



COMMENTATOR

PLAINS COTTON COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION | WINTER 2010-2011

UNIVERSITY BRANDED JEANS

ROOM TO GROW
ON FASHION ROW

PCCA HOSTS ITS FIRST
COTTON SUMMIT



COMMENTATOR

VOLUME 44, NO 1 | WINTER 2010-2011



ACE Award



University Branded Jeans



Room to Grow on Fashion Row



PCCA Hosts its First Cotton Summit

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On the cover...

*The 2010-11 season was memorable for many PCCA members as they witnessed the rare combination of a good crop and record cotton prices.
Photo by Lynette Wilson*



COMMENTATOR is published three times per year as information for its farmer-members by Plains Cotton Cooperative Association (PCCA), a cotton marketing cooperative with headquarters at 3301 East 50th Street, Lubbock, Texas. Eligibility to participate in programs administered by PCCA is established by law without regard to race, color, creed, sex, religion, age, national origin or handicap.

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ARE COTTON PRICES WEAVING A *tangled web?*

By John Johnson

Market volatility created by record high cotton prices in the 2010-11 marketing year has farmers, merchants, textile executives, analysts, and others shaking their heads and wondering how long the situation will last. It also has generated uncertainty about continued demand for cotton.

The volatility, also the highest on record, was most obvious in December, January and February when more than half of the days witnessed limit moves in futures prices at the Intercontinental Exchange.

Through early March, the dramatic rise in cotton prices made market risk barely tolerable for both buyers and sellers and led to a heavy financial burden required to support both physical and futures positions for many businesses, according to one market newsletter. It also raised fears of "demand destruction" which is caused when prices rise so high they discourage end users from purchasing raw cotton.

One analyst in mid-February noted some textile mills were beginning to have problems acquiring working capital to maintain efficient production levels. The squeeze on mills' margins also may force them to switch to synthetic fibers or start blending synthetics with cotton to improve their financial health.

While the prevailing wisdom among the cotton trade has been that the cure for high prices is high prices, it may not be the case at least for the near-term. During the past five years, world cotton consumption has exceeded world production which has led to the current tight supply situation, and it cannot be corrected in just one season. In its February reports, the U.S. Department of Agriculture projected 2010-11 U.S. ending stocks at less than 2 million bales and world ending stocks at about 43 million, both of which are extremely tight.

Virtually everyone seems to agree world cotton acreage will increase in the 2011-12 marketing year. In its annual planting intentions report, the National Cotton Council predicted U.S. farmers will plant 12.5 million acres, based on a survey of farmers in January. Others predict acreage at 13.0 to 13.5 million as prices continued to surge higher in February, but even an additional one million acres, depending on abandonment and yields, will not be enough to significantly change the supply situation in the United States.

The International Cotton Advisory Committee on March 1 predicted world cotton production will increase 9 percent in 2011-12 to a record 127 million bales. World consumption was pegged at 117 million bales, up 3 million from last year. However, two key factors could make current projections inaccurate.

In addition to cotton, corn and soybean prices in the United States also are at record levels which could lead to fierce competition for acres, primarily in the U.S. Delta and Southeast. Some analysts, on the other hand, say cotton can meet the challenge because three years will be needed to rebuild cotton stocks. The other factor is weather.

A drought in China, the world's largest producer and consumer of cotton, and new incentives for Chinese farmers to increase their wheat and rice production have caught traders' attention. Likewise, drought conditions in West Texas, the world's largest contiguous cotton-growing region, were becoming severe by early March while recent heavy flooding in Australia may have caused significant damage to the cotton crop.

Some analysts now say weather will be the most important factor impacting the cotton market in the coming months. They say the market remains fundamentally very bullish, but are current prices weaving a tangled web? Stay tuned. ☺



U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT RECOGNIZES PCCA DIVISION FOR CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

By Emma C. Matkin

From the U.S. State Department's Benjamin Franklin Diplomatic Reception Room in Washington, D.C., Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton presented the Department's prestigious 2010 Award for Corporate Excellence (ACE) in the small-to-medium enterprise category to Denimatrix, the apparel manufacturing operation of Plains Cotton Cooperative Association (PCCA). The award ceremony was held on December 17, 2010.

"We're here to honor American companies that stand out for their efforts to improve lives around the world," Clinton said in her opening remarks at the ceremony. "They also represent the best of what American business has to offer. They

are generous, inventive, and effective."

