



Edcot Gin – Edmonson, TX
Phillip Kidd, Manager
Landon Kidd, Assistant Manager
(806) 864-3335

Tule Creek Gin – Tulia, TX
Jaime Subealdeia, Manager
(806) 627-4287

Lakeview Gin – Tulia, TX
Joe Borchardt, Manager
(806) 627-4227

Johnson Gin – Silverton, TX
Daniel Jenkins, Manager
(806) 823-2224



Top of Texas Gin – Hereford, TX
Billy Sam Borchardt, Co-Manager
Steven Birkenfeld, Co-Manager
(806) 258-7466



Adobe Walls Gin – Spearman, TX
Jerrell Key, Manager
Doug Kennedy, Assistant Manager
(806) 659-2574



Lonestar Gin – Pampa, TX
Carey McKinney, Manager
(806) 665-0677



Cotton Insights Newsletter

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Randy Boman, Ph.D.
Windstar, Inc.
Cotton Agronomics Manager
(580) 481-4050
rboman@windstarinc.com
www.windstarinc.com

The Numbers for May 2023

May is generally a challenging month, and the roller coaster weather in May, 2023 has certainly been no exception. Early May temperatures allowed the planting of a large number of irrigated acres. Lingering drought resulted in few dryland acres being planted. Mid-month the weather pattern shifted to cooler conditions and in many cases drought-breaking rainfall across the region. Local reports of over 10 inches of precipitation have been noted in some locations. The northern Texas panhandle has encountered substantial high rainfall, while many sites in western OK are reporting less than 2 to up to 6 inches or so. The West Texas Mesonet has yet to summarize and report May rainfall data across its sites, but to see the distribution of rainfall for the past 30 days provided by the Oklahoma Mesonet, click on the link below:

<https://www.mesonet.org/weather/rainfall/30-day-rainfall-accumulation?ref=1210>

Changes in Amarillo National Weather Service “Normal Temperatures Definition”

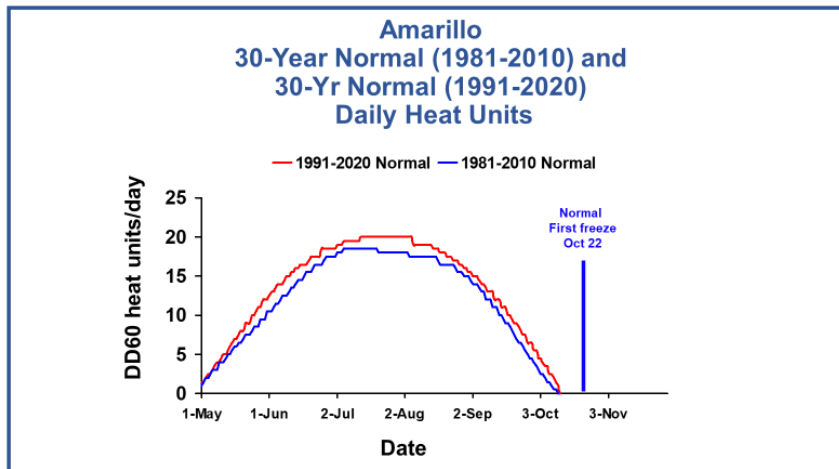
“Normal temperatures” as defined by the Amarillo National Weather Service are generated based on the average of each day’s temperature over a 30-year period of time. For the past several years, I have been using their 1981-2010 data to calculate the “long-term heat units.” Recently, their website has updated the “normal temperature” dataset. The period of record for the new “normal” is now generated using average temperatures for each day during 1991-2020 time frame. Therefore, moving from 1981-2010 data to 1991-2020 data implies that 1981-1990 daily temperature data are deleted, 1991-2010 data kept, and 2011-2020 data added in the new 1991-2020 30-year dataset. This has resulted in an interesting shift in temperature data, daily heat units, and accumulated heat units.

