active on several projects with the organization until completion over the next several months.

For Verett a dream molded from experience in previous positions came true in July of 1997 when he was asked to be the CEO of PCG, a position held by only two predecessors since the organization's formation in 1956. Having served PCG previously as a producer board member from Crosby County and as PCG board president in 1988 and 1989, as well as chairman in 1990 and 1991, joining the PCG staff was like coming home.

With his boots on the ground and a personal connection to farming, Steve has a unique understanding of what producers are faced with and has guided the organization through a significant period of change and renewal. Changes made during his tenure have allowed PCG to carry out the mission of the organization and successfully work on behalf of producers and the High Plains cotton industry. His leadership established an environment that encourages staff and volunteer leaders to continually find ways to improve the organization and meet the unique challenges facing the region's cotton economy.

"Steve is and always has been an advocate for cotton and the agriculture industry. It would be almost impossible to list all the things that he has done for PCG and for High Plains producers," says PCG current president Brent Nelson of Sudan. "It has been a real honor working alongside him as a volunteer and now as PCG president. What makes him so effective is that he is an excellent communicator who knows how to get the job done and done well. I am truly grateful for all that he has done through the years, and I wish Steve all the best in his retirement."

The knowledge that Steve has brought to the organization has been tremendous, whether it was

through the development of multiple farm bills, crop insurance reform, or assisting with the development of ad hoc assistance programs. He is a tireless supporter of cotton producers in the High Plains area and the agriculture industry as a whole.

Kody Bessent, formerly vice president of operations and legislative affairs of PCG, officially took the reins of CEO on July 1. In his new role, Bessent stated he has benefited greatly from the time he has worked with and around Verett. Bessent says, "Steve has been an excellent mentor over the years, and I look forward to using the knowledge I have gained to lead the organization forward".

Verett in his recent retirement remarks stated, "When I started looking at retiring some five or six years ago, I wanted to make sure that when I walk out that door, I believed we have the staff in place that can carry this organization to even higher heights and can improve even more. I am confident that Plains Cotton Growers is set up for even more success in the future and that's what makes me proud. It's why I can retire knowing I've been able to do whatever I could to keep the organization moving forward and will continue to be successful and relevant."

In his retirement, Verett plans to continue being active in the agriculture community, working on the farm alongside his son Kristofer, as well as spending time with his wife Patricia, kids, and chasing his grandkids around. The PCG staff, Executive Committee, board, and friends wish him the best in his retirement.



Plains Cotton Growers Board of Directors Meeting

FiberMax Center for Discovery, Lubbock, Texas
July 14, 2021 | 12 p.m.

Timely Rain Across the High Plains

Friday, July 2, 2021

By Whitney Curry

Over the past week, producers have been dodging storms across the Texas High Plains and according to Dr. Murilo Maeda, Extension cotton specialist with Texas A&M AgriLife, in general the recent rainfall has been beneficial, especially to the area's dryland farmers. During the PCG Plains Cotton Advisory Group roundtable July 2 reports of rainfall throughout the PCG service ranged from one-half to seven inches.

While the recent storms delivered timely rains for most of the PCG service area, however, in some areas producers reported receiving isolated hail and high winds along with the rainfall.

According to the West Texas Mesonet for the month of June, Northeast Amarillo has received 1.52 inches of rain, Plainview has received 4.73 inches, Northwest Lubbock 3.49 inches, and Lamesa has received 6.98 inches of rain. To kick off the first weekend in July and Independence Day weekend, temperatures should remain in the eighties with chances of rain forecasted across portions of the PCG service area, according to the National Weather Service.

As producers are monitoring and managing their crops weed control is one of their biggest challenges as they continue to face reduced supply and availability of herbicides. According to several producers, many dryland acres in the area did not receive a pre-emerge herbicide application and producers are now racing against the clock to keep up with timely post-emerge applications to control weeds. That being said, the sentiment from most in Friday's meeting was the vast majority of herbicide products being used were maintaining their efficacy and holding weeds at bay.

On Wednesday, June 30, 2021, USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) released the June Acreage report which indicated that All cotton

plantings in the United States totaled an estimated 11.6 million acres, down 3 percent from 2020. American pima cotton is estimated at 142,000 acres, down 30 percent from last year.

In Texas upland cotton plantings are estimated at 6.7 million acres, down by 1 percent from 2020, and pima cotton is estimated at 22,000 acres, down 42 percent from 2020. To review the full report from the NASS

visit:

https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Texas/Publications/Current_News_Release/2021_Rls/spr-acreage-2021.pdf.

Cotton December 2021 futures ended the week at 86.97 cents a pound slightly lower than the previous weeks close. According to Pro Farmer, forecasts for plentiful rain over the main Texas cotton-producing area through the first half of July sent cotton futures tumbling this week, despite a significant USDA cut to its planted acreage estimate.

The new classing office being built in Lubbock is progressing along as scheduled, however, USDA AMS is planning to class all of the 2021 crop in the current Lubbock classing office to avoid operational disruptions during the harvest and ginning season.

It also was reported in the Plains Cotton Advisory Group meeting that local FSA offices continue to operate at 75% capacity and by appointment only at this time, with hopes of opening fully in the next couple of weeks. FSA representatives remind producers that the deadline to file the 2021 crop acreage certification reports for many crops is July 15.

For more information on filing that report visit: <https://www.farmers.gov/crop-acreage-reports>.

FSA Important Program Deadlines

Crop Acreage Certification Deadline

July 15

Conservation Reserve Program General Signup

July 23

Conservation Reserve Program Grasslands

July 12 – August 20

Editor's Note:

"Cotton News", a weekly service of Plains Cotton Growers to the cotton industry and news media in the 42-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