Along with Denimatrix, Mars Incorporated and Cisco Systems also were recognized as ACE award winners in the larger enterprise divisions. Clinton humorously described the three division winners as a representation of iconic American products – blue jeans, chocolate bars, and computers.

For more than a decade, the ACE Award has recognized U.S. companies with international operations that demonstrate good corporate social responsibility. Past recipients of the ACE award include Cargill, General Motors, Motorola, Chevron/Texaco, and Ford Motor Company. These distinguished recipients represent the vital role that U.S. companies play abroad as good corporate citizens.

A record 78 American companies doing business in other countries were nominated by U.S. Ambassadors around the world in 2010. Denimatrix was nominated by U.S. Ambassador to Guatemala Stephen McFarland for its corporate social responsibility and environmental stewardship.

Clinton presented the award to PCCA President and CEO Wally Darneille at the ceremony.



The award was presented to PCCA President and CEO Wally Darneille by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.



ABOVE L-R: Denimatrix President Carlos Arias, PCCA President and CEO Wally Darneille, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, and PCCA Board Chairman Eddie Smith.



Darneille graciously accepted the award on behalf of PCCA's stockholders, employees, board of directors, and management team.

"We are extremely proud that Denimatrix has been chosen for this award," Darneille said at the ceremony. "It is very fitting that they have been honored for their corporate social responsibility and their environmental stewardship."

Clinton explained that when Denimatrix was nominated for the ACE Award, they were really touted for the exemplary care they show for their employees, their respect for the local community, and their commitment to the environment.

Darneille said that social responsibility and environmental stewardship are critical to a company's success and by providing a stable and desirable workplace, PCCA can attract employees whose productivity will make them competitive in a global economy.

"This award means a great deal to us about the future as well as the past," Darneille said. "It is a recognition of the dedication of several generations of stockholders to doing the right thing for present and future generations." 🌱

COMMENTATOR

WINS TOP AWARD By Britton Barrett

PCCA's membership magazine, *COMMENTATOR*, captured first place in its category at the 65th annual Cooperative Information Fair held during the recent annual meeting of the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives (NCFC) in San Antonio. It was the second time since 2009 *COMMENTATOR* has won the top award. The fair recognizes cooperatives for their efforts to promote their business and/or products, inform their members, and disseminate information to the public.

COMMENTATOR is published three times annually to inform PCCA members about the cooperative's activities and developments in the cotton and textile industries. PCCA Vice President of Administration and Human Resources Jim Taylor said he has heard many members compliment the quality and effectiveness of the magazine.

"It's very rewarding to know NCFC's judging committee considers *COMMENTATOR* to be the best in the nation," Taylor said. 🌱



Greg Bell

PCCA Announces New Initiative

STAFF CHANGES WILL ENHANCE MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

PCCA President and CEO Wally Darneille announced on February 22 a new initiative designed to enhance communication regarding cotton marketing with the cooperative's members. To facilitate the new effort, Darneille also announced a reorganization of staff and staff promotions.

"Our primary flywheel is marketing our members' cotton, and our primary means of communication with our members is the network of cooperative gins; therefore, it is critical that all of our people who are calling on gins be fully up-to-date on market developments around the world," he said.

All Field Services personnel have been transferred to a new Marketing Communications Department led by Charley Triplett within PCCA's Marketing Division. Triplett's experience leading PCCA's Grower Services Department for many years gives him perfect preparation for his new role, Darneille explained.

"Charley and all of his staff throughout our trade territory will participate in Lonnie Winters' daily marketing meetings, so they will be able to share with gin personnel our worldwide market intelligence on a constant basis," he continued. "We also want to listen to our members' concerns and benefit from their knowledge about growing conditions and potential yields."

In another move, Greg Bell has been promoted to Vice President of Grower Services and Gin Bookkeeping. "Greg's 25 years of experience working within various divisions of PCCA makes him a perfect fit for this job," Darneille said. "We will continue our tradition of service to member gins and hope to enhance the value we provide for them through continual software improvements to respond to their needs." With more and more cotton being sold into the export market, the staff reorganization and promotions will enable Dean Church, Vice President of Warehousing, to develop innovative ideas to improve cotton flow.

