

TALKIN' COTTON

COTTON FARMING'S FUTURE in the Rolling Plains of North Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas is a bright one when you consider there is still a big demand for cotton world-wide and futures pricing for the product is at an all-time high.

Jay Cowart, director of warehouse operations for Plains Cotton Cooperative Assn., Altus, Ok., explains the farmer-owned cooperative's warehouses, designed to hold 1,250,000 bales, have been filled to date with 1,325,000 bales.

"Before we complete processing the 2010 crop, we may get more than 1,450,000 bales," Cowart said. Cowart explains active cotton sales removing cotton bales from the warehouses enables them to keep receiving more cotton to replace that sold.

Cowart explains March, 2011, cotton futures price cotton are \$1.47 per pound of lint cotton and the cash cotton price is \$1.40 per pound.

Predicting a continuing bright future for cotton prices, Cowart further explains the Dec., 2011 futures price quoted for cotton is \$1.04 per pound.

Even with many cotton growers having placed their cotton in cooperative "pools" to be sold when the market is highest, it is believed the high demand for cotton will soon bring those prices up to current cash prices.

All cotton producers are encouraged to respond to the National Cotton Council's annual survey of 2011 planting intentions which was recently distributed to upland and extra-long staple cotton producers across the Cotton Belt.

The current survey was distributed through a combination of regular mail and email with the intent of reaching all US cotton farms. Growers who did not receive a survey may contact the NCC via email at econsurvey@cotton.org for survey instructions.

The survey, conducted each year to aid with industry planning and policy deliberations, provides the basis for the economic outlook presented to delegates during the annual NCC annual meeting in early February. Survey results will be presented during the joint meeting of program committees on Saturday morning Feb. 5. To enhance the survey's accuracy, producers are encouraged to respond by the Jan. 18, 2011, deadline.

HIGH COTTON PRODUCERS for 2010 were honored at the 2011 Beltwide Cotton Conferences. They are Ronnie Lee, Bronwood, Ga., Ray Makamson, Itta Bena, Miss., Eric Seidenberger, Garden City, TX., and Bruce Heiden, Buckeye, Az.

The High Cotton awards are made possible through a grant from Farm Press publications to The Cotton Foundation.

COLD WEATHER, with its accompanying ice and snow and the necessity of wearing clumsy, thick layers of winter clothing, can create opportunities for falls and other dangerous happenings.

People involved in winter outdoor jobs should remember to keep aisles and walkways in barns and warehouses free of clutter and debris. Oil spills should be cleaned up and tools should be put away.

Guard rails and fences should be placed around throw down holes and other openings in barns. Sand and salt should be ready to be spread on icy surfaces.

Steps and platforms on tractors and other equipment should be kept clean and dry. People should wear slip resistant boots or shoes.

You should never jump from a tractor or other machinery. Don't carry tools, chains or other dangling equipment on platforms.

When using a three point system, keep either two hands and one foot or one hand and two feet on the machine at all times. Only operate equipment from the seat of the vehicle. Maintain safe speeds and never allow passengers to ride on tractors or machinery, including ATV's.

These safety tips come from the Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention and Education (agcenter@uthct.edu).

TALKIN' COTTON is produced by NTOK Cotton, a cotton industry partnership which supports and encourages increased cotton production in the Rolling Plains of North Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas. For more information on the cotton scene, see ntokcotton.org and okiecotton.org. For comments or questions about Talkin' Cotton, contact eventerprise1@hughes.net