For “normal” daily maximums go to: https://www.weather.gov/ama/ama_norm_max

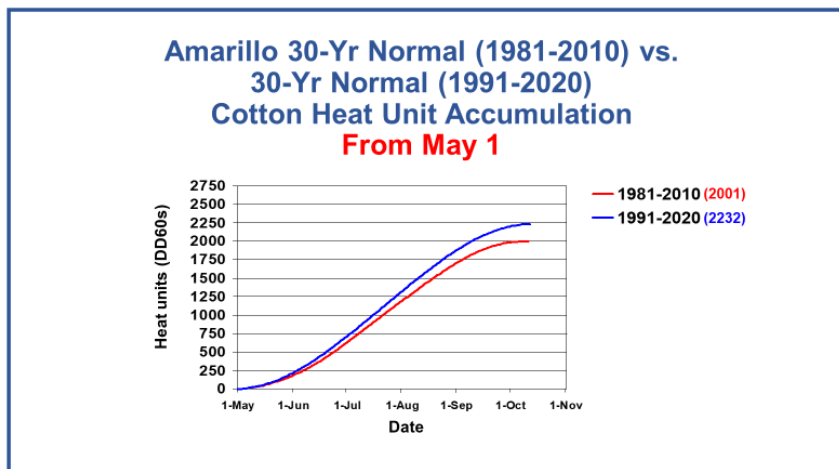
and for “normal” daily minimums go to: https://www.weather.gov/ama/ama_norm_min

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Old “Normal” Daily Heat Units vs. New “Normal” Daily Heat Units



Old “Normal” Accumulated Heat Units vs. New “Normal” Accumulated Heat Units

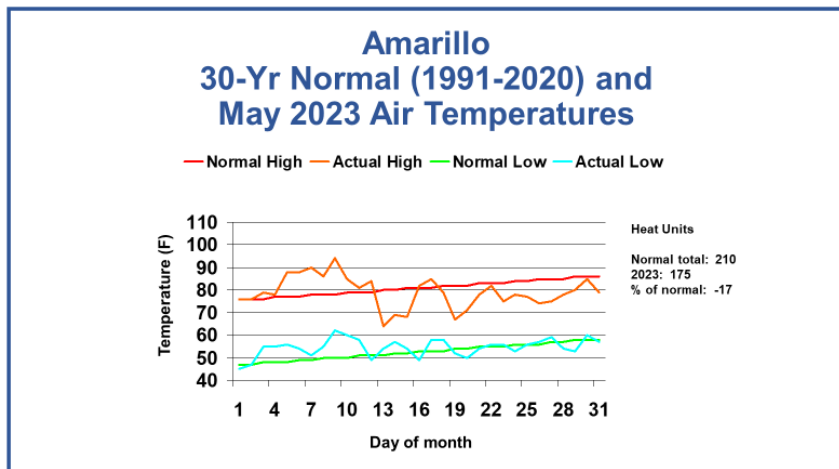


This shift in the period of record has indicated (at least during that specific period of record) that warmer temperatures have been encountered over the newly defined 30-year period. For the season-long DD60 accumulation, the new 1991-2020 “normal” total is 2232 vs. 2001 for the previous 1981-2010 30-year time frame.

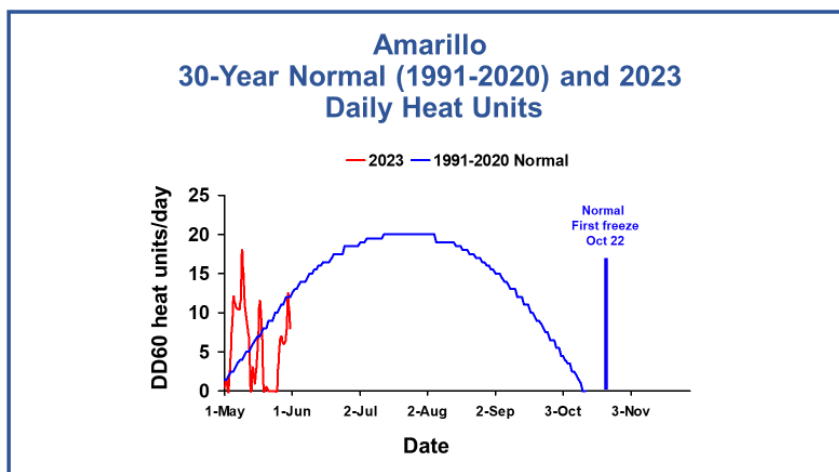
May 2023 Weather

For Amarillo, the month of May ended with 175 cotton heat units (DD60s), which is about 17 percent LOWER than the new 1991-2020 30-year normal (210). But as seen in the graphs below, May was really characterized with “boom and bust cycles” with respect to temperatures. There were 8 days with zero cotton heat units, and NO days of 100 degrees or greater. High winds were also noted early in the month. NOAA provides highly vetted daily total solar radiation numbers, but unfortunately the only site in the Texas panhandle region is located near Muleshoe. The May values appeared to be somewhat higher than the 18-year average for the first 10 days or so of the month, but later days were apparently impacted by cloud cover associated with the thunderstorms moving through the area, and were substantially below average. These cooler, cloudy conditions have resulted in reduced growth rate and may have resulted in some level of seedling disease pressure, but I have not yet been able to ascertain that due to continuing rainfall and wet conditions.

