



# Cotton Comments

OSU Southwest Oklahoma Research and Extension Center  
Altus, OK



December 11, 2013

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## Crop Update

The December 10 USDA-NASS Crop Production report indicated that 2013 US upland cotton production will be 12.4 million bales, down about 25 percent from 2012. About 10.1 million acres were planted across the Belt, and harvested acres are expected to be just under 7.8 million. Average yield across all harvested acres is expected to be 806 pounds per acre, down 81 pounds from 2012. The report also noted that Oklahoma planted about 185,000 acres in 2013, and will harvest 170,000 acres. From this harvested acreage, 200,000 bales will be produced. Average yield is expected to be 565 pounds per acre, up 34 pounds from 2012.

I believe there is a notable discrepancy with respect to harvested acres. NASS has Oklahoma at 170,000 harvested acres. We believe that we will fail most acres in Jackson County due to drought. This is because there was no irrigation water available to the Lugert-Altus Irrigation District in 2013. This would indicate that somewhere around 40,000 acres in Jackson County have failed. Tillman County has failed a large number of dryland acres. This number is perhaps 10,000 acres. Harmon County has also failed some dryland cotton acres. Therefore, we submit that the failed acres in these three counties totals about 50,000-60,000. If we go with the 60,000 failed acres, then based on 185,000 planted, we should be looking at about 125,000 acres standing for harvest. After informal discussions with our 14 operational gins in 2013, it is apparent that they are expecting a combined total of about 120,000 bales. This number is substantially lower than what USDA-NASS reported in the December 10 report (200,000 bales). Only time will tell how this plays out.

Oklahoma producers have been through a roller-coaster year and are making great harvest progress, and most gins are reporting at least 75 percent harvested acres at this time. Some areas are still less than 50 percent, however. Many dryland areas are still in the grips of extreme to exceptional drought, and considerable acreage failed. We still have dry watersheds for important reservoirs in the southwestern corner of the state. Some Oklahoma producers who were able to catch some timely rainfall and provide adequate supplemental irrigation, have seen record yields. Producers in several counties are reporting 3-4+ bale/acre irrigated yields. Dryland fields in areas that received excellent summer rainfall are producing 1.5 – 2.5 bale/acre crops. For many irrigated producers, the right factors aligned, and resulted in record yields. I attribute this to wise variety selection, the cool-off and rainy spell in late July, then a

September that was about 30 percent above normal for cotton heat unit accumulation. Overall, it is great to see this success, and I believe that in 2013, we may set a record for the number of growers who have achieved 4 bale/acre production.

The other great news is that the USDA-AMS Classing Office at Abilene is reporting that color and leaf grades, staple, micronaire, strength, uniformity, and bark contamination have all been good to excellent based on early classing results. For over 59,000 bales of Oklahoma cotton classed through December 8, 93% have been color grades 11, 21 or 31, with a solid 69% with color grade 11 or 21 – the best possible. Leaf grades have averaged 2.5 with 57% exhibiting leaf grade 1 or 2 – the best quality possible. Bark contamination is present is about 14% of the bales classed thus far. Staple (fiber length) has averaged 35.5 32nds. This is excellent, and we have nearly one-third of the crop with a 37 or longer staple. Micronaire (a measure of maturity) averaged 4.1 units, with 88.3% in the 3.5-4.9 range. If our numbers hold up, fiber strength may set a record in 2013. Currently our average is 30.9 g/tex, which is on par with the previous record set in 2010. We have nearly 78% of the crop classed thus far with strength of 30 or greater g/tex. The yields and quality of modern genetics is amazing. It is critical that growers make good decisions with respect to varieties.

[For a copy of the Abilene Classing Office December 8 report, click here.](#)

**New Red River Crop Conference – January 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, 2014 – Altus Southwest Technology Center**

[To download a brochure with registration information, click here.](#)

Please mark your calendars, download a brochure with registration information, and submit the form for preregistration! On behalf of the planning committee, I want to inform you of an exciting new Extension crop production conference specifically tailored to agricultural producers in north Texas and southwest Oklahoma. The Red River Crop Conference brings together two land-grant institutions - Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and OSU - Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service. The conference has been planned and will be executed as a joint effort of Extension personnel with both institutions. The crop conference will rotate between Altus, OK and Childress, TX, with the inaugural 2014 crop conference being held at Altus on January 28th and 29th. Due to the complexity of agricultural production in the area, it was decided to have a full meeting day focusing exclusively on cotton (January 28), and another day to provide programming for other crops including wheat, canola, guar, sesame, pastures, etc. (January 29). This is a new concept for Extension programming in our region, and the entire planning team is committed to making this a successful conference. We believe this will be a great conference which will provide excellent programming for producers on both sides of the Red River. The 2014 conference hotel will be the Altus Best Western. It is located approximately 2 blocks east of the Southwest Technology Center. A total of 25 rooms will be blocked off at a conference price of \$83/room (state rates).



The 2014 Conference Planning Committee consists of: Texas - Stan Bevers, Joshua Brooks, Leonard Haynes, Lonnie Jenschke, Langdon Reagan, and Steven Sparkman. Oklahoma - Gary Strickland, Randy Boman, Aaron Henson, Marty New, Lawrence Tomah, Mark Gregory, and Dianna Thompson.