"Since we must compete in world markets with other suppliers who are closer to cotton consuming countries, optimizing the flow of our members' cotton will be necessary to maintain our competitive position," Darneille added. "Dean's broad and deep experience in these issues will be invaluable as we move forward. In summary, we are realigning our structure to make it more efficient, more responsive, and more productive so we can provide an ever-higher level of service to our members, gins, and our cotton customers." 🌱



Charley Triplett

TEXAS TECH BESTOWS HONOR ON PCCA PRESIDENT

DARNEILLE NAMED OUTSTANDING AGRICULTURIST

PCCA President and CEO Wally Darneille was named a recipient of the Gerald W. Thomas Outstanding Agriculturist Award during Texas Tech's College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) annual Pig Roast last November. The award, established in 1969, is named for Thomas who served as dean of Tech's College of Agricultural Sciences from 1958 to 1970. It recognizes individuals for their contributions to various areas of Texas agriculture.

CASNR, during the award ceremony, noted Darneille's leadership over the years in the creation of the Larry Combest Endowed Chair in Agricultural Competitiveness. The college also recognized Darneille's leadership rolls with Cotton Council International, the National Council of Textile Organizations, the Texas Cotton Association, the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, and the American Cotton Shippers Association.

Darneille received his bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College and a master's of business administration degree from Auburn University Montgomery (AUM). Recently, he was named one of the "Top 40 at 40" which honors the 40 top graduates for the 40-year history of Auburn University's Montgomery campus.

The Pig Roast, held at Lubbock's Memorial Civic Center, also featured scholarship donors, recipients and intercollegiate judging teams. Other 2010 recipients were Tim Lust of Abernathy, Texas, and Barry Evans of Kress, Texas. 🌱





LEARNING THE ROPES

Two agricultural organizations are actively searching for the next generation of ginners in Texas. Texas Cotton Ginners Association (TCGA) and Texas Agricultural Cooperative Council (TACC), both headquartered in Austin, Texas, now sponsor internships for college students who aspire to manage a cotton gin in the future.

Although the two internship curriculums differ slightly, the goal of each program is the same – to give students who are interested in gin management an advantage by providing them with the information and hands-on skills they need to enter the field after graduation.

TCGA is one of the oldest cotton organizations in the United States and represents gins that process a majority of the state's cotton crop each year. The organization represents ginning interests at the Texas Capitol, at numerous national and state meetings, and through membership in other organizations that share mutual goals for the industry. TCGA is deeply

ORGANIZATIONS OFFER INTERNSHIPS IN THE GINNING INDUSTRY

BY LYNETTE WILSON

involved in helping its membership address safety and environmental issues and provides a vital communication link among the membership and with other agricultural interests.

In 2008, through a partnership between the organization, member gins, and Texas A&M University, TCGA became the first Texas organization to create a ginning internship program.

"The Ag Systems Management program in Texas A&M's Ag Engineering Department features a curriculum that could prepare a student for a career in gin management," said TCGA Communications Manager and Special Projects Coordinator Aaron Nelsen. "We hope to develop an interest in the cotton industry that will lead to a career," he said.

After students submit an application and go through an interview process, Nelsen chooses two candidates for the internship program. Each intern is matched with gins in the West Texas area during the first part of the summer. They are given the chance to observe all facets of a gin operation during that time, including the marketing of cotton, financial decisions, gin safety, and management of employees. During the second part of the summer, they move to South Texas where they work in a gin that is actively processing cotton. In addition, TCGA pays travel expenses for the interns to attend the association's annual meeting and trade show in Lubbock, Texas.

"Interest in the internship has grown exponentially each year," Nelsen said. "We've gone from just two to more than 12 applicants in just four years. It's good to see that a growing number of students are interested in entering the cotton industry."

In 2010, TACC began its internship program. An association that serves as a voluntary, statewide organization created by Texas cooperatives, TACC's primary mission is to "promote, support, and advance the interests, understanding, and viability of agricultural, utility and credit cooperatives and their members through legislative and regulatory efforts, education and public relations."



TACC believes it is knowledge that provides the solid foundation that success is built upon; therefore, creating an internship was a natural step for the organization. In the inaugural year, interns were selected from Texas Tech University and Texas A&M. One worked primarily at a grain and farm supply cooperative and the other at a cotton gin.