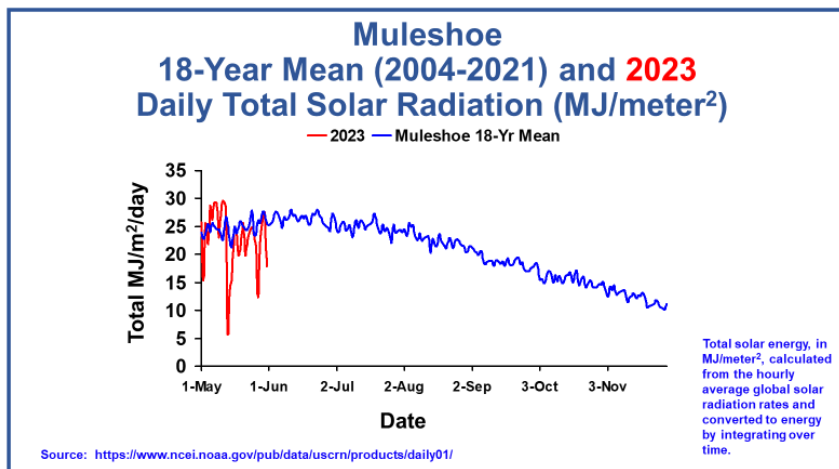
Amarillo May, 2023 vs. 1991-2020 Normal Temperatures



Amarillo Daily DD60s for May, 2023 vs. 1991-2020 Normal



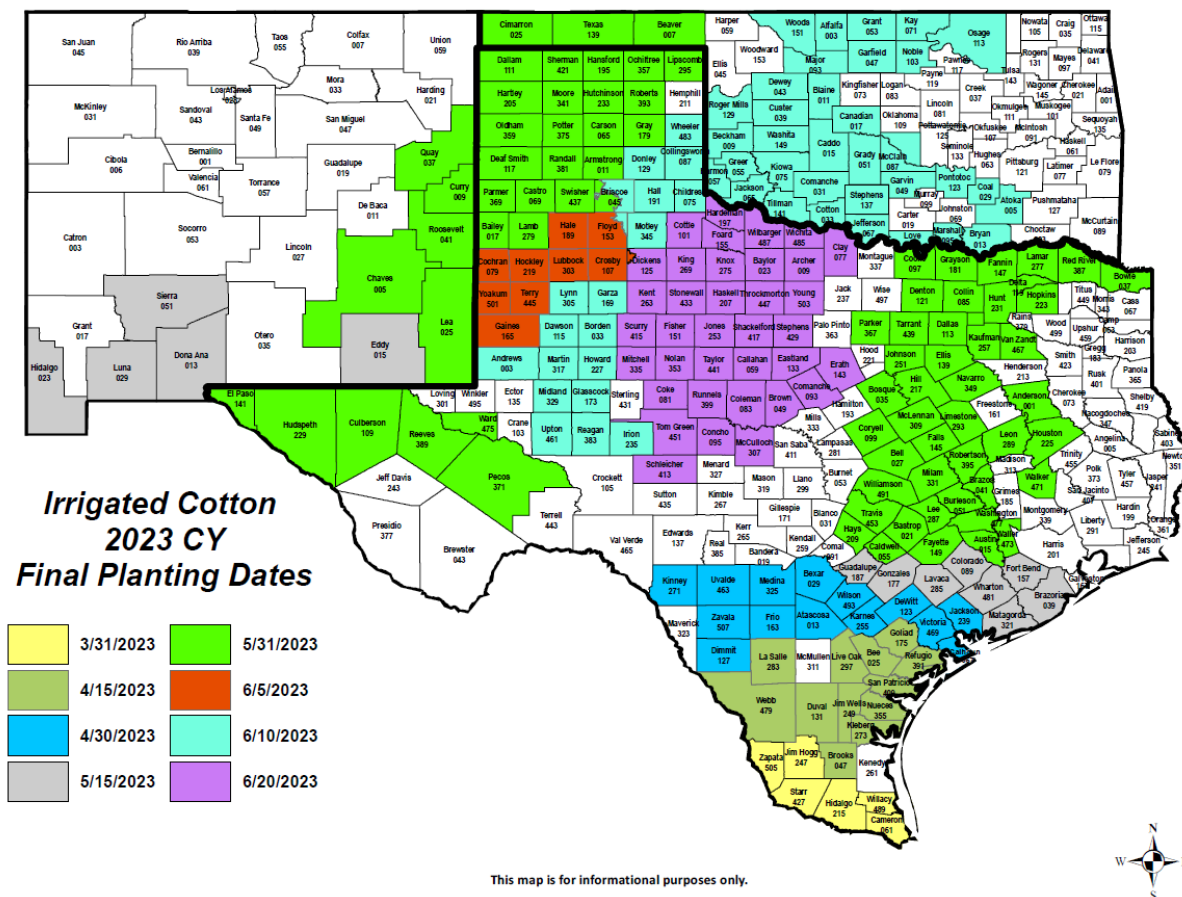
Muleshoe Daily Total Solar Radiation for May, 2023



