

# Keith Corzine

May 10, 2010



Picture cut in:

READY TO CLIMB into his "mobile office," Keith Corzine is ready for two important duties about to happen in his farming life. Around May 25, he will begin planting cotton and a little bit later, he will be harvesting a promising wheat crop. Wheat and cotton are two important crops for Corzine, both as money crops and as two crops that complement each other in a rotation program. (NTOK Cotton photo)

By Vic Schoonover  
NTOK Cotton

STAMFORD, Ex.-It is predicted a lot more cotton some say 25 percent more acres, will be planted in Texas this year.

However, there are some people taking this exciting information in their stride; people who have been utilizing cotton as an important crop for decades.

Two such persons are Rex Ford, manager of the Farmers Cooperative cotton gin at Stamford, Ex., and Keith Corzine, a Stamford, Tx., farmer who is one of Ford's clients.

"We know about the new predictions on increased cotton acreage in Texas," Ford said, "but our cotton acreage around here will remain about the same this year as it has been for a long time.

"Cotton works well for our farmers as a 50-50 rotation with winter wheat. We plant 50 percent of our acreage to winter wheat every year and the other half to cotton."

By rotating acreage between the two crops, farmers avoid problems that occur by growing continuous wheat or cotton on the same acreage year after year.

"Continuous wheat brings along problems with such weeds as cheat and wild oats," Corzine said.

"The presence of these weed seeds in the wheat we sell can reduce the price we get. Planting cotton after wheat breaks up the weed cycle and gives us cleaner fields the next time we plant wheat after the cotton."

Growing continuous cotton creates problems with soil-borne diseases that attack the cotton plants, Ford said. Growing wheat after the cotton reduces these diseases plaguing cotton.

Nature has been good this year to the farmland in the Rolling Plains around Stamford, both men said. A wet winter has given them plenty of soil moisture for planting cotton and the same rain has yielded a bumper wheat crop to harvest this spring.

"We have a few weeks yet to harvest the wheat and we hope everything remains in good shape until we start up our combines," Corzine said. "And we hope there will be more rain in the future to help us get the cotton crop started."

The majority of farming in the area depends on rain alone, Ford said. Dryland farming has always been a big challenge for Southern Plains farmers. Wet years and bumper crops can be followed by bone-dry drought and slim harvests.

Diversity in production and careful management are two important skills Rolling Plains farmers must practice, Ford said.

Along with being manager of the Farmers Cooperative gin, Ford also farms wheat and runs a herd of commercial beef cattle.

Corzine, who will be planting approximately 2,000 acres of dryland cotton later this month, also owns a herd of commercial beef cattle.

"We have come a long way with the cotton varieties we plant," Corzine said. "I think nearly everyone, including myself, see the advantages of planting transgenic cotton varieties. Most of the cotton planted

around here is Fibermax Roundup Ready Flex with BolGard protection. This gives us the ability to control weeds and insects preying on the cotton plants."

Modern cotton varieties have been good to Corzine's dryland production; yielding him an average 480 pounds of lint cotton per acre for several years.

Both men give liberally of their time to farmer organizations. Ford and Corzine are members of the Rolling Plains Cotton Growers Assn., a group actively supporting cotton growers locally and nationally.

Ford has been active in committee work with the Plains Cotton Cooperative Assn., at Lubbock, Tx., for many years.

Corzine is one of Ford's cooperative gin directors and is a member of the board of directors of Capital Farm Credit, affiliated with the Farm Credit Bank of Texas.

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