"These students will not come out of the intern program, graduate from college, and automatically expect to land a position as a coop general manager," explained Charley Triplett, PCCA's Director of Marketing Communications and a member of the TACC Leadership Subcommittee. "The intent of the program is for students to gain valuable practical experience so they will be qualified to begin at an entry level position and work their way up. The knowledge they obtain from one summer working in the industry really gives them a leg up," he said.

Originally from New Home, Texas, Ryan Wied was an Ag Leadership major and a senior in the Corps of Cadets at Texas A&M University when he became an intern in the inaugural year of TACC's internship program.

"I wanted to complete an internship in the agriculture industry and this one really peaked my interest," Wied explained.

After he graduated in December 2010, Wied accepted a position with Ecodrip and moved back to West Texas. He is grateful for the experience provided by TACC and says the knowledge he gained was invaluable.

"I learned a lot from Jimmy Roppolo in El Campo and I would seriously consider a career as a gin manager if the opportunity came up and the timing was right," he said.

Jimmy Roppolo, General Manager at Farmers Cooperative of El Campo, has taken part in training students from both the TACC and the TCGA internship programs. Roppolo believes introducing young people to agriculture and allowing them to work in the industry before graduation is a great way for students to decide if that is where their future career may lie.

"I enjoy being a teacher and a mentor," Roppolo said. "Both programs are tremendous because they offer young students with a passion for the industry the opportunity to pursue a career, and it gives the industry a chance to find the next generation of ginners in Texas." 🍌



TOUR

- de -

LATIN AMERICA

By Britton Barrett
Photos courtesy of
Cotton Council International



Last July, eight U.S. cotton producers received a first-hand look at the textile industry in Latin America. In the news, people normally hear about China's textile industry consuming a large volume of U.S. cotton, but this tour showed the importance of U.S. cotton in Latin American markets.

The trip, sponsored by Cotton Council International (CCI), the export promotion arm of the National Cotton Council, and Cotton Incorporated gave the U.S. cotton producers a chance to reinforce the industry's commitment to continue delivering cotton fiber and value-added products to the region. The group toured three countries in Latin America, Mexico, Honduras and Peru, within five days.

According to CCI, Mexico consumes approximately two million bales of cotton each year in both fiber and the fiber equivalent of yarns and fabrics. This represents 12 percent of the cotton grown in the United States.

Frank Bezner, Jr., from Hereford, Texas, was one of the eight cotton producers chosen to participate. It was the first time Bezner had been to Latin America, and he was very excited to participate and learn about their markets.

"I was really impressed with the people, everybody was friendly and nice, and they expressed their appreciation of U.S. cotton producers," Bezner said.

According to government statistics, around 2.2 million bales of U.S. fiber exports are sent to Latin America, representing about 16 percent of total U.S. exports.

Brady Mimms from Lubbock, Texas, was another cotton producer asked to participate in the tour. Like Bezner, he had never been to Latin America but was excited to experience the culture.

The trip proved to be educational for both producers. Mimms said he knew how important Mexico, Peru, and Honduras were as export markets but was surprised to see how modern machinery was being used by the mills in all three countries.

The producer delegation began its trip in Mexico City where it had several meetings with that country's textile industry leadership. Included in the stop was a tour of the Grupo Zaga textile mill.

The tour continued to Honduras for similar meetings with that country's textile leaders as well as a tour of the Gildan knitting and sewing plant. The trip concluded with a stop in Peru where meetings were conducted with Andean textile and mill leadership as well as a tour of the Nuevo Mundo mill.

Benzer said the trip was informative and demonstrated the importance of maintaining good relationships with these countries' textile leaders.

"These countries in Latin America are important export markets for U.S. cotton, and it's important to show our gratitude to them," Benzer said. 🌱



The delegation visited mills in Mexico, Honduras, and Peru.

Around
2.2 MILLION
bales of
U.S. fiber exports
are sent to
LATIN AMERICA,
representing about
16 PERCENT
of *TOTAL* U.S. exports.



Top: Before continuing their tour, the entire U.S. delegation poses for a group photo at a mill.

Left: The tour allowed producers to learn how U.S. cotton is processed in Latin America.

Right: The group receives a briefing from mill officials.



Coming Soon to a Store Near You:

UNIVERSITY BOOKS





BRANDED JEANS

By Britton Barrett | Photos by Savant Photography

Students, fans, and alumni now have another way to show their school spirit. PCCA officially announced the creation of a new line of jeans that display university logos on the pockets and will be created from PCCA members' cotton spun into denim at American Cotton Growers and sewn into jeans at Denimatrix.