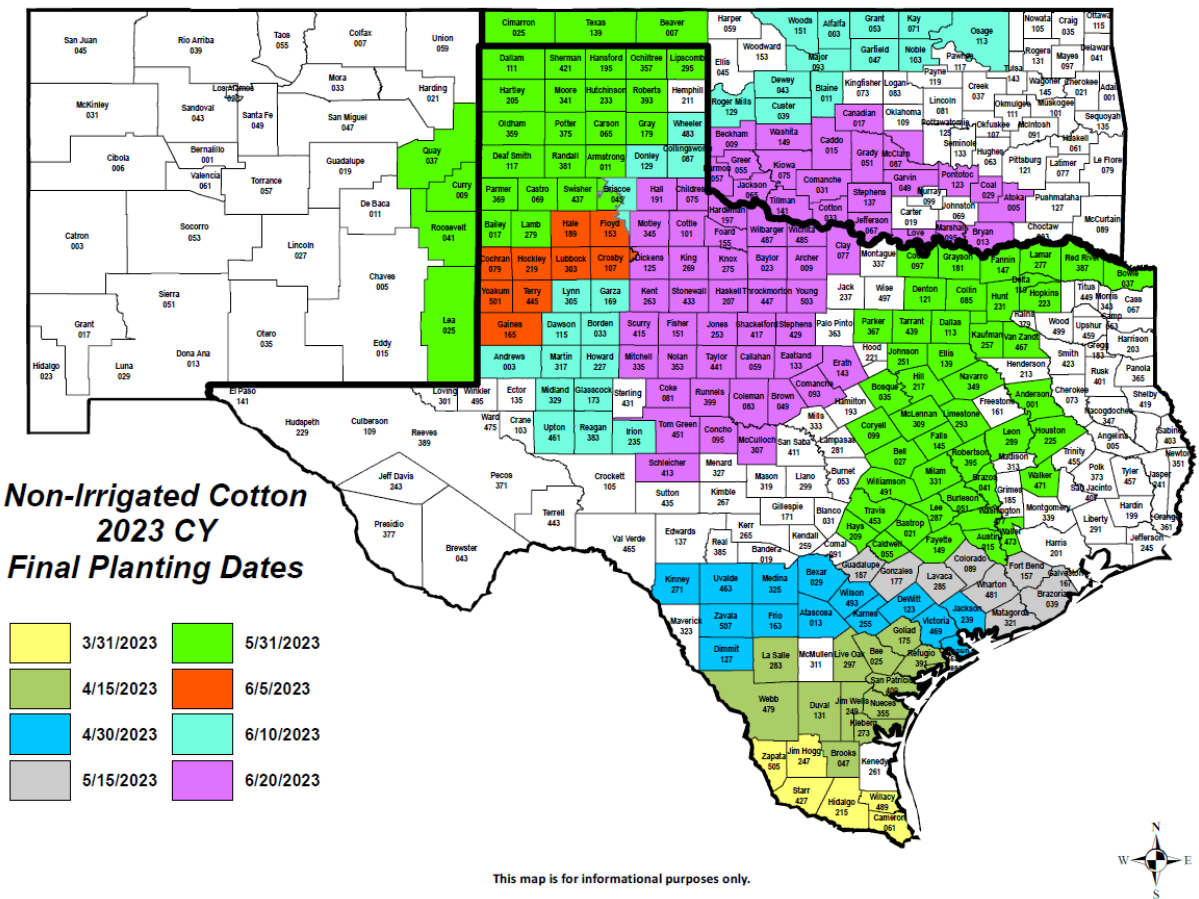
Cotton Final Planting Dates for Insurance Purposes

The May 31 final planting dates have passed, and this affects numerous counties in the Texas Panhandle as far south as Swisher, Bailey and Lamb. Maps of both irrigated and non-irrigated final planting dates by county for 2023 are available from the USDA-Risk Management Agency. For convenience they have been provided below. These maps were provided by Shawn Wade with Plains Cotton Growers and we appreciate his assistance in obtaining them.

Irrigated - 2023 Cotton Final Planting Dates for Insurance Purposes



Non-Irrigated 2023 Cotton Final Planting Dates for Insurance Purposes



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