

Cotton Farming Meeting

March 30, 2007

McClain County Mid-American Vo-Tech Center

PURCELL, Ok.--(NTOK Cotton release)-Farmers are invited to attend a meeting about modern cotton production March 30 from 5p.m. until 7p.m. at the Mid-America Vo-Tech near Wayne, Ok., according to Roy Hanan, Oklahoma State University Agricultural Extension Agent. Leading the meeting will be Dr. J.C.Banks, OSU state cotton specialist. Dr. Banks will have a presentation on modern cotton production and conduct a question and answer session.

Since the recent eradication of the bollweevil that nearly stopped cotton production in Oklahoma and surrounding states, new varieties of cotton to grow and modern mechanization to handle it has produced new interest by farmers.

In 2004 and 2005, the new varieties of cotton helped cotton producers set new records in pounds per acre of cotton grown and in the number of bales produced. Farmer cooperatives had to build larger facilities than ever before to store the record crops. In 2005, the Plains Cotton Cooperative Assn. built a cotton storage facility at Liberal, Kansas. In order to handle the record crop, a building that covers seven acres had to be constructed. It is the largest USDA insured cotton storage facility under one roof in the United States. Last year, 2006, was the worst drought on record for the U.S. Thousands of acres of crops withered in the field due to months of extreme heat and no rain. But with the new cotton varieties that are available now, where ever a little extra rain fell, a farmer would harvest cotton yielding a bale to the acre. A bale to the acre for dryland cotton was almost unheard of 20 years ago. Today, with no bollweevils to battle and cotton varieties that have built-in protection against weeds and insects and superior yielding abilities, good cotton can be grown even under the harshest growing conditions. Cotton also works well in rotation with wheat, soybeans, corn and alfalfa. It breaks up weeds and soil-borne crop diseases when planted behind these crops. It also has proven to use less water than many other crops.

Cotton is a major agricultural commodity recognized by the USDA with crop insurance available and it is traded on every agricultural commodity market worldwide.

More information on modern cotton production is available from the local OSU Agricultural Extension office or from Dr. Banks.