(continued on page 15)



The idea behind the jeans originated with PCCA President and CEO Wally Darneille. College students wear jeans by nature, and Darneille saw an opportunity to expand into an untapped market.

Eduardo Gutierrez, Denimatrix's Director of International Markets, said PCCA initially will market the jeans to three prestigious universities then expand to more universities with the overall goal to make them a nationwide product. Samples were made with logos for Texas Tech University, The University of Alabama, and the current national football champion Auburn University.

"We also have licensing agreements with the University of Georgia, Georgia Tech, the University of Kansas, Louisiana State University, Oklahoma State University, Texas A&M, SMU, South Carolina and TCU, and are working on many others," Darneille said.

Since last summer, PCCA employees and Denimatrix designers have been hard at work to produce the high-quality, fashionable jeans. Focus groups also were used to see what styles would be viable. Nine focus groups were conducted in Texas and Alabama, and on-the-street interviews also were conducted in the two states. For the focus groups, volunteers were selected from three target audiences: students, alumni, and fans of each of the chosen universities. The street interviews were conducted on game days at the

universities where volunteers were presented with samples of the jeans and were told about the concept behind them. The "intercepts" included interviews with students, alumni, and fans, specialty shop owners, and managers who carry collegiate licensed products and apparel.

At the end of February, PCCA showcased the line of jeans in the Campus Merchandise Exhibition (CAMEX) in Houston, Texas. It was a great opportunity for PCCA to show off its latest product to

buyers representing bookstores and specialty stores that sell collegiate merchandise.

The suggested price range for men's jeans will likely be \$49.50 to \$59.50, for women's jeans \$49.50 to \$69.50, and for women's shorts \$29.50 to \$39.50, according to Gutierrez. Each university involved will receive a percentage of the proceeds from each pair sold.

"As people support their school with spirit, they're also supporting it with contributions to that university," Darneille said. 🌱

**Samples were made with logos
for Texas Tech University,
The University of Alabama,
and the current national football
champion Auburn University.**



ROOM TO GROW

With continued growth and expansion of PCCA's vertically integrated Textile and Apparel Division, new business opportunities continue to arise. In April 2010, PCCA announced the opening of its new joint sales and product development office in Los Angeles, Calif., which will promote products from American Cotton Growers (ACG) and Denimatrix (DMX).

PCCA employees Wilson Avalos and Ryan Lupton are running the new Los Angeles office. According to Avalos, Los Angeles is known as the "Denim Mecca" of the world, so it is a great area for ACG and DMX to target an audience that plays such an active role in the fashion industry. ACG and DMX have built relationships with new clients and maintained relationships with established clients. Some key customers in the area include Gap, Guess, Lucky Brand, Rock and Republic, and Armani among several others.

"Having our office based out of Los Angeles allows us to stay current with trends which gives us the opportunity to have a voice and an opinion regarding what is going on with denim," Avalos said.

Avalos oversees commercial initiatives in the Los Angeles market for DMX and has an active role in the promotional activities of the organization, while Lupton works in product development for ACG and is a sales representative for ACG and DMX. Before coming to Los Angeles, Lupton worked for ACG in San Francisco, Calif., and Avalos worked for Denimatrix in Guatemala City, Guatemala.

"When we go into a meeting with a client, Wilson and I go into it as a team," Lupton said. "Together, we bring something to the table because I have knowledge from actually selling the fabric while Wilson knows about selling the finished product. Together, we make a good combination."



ON FASHION ROW

By Mica Graybill and Hallie Bertrand

Los Angeles is known as the “Denim Mecca” of the world, so it is a great area for ACG and DMX to target an audience that plays such an active role in the textile industry.

Originally an old warehouse, the Los Angeles office location had been converted by its owner into a building with a style similar to loft apartments. According to Lupton, the environment of the office has a very unique style that is representative of ACG and DMX.

“The office environment has its own culture,” Lupton said. “Customers love culture, especially when it is definitive of what a brand wants to represent.”

Avalos and Lupton agree that the Los Angeles office definitely has a potential for future growth. As business keeps expanding and the client base continues to grow, Lupton and Avalos are excited to see what is in the future for ACG and DMