

## Crops

# Growers talk shop at cotton field day

By J.T. SMITH

**G**ROWERS from multiple cotton-growing states converged on the 2009 Americot and NexGen Field Day at Lubbock, Texas, this fall, which gave them a chance to compare notes.

One common thread — from Kansas to Oklahoma to the Texas High Plains — clearly was the worry of cold weather too early, and a big wish for sunshine to finish what had the potential to be an excellent cotton crop for many producers.

Roger Sewell of Pratt, Kan., noted the weather has been cool there this fall.

“Our cotton looks good but needs heat to finish,” Sewell reported.

He said that’s one reason he grows Americot as well as Deltapine cotton varieties 80 miles from the Oklahoma border.

“They seem to work well with our

## Key Points

- Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas growers needed sunny weather for cotton.
- Growers get chance to compare notes at Americot and NexGen Field Day.
- Cotton varieties are bred to deal with the vagaries of growing seasons, conditions.

short season,” he noted.

Oklahoma grower Dennis Kahle of Blackwell raises both dryland and irrigated cotton of Americot and NexGen varieties. He has kept his fingers crossed.

“The 2009 crop could be the best crop we’ve had in maybe 10 years,” Kahle allowed.

He expected to start harvest in Oklahoma in late October after he defoliates the crop.

Sewell said he hopes to start gathering cotton the first week of November in Kansas.

## Cotton with other crops

In Oklahoma, Kahle grows cotton in 30-inch rows and rotates cotton with both soybeans and wheat and sometimes corn in Kay County.

While his part of Oklahoma, just five miles from the Kansas line, still has more soybeans, wheat and corn than it does cotton acreage, Kahle said cotton

## FULL OF POTENTIAL:

According to Burt Heinrich, a Slaton, Texas, cotton grower, his 2009 cotton production offers great potential, especially his NG 3348 B2RF cotton, an early medium-maturity Bollgard II/ Roundup Ready Flex variety. He spoke to fellow growers from Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas on the Americot and NexGen cotton field day at Lubbock this fall.

## Key Points

- U.S. production and consumption of cottonseed oil expected to rise.
- For the second year, more seed will be crushed for oil than fed to dairy cows.
- Cottonseed processing viewed as a viable revenue source over fiber production.

lion pounds, a 25% increase.

For the second year in a row, more available cottonseed will be crushed for oil than fed to dairy cows as whole seed, upsetting a more than 10-year-long trend favoring cows, says Ben Morgan, execu-



**COTTON CONVERSATION:** Dennis Kahle (left), a Blackwell, Okla., cotton grower, and Roger Sewell, a cotton producer from Pratt, Kan., gather to discuss various methods of irrigation with expert Jim Bordovsky, a Texas AgriLife Research engineer with many years of experience with irrigation systems, during the Americot and NexGen cotton field day at Lubbock, Texas.

continues to make a steady increase.

Kahle expected his better irrigated cotton to make 1,300 pounds per acre, and even his dryland cotton should exceed 1,000 pounds. He likes the Americot and NexGen cotton for his area. He takes his cotton to be ginned at the Bi-State Cotton Producers Co-op at Blackwell.

## Corn influences cotton

Sewell readily acknowledged corn determines cotton. “No question, the corn market absolutely drives cotton acres in Kansas,” Sewell assured.

But as of this fall, the ethanol plant was idle there, while the cotton gin was ready to process another crop.

The High Plains Cotton Gin at Pratt was the last cotton gin built in Kansas.

“This [2009] harvest will be our sixth crop,” the Kansas grower reported.

They’re hoping for a big cotton harvest.

## Texan wants heat, too

Burt Heinrich, a veteran cotton grower at Slaton, Texas, just east of Lubbock,

noted the Plains crop has been a dab late and the weather got cool early. Nevertheless, with sunshine, Heinrich could make one of his best crops ever.

## Cotton selections

Heinrich’s best-looking cotton was NG 3348 B2RF, an early medium-maturity Bollgard II/Roundup Ready Flex variety. The 3348 variety has excellent fiber quality and yield potential. It is well adapted to the Texas Plains, Oklahoma and Kansas.

Jason Woodward, Texas AgriLife Research plant pathologist, Lubbock, said 3348 also has exhibited very good verticillium wilt tolerance.

NG 2549 B2RF is early-maturity cotton, which also has verticillium tolerance, with storm-proof bolls for High Plains’ weather.

NG 3410 RF also is storm-proof and adapted for the Texas Plains, Oklahoma and Kansas.

AM 1532 B2RF is a medium-maturity cotton that has performed well on both irrigated and dryland acres on the Texas South Plains and Oklahoma.



# Domestic cottonseed oil use likely to rise

**U**.S. production and consumption of cottonseed oil are expected to significantly increase despite fewer cotton acres and a lower supply of cottonseed, says a spokesperson for the cottonseed crushing industry.

Cottonseed oil is a versatile, trans-free salad and frying oil for the restaurant and snack food manufacturing industries.

Crushers are expected to produce 845 million pounds of cottonseed oil for the 2009-10 marketing year, up from 730 million in 2008-09, according to USDA analysts. What’s more, domestic consumption is expected to reach 700 mil-

lions pounds, a 25% increase.

For the second year in a row, more available cottonseed will be crushed for oil than fed to dairy cows as whole seed, upsetting a more than 10-year-long trend favoring cows, says Ben Morgan, execu-

tive director of the National Cottonseed Products Association, Cordova, Tenn. “Cottonseed oil now comprises the largest portion of the total return from cottonseed to growers,” Morgan notes. “Strong demand from the food industry sector has undeniably increased the value of cottonseed.”

Morgan further explains the shifting demand curve for cottonseed. “There is a certain maximum amount of dollars that can be made from either selling whole cottonseed and/or crushing cottonseed for its products,” he says. “In a free market, that level is determined by supply and demand. In previous years,

more profit could be made by selling a larger share of cottonseed as whole seed. However, current USDA estimates indicate more dollars can be made from crushing seed.”

Once viewed as a leftover of the cotton ginning process, cottonseed processing is increasingly being viewed as a viable revenue source over and above cotton fiber production, he adds. “If the price of cottonseed oil can improve by one penny per pound, the added value to the cottonseed crop would exceed \$24 million in an average year,” he says.

Source: National Cottonseed Products Association