



AUTAUGA QUALITY COTTON

Your Cotton, Your Choice.

The Turnrow

*by Jeff Thompson,
AQCA Manager
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Picking up where we left off last year, weather patterns continue to be excessively wet in the east and bone dry in the west, both of which are severely hampering field preparations for planting. For weeks in the east we've chased high ground and sandy spots for a place to work while dodging wet bottoms. As for cotton, we aren't yet in a panic, but those trying to plant corn are beginning to feel a little pressure. If planting delays do continue we could see a shift in planted acres to cotton in some of these wetter areas. With no two years alike, we must simply prepare ourselves to handle whatever situation is thrown at us.

Cotton Variety Selection

This is without question one of the most important decisions you will make all year. The cost of seed treatments and technology are so exorbitant you can ill afford to be wrong. Our seed manufacturers have made tremendous advances in research and development to bring us varieties genetically superior to those of the recent past. Though yield potential should be the primary factor when evaluating varieties, it shouldn't be the only one. Other environmental factors such as nematode populations, weed pressure, soil types and planting dates should all enter into your thought process, for they may influence which seed traits are needed in a particular situation.

The rapid introduction of new varieties certainly limits historical performance data. We no longer have the benefit of two or three years of test results from which to judge. Instead, consistency is your best indicator. Select from only those which routinely perform at or near the top in OVT and on

farm variety trials across several locations. Plant the majority of your acreage to varieties with a proven history of high performance while limiting newer varieties to smaller acreage.

Southeast Observations

Before noting some field observations from last year, be reminded 2013 was an outlier because of the impact the excessive rainfall had on yields and maturity. I would caution basing any decisions solely on last year's performance. Surprisingly, in 2013 we experienced a decline in the performance of PHY 499. A consistent yielder for several years, it failed to compete in many locations across the SE. Nevertheless, Phytogen Seed Company has stepped up their R/D efforts and has several experimental lines that look very promising. PHY 333 is one being released this year and has shown superior yield potential. It is allocated in 2014, but keep this variety on your radar screen along with PHY 339, which also performed exceptionally well in farm trials. Delta Pine Land's DP 1137 stood out as one of the most consistent varieties of all in the past couple of years. DP 1050 and DP 1252 also performed admirably, but I caution the latter is known as an irrigated cotton and its performance may differ under the stress of normal dry land conditions. Two other varieties that were a pleasant surprise last year were ST 6448 and FM 1944. In addition to high yield potential their twinlink technology allows for Ignite applications, which make them an excellent fit where resistant pigweed is present.

Southwest Observations

Conditions are still dry in the southwest, but that hasn't stopped producers from preparing for another year of planting cotton. For the fourth year in a row there is very little moisture going into April. Nevertheless, one can only be optimistic that the drought will break and the rain will come.

This year, more than any other year, we

are seeing more no-till or minimum-till operations. The persistent wind and lack of rain have made it difficult to grow much of a cover crop, but producers are doing all they can to keep the sand from blowing.

While the southeast was suffering in 2013 from excessive rainfall, the southwest conditions were the exact opposite. Still, many irrigated fields were able to produce over 2000 lbs. It goes to show how far cotton varieties have come over the past five years. DP 1044 was the number one planted variety in Texas for the second year in a row. It has proven to be the go-to seed variety for most every growing situation. 1044 and DP 1219 continue to be popular picks with growers all over West Texas. NG 1511 was another popular choice in 2013. 1511 is a medium maturing variety that has shown it can yield very well if it's adequate water throughout the growing season. It seems FiberMax has set the bar with consistency in West Texas, and 2013 was no exception. FM 2484 did a great job in both yield and quality last year.

Southeast Recommended Cotton Variety List for 2014

DP 1252 B2RF
DP 1050 B2RF
DP 1137 B2RF
FM 1944 GLB2
PHY 499 WRF
PHY 375 WRF
PHY 333 WRF*
ST 6448 GLB2*

*limit plantings

Southwest Recommended Cotton Variety List for 2014

DP 1044 B2RF
DP 1219 B2RF
NG 1511 B2RF
FM 2484 B2F
DP 1321 B2RF
DP 1454 NR B2RF*
FM 9180 B2F

Thrips Management

Last year thrips became a major problem as cool, wet soils hampered seedling growth. Over time seed treatments broke down, stands were lost, and the resulting stunted plants appeared to be affected all year. Of course, what the spring of 2014 holds in store is unknown. Nonetheless, given the yield potential of these newer varieties constant protection is warranted in the early stages of growth. Be mindful of these points. Seed treatments can only be expected to provide residual thrips control for about three weeks. If poor

growing conditions persist, a foliar overspray will be needed. Acephate (Orthene) is the insecticide of choice for such application. The timing of this is most critical. Best results occur when applied as the plant is putting on the first true leaf. Any later and the damage may have already occurred. Insuring healthy plant growth through the fourth or fifth leaf stage will get you well on the way to maximizing yield potential.

