Agriculture News

Cotton News: *SURE Program*

2011 SURE Program Benefit Estimator Updated; Sign-up Dates Still Unknown

By Shawn Wade

Even though no information has been released by USDA about when it will begin sign-up for the 2011 Supplemental Revenue Assistance (SURE) Program, interest is growing in the program and the assistance it might provide to producers finishing up their second drought-impacted growing season.

In order to help producers determine if they could qualify for the 2011 SURE program, and estimate their level of assistance, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service has released an updated version of the SURE Benefit Estimator for the 2011 crop year. The new SURE Benefit Estimator can be downloaded at http://agrilife.org/southplainscotton/?p=234.

Like all previous versions, the 2011 SURE Benefit Estimator is a Microsoft Excel-based spreadsheet. A copy of Microsoft Excel is required to view and use the estimator.

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service developed the original SURE Benefit Estimator soon after passage of the 2008 Farm Bill with assistance from Plains Cotton Growers, Inc. The goal of the spreadsheet is to provide farmers with a tool that they can use to make preliminary determinations about SURE program eligibility on their operations.

It is important to note that final regulations governing the 2011 SURE program, including the state and national level crop prices that will be used to estimate benefits, have not been released by FSA and any benefit calculated by this version of the Texas AgriLife Extension SURE Benefit Estimator could still vary from the official calculation a producer obtains from FSA during the sign-up process.

Going forward, the availability of additional 2011 program details, as well as inclusion of final 2011 market year average prices, will prompt an updated version of the SURE Benefit Estimator. PCG will report on the availability of all updates as soon as they are released.

This SURE benefit estimator is provided specifically to help producers calculate possible SURE payments. It does not calculate an exact actual payment due to the lack of a final set of program rules and price tables.

The SURE benefit estimator utilizes Direct and Counter-cyclical Program data and Federal Crop Insurance information for an eligible producer or entity to estimate the possible benefits that might be available through the SURE program.

Complete instructions for using the estimator and explanations of the various program parameters used to calculate the estimated SURE payment are included as well.

Want the facts about the U.S. agriculture and farm policy?
http://www.farmpolicyfacts.org

"Drop Your Jeans" For A Good Cause

The Tech Retail Association at Texas Tech University is asking people to "drop their jeans" for a good cause as part of Cotton Incorporated's Cotton. From Blue to Green.™ denim recycling program, a call to action to recycle old denim and give it a "new life" by converting it into natural cotton fiber insulation.

Collection points are at the Plains Cotton Growers, Inc., office, the Lubbock County Farm Bureau Office at 52nd Street and Avenue Q or at 98th and Indiana, and at several places on the Texas Tech campus through October 31.

The Cotton. From Blue to Green.™ denim recycling program will be at the following schools this fall: University of Kentucky, Texas Tech, Simmons College, and the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising (FIDM) in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Irvine and San Diego.

Cotton Incorporated and Bonded Logic, the leading manufacturer in natural cotton fiber insulation, partnered for the 2006 inaugural launch of the Cotton. From Blue to Green.™ denim recycling program. The denim collected on college campuses is given new life when it is converted to UltraTouch™ Denim Insulation and provided to communities in need to assist with building efforts, often in areas affected by natural disasters.

In addition to working with students on college campuses, the denim recycling program continues to gain momentum by partnering with retailers, consumers and corporate responsibility programs throughout the nation. All denim collected through the Cotton. From Blue to Green.™ program is recycled into UltraTouch™ Denim Insulation, and a portion of this insulation, up to approximately 250,000 square feet, will be distributed in 2013 to communities in need.

To date, the Cotton. From Blue to Green.™ program has received nearly 850,000 pieces of denim, resulting in over 1.7 million square feet of insulation. That's approximately 531 tons of denim diverted from landfills. And denim drives on campuses make a big impact! Over 100,000 pieces of denim have come directly from college denim drives.

For more information on how to get involved, contact Emily Thompson at emily.a.thompson@ttu.edu. Learn more about the program at http://www.cottonfrombluetogreen.org.

Area Field Days Scheduled

Mark your calendars for the following area field day:

October 4 – Americot Field Tour and Barbeque Lunch, 10 a.m., Four Bar K, 302 E. 82nd Street in Lubbock

For more information on the Americot field days, call Jerry Montgomery at (806) 577-8011, Denver Cole at (940) 704-7214, or the Americot office at (806) 793-1431.

If you have a field day you would like to add to this schedule, please call Mary Jane Buerkle at (806) 792-4904 or email maryjane@plainscotton.org.

"Celebrate Cotton" Game Successful

Cotton took center stage on Saturday, September 15, at the first-ever "Celebrate Cotton" game at Jones AT&T Stadium as the Texas Tech Red Raiders defeated the University of New Mexico. The audience of 58,955 was the fourth-largest crowd in school history.

Plains Cotton Growers would like to thank the Committee for Champions at Texas Tech, the marketing team at Texas Tech Athletics, Red Raider Sports Properties, the ten presenting sponsors for the game, and everyone who participated in the planning, execution and support of the event.

"The Celebrate Cotton Game was a great opportunity to showcase the significant importance of the whole cotton industry to our region and state," PCG Executive Vice President Steve Verett said. "Equally important was to highlight the critical partnership with Texas Tech University and the cotton research performed there. We are hopeful this is just the beginning of many more annual events in the future."

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