[To download a brochure with registration information, click here.](#)

**Red River Crops Conference**  
**Altus, Oklahoma**  
**January 28-29, 2014**

**AGENDA**

**Day 1: January 28, 2014 – “Cotton Day”**

8:00 – 8:30	Registration	
8:30 – 8:45	Welcome	Gary Strickland, Jackson County Extension Educator, Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, Altus, OK
8:45 – 9:15	National Cotton Council Update	Dr. Mark Lange, President and CEO, National Cotton Council
9:15 – 10:00	Cotton Market Update	Dr. John Robinson, Professor and Extension Economist-Cotton Marketing, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, College Station, TX
10:00 – 10:30	Break	
10:30 – 11:15	Current Cotton Variety Summary	Dr. Randy Boman, Research Director and Cotton Extension Program Leader, Oklahoma State University Southwest Research and Extension Center, Altus, OK
11:15 – 12:00	Herbicide Options and Outlook	Mr. Shane Osborne, Associate Extension Specialist, Oklahoma State University Southwest Research and Extension Center, Altus, OK
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch	
1:00 – 1:45	Seed Treatments and Plant Disease Management	Dr. Jason Woodward, Associate Professor and Extension Plant Pathologist, Peanut and Cotton, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Lubbock, TX
1:45 – 2:30	Irrigation Water Quality	Dr. Paul DeLaune, Assistant Professor, Environmental Soil Science, Texas A&M AgriLife Research, Vernon, TX
2:30 – 3:00	Break	
3:00 – 4:00	New Developments in Technology – Industry Panel	Dr. Ty Witten, Cotton Specialty Crop Product Management Lead, Monsanto, St. Louis, MO Dr. Jonathan Siebert, Enlist Field Specialist, Dow AgroSciences LLC., Memphis, TN Mr. Jared Hayes, Territory Customer Support Manager - Western Region, John Deere, Amarillo, TX
4:00 – 4:15	Wrap-up and Evaluation	

**Day 2: January 29, 2014 – “In-Season and Summer Crops Day”**

8:00 – 8:30	Registration	
8:30 – 8:45	Welcome	Lonnie Jenschke, Childress County Agricultural Agent, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Childress, TX
8:45 – 9:15	Grain & Cattle Market Outlook	Stan Bevers, Professor and Extension Economist-Management, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Vernon, TX
9:15 – 10:00	Wheat Breeding Outlook and Discussion	Dr. Brett Carver, Regents Professor, Chair, Wheat Genetics and Breeding, Department of Plant and Soil Sciences, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK
10:00 – 10:30	Break	
10:30 – 11:15	Pasture Management	Dr. Larry Redmon, Professor and Extension State Forage Specialist, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, College Station, TX
11:15 – 12:00	Congressional Update	The Honorable Frank Lucas, United States House of Representatives, Oklahoma 3rd Congressional District
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch	
1:00 – 1:45	Climate Update	Mr. Bryan Rupp, Meteorologist and On-Line Weather Producer, KFDX-TV3, Wichita Falls, TX
1:45 – 2:30	Canola Production and Crop Year Outlook	Mr. Mark Gregory, Southwest District Area Agronomy Specialist, Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, Duncan, OK Mr. Heath Sanders, Great Plains Canola Association Field Specialist, Oklahoma
2:30 – 3:00	Break	
3:00 – 3:45	Specialty Crops (Guar and Sesame)	Dr. Calvin Trostle, Professor and Extension Agronomist, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Lubbock, TX
3:45 – 4:00	Wrap-up and Evaluation	

RB

## Winter/Spring Weed Control Reminders



All too often cotton guys tend to disregard weed control issues until spring when things start to warm up. I can honestly say that when the temperature is approaching zero I'm not really thinking weed control either. However, it is not too early to start scouting no-till fields...after the snow and ice is gone of course. **Scouting** is the first step towards developing an effective weed control program. Quite often growers tend to ignore weed pressure this time of year because it

can appear insignificant or harmless. However, if the drought has taught us anything it's that soil moisture is a precious commodity. Dryland producers can't buy any and irrigated producers can't buy enough. Anything we can do to maximize soil moisture is a step in the right (or only) direction. In many instances, weeds sprayed in February or March actually emerged in the fall or early winter. Though they may seem insignificant in size and have an apparent lack of vigor at this time...green winter weeds are still robbing the soil. In addition to the moisture loss, residual fertility is another valuable asset producers often overlook. If nitrogen costs fifty cents a pound, how many pounds are you willing to give to weeds instead of your cotton? Most soils that have been in production for a while do have a significant amount of residual fertility. This is like money in the bank. It can be credited to your crop's needs and substantially reduce the amount of money you have to spend...but only if you conserve it. Since we know our winter weed pressure is so closely tied to moisture events, start scouting within 7-14 days of any significant moisture in the fall or winter. This can pay additional dividends because small weeds are the easiest and cheapest to control. A challenge that comes with the territory is the identification of seedling stage weeds. **Identification** is critical for developing an effective weed control program. Without proper identification a grower is basically gambling with herbicide cost as well as the cost associated with application. In addition, weeds that have been stressed by ineffective applications tend to be harder to kill the second time around. It pays to do a little homework. Once you have identified the weed(s) the homework may continue. If it is a weed that you are not accustomed to dealing with then help is required. This help can come from many sources, just make sure your source is reputable and has your best interest in mind. The coffee shop, though very informative, may not be the best source of "tried and true" information. OSU Extension can help in this department. In many cases we have had the opportunity to evaluate products and compare treatments to one another in research trials and hopefully we will have the answer you need. If not, we are able to pursue the

necessary information and deliver what data may be available for your issue. It should be noted that no recommendation, regardless of the origin or basis, is intended to substitute for product labeling. **Reading the label** is always a necessity. When you do receive a recommendation, the first thing you should do is read the label. This is a very easy task these days. Purchasing the product is not necessary to do your homework. All labels are available over the internet, just make sure the version you are reading is current. Company websites usually contain the most current version of product labeling. If you scout on a timely basis, identify your weeds early and read product labels you are guaranteed to be on target for the most profitable year you've ever had. SO

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