Cold Winter vs. Insects

I've heard often over the past few months, "If anything good comes out of this winter it's that maybe some overwintering insects will be killed off." Though warmer weather is why we have more insects in the south, it's true that certain species are more tolerable to cold temperatures than others. Plant bugs can withstand very cold temperatures. Do not expect much of a winter kill with this pest. In the spring they feed on weedy host plants before migrating to cotton, so any affect the cold may have had on these plants could alter the timing of their migration. The Southern Green Stinkbug does not fare well in the cold. Reduced populations of this pest can certainly be expected. However, the green and brown stinkbugs, which are our predominant species, can survive cold temperatures, and this winter should have little effect on them. Their severity depends on other environmental factors such as summer temperatures and nearby cropping patterns. The kudzu bug, a relative newcomer to our area, does appear to tolerate the cold. This pest usually overwinters in homes and structures that provide it additional protection.

AQCA News

March Progress Payment

A five cent progress payment was recently paid on all 2013 pool bales. When combined with previous payments, this brings the total equity paid to date to 24 cents over government loan. The average loan rate for the pool is 54 cents, thus bringing the average price received by an AQCA member to 78 cents per pound based Rule 5 terms. Additional payments will follow as remaining inventory is sold.

2014 Farm Verification Forms

Farm verification forms will be mailed to all members within the next few weeks. As in the past, on this form you will provide us the necessary contact and payroll information. Most importantly, you will indicate the farm numbers and acreage from which cotton will be delivered to AQCA. New this year is a place to indicate which marketing option you are choosing (forward contract, pool or recaps). These forms are to be returned by May 1.

2014 Marketing Choices

In keeping with our new business model, which has been hugely successful and quickly gaining producer's attention, you have a choice as to how you would like your cotton marketed through AQCA. These choices include forward contracts, pool, and/or by recaps. Currently, as the Dec futures contract moves above 80 cents forward contracts are garnering some attention from members. We have on call bale contracts available at a historically low basis. Please call our office to go over these terms in more detail and discuss possible pricing levels. We are currently engaged in discussions with merchants about offering an equity contract. Such contracts will allow you to capture government loan premiums, which are not available with an on call bale contract. We will keep you informed as to the availability of this.

AQCA Website

I encourage everyone to visit our website at www.aqca.com. Take advantage of the information found there concerning cotton production, marketing, and other related topics that are updated routinely. Also, you can customize it to deliver the commodity quotes of your choosing. We are in the process of developing a mobile app that allows you easier access to the website.

Until next time,

The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will be rewarded according to their own labors. For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field.

1 Corinthians 3:8-9



Jeff Thompson

119 East Main Street
Prattville, Alabama 36067
Phone: (334) 365-3369
jthompson@aqca.net

AQCA.COM

David Mullins

801 N. Winston Ave.
Lubbock, Texas 79416
Phone: (806) 549-4137
dmullins@aqca.net

AQCA.COM

AQCA Market Report

2013 Crop – The near month futures [May and July], from which old crop cotton is being priced, remains above 90 cents. Though providing an excellent selling opportunity for our remaining inventory, until recently the pace of sales has been slower than this time last year. It appears the 11 cent invert between the July and Dec contracts have buyers purchasing only to fill their immediate needs. Fortunately, the demand is for high quality cotton, and the US one of the few suppliers able to provide such fiber. With sales picking up considerably over the past week, it's our thought that the shortage of high quality cotton has scared many buyers into purchasing lest supplies get even tighter. We have approximately 14,000 bales remaining in our unsold inventory and we're aggressively taking advantage of this opportunity. We will be making further equity determinations as more of these bales are priced.

2014 Crop – New crop futures has been much slower to advance than old crop in recent weeks, moving about one penny with every three cents move by old crop futures. The DEC contract did finally reach 80 cents this week, garnering attention from many producers who were looking to price in the 80's. With all the uncertainties hanging over this market [increased US acreage, lower world demand, Russia's effect on financial markets, Chinese Ag policy], new crop futures cannot be expected to advance much higher at this time. A range of 80 to 83 cents on the DEC contract would be best case scenario prior to planting. Anyone considering forward pricing some of their production through AQCA would be wise to at least lock in a basis, which currently is at historically low levels. Or better yet, establish a price by placing an order within the above mentioned range on a portion of your crop. The pool will begin pricing at these levels, as well.



John Mitchell

119 East Main Street
Prattville, Alabama 36067
Phone: (334) 380-4738
jdmitchell@choicecotton.com