



Cotton Harvest—Farmers Cooperative Gin at Martha, Oklahoma November 17, 2008



COTTON HARVEST is booming at the Farmers Cooperative gin at Martha, Ok. Lynn Scalf, pictured here at his gin office desk, has been manager of the Jackson County facility for five years. As is the case throughout the Rolling Plains cotton-growing area, Scalf says he won't gin as many bales this year as in 2007, but the quality of the cotton is extremely good. NTOK Cotton photo.

COTTON HARVESTED this year has good quality and farmers are seeing outstanding yields of lint produced per acre, according to Lynn Scalf, manager of the Farmers Cooperative gin in Martha, Ok.

"We have ginned more than 6,000 bales so far this year," he said. "I am predicting we will gin a total of 14,000 bales when we are done. We ginned 20,000 bales in 2007. There were a lot of weather-related problems getting the crop started this year. Such things as too much wind and rain in the spring and then some extremely hot, dry weather later in the summer caused a lot of growing problems."

Scalf explained the majority the cotton produced by his gin's farmers is irrigated. "We are seeing some really good cotton this year," he said. "A lot of it has outstanding staple length and the yields out in the field have been good."

Farmers hauling cotton to the Martha cooperative gin report average yields of two and a quarter to two and a half bales per acre from irrigated fields, Scalf said. "Some fields are yielding three and a half bales of lint per acre."

The Martha facility is located north of Altus with member farmers bringing cotton from as far away as Hobart, about 40 miles north, and Elk City, even farther north by I-40. In 2008, Scalf said, the gin is receiving cotton from approximately 7,500 acres of irrigated cotton and 2,000 acres of dryland cotton. Most of this year's crop for the Martha gin is already harvested and waiting on the module yard to be processed, he said.

A SMALLER COTTON crop for 2008 has been projected by the USDA. In its November report, a 2008-09 US crop will be 13.25 million bales, down 180,000 bales from the October report.

Upland production was put at 13.07 million bales and extra long staple cotton production at 459,000 bales.

Harvested area was estimated at 7.76 million bales, implying a non-harvested area of 1.66 million acres, based on USDA's revised acreage report. The resulting abandonment rate is roughly 17.62 percent. The national average yield per harvested acre was estimated to be roughly 837 pounds, 16 pounds above the five-year average.

The Southwest upland crop, covering Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas, is an estimated 5.4 million bales, based on harvested area of 3.53 million acres and the estimated regional average yield is 734 pounds. The three state area has the largest number of cotton-planted acres and bales produced of all the US cotton production areas. (National Cotton Council)

TALKIN' COTTON is produced by NTOK Cotton, a cotton industry partnership which supports and encourages cotton production in the Rolling Plains of Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas. For more information on the cotton scene, see okiecotton.org and ntokcotton.org. For questions or comments on Talkin' Cotton, contact enterprise1@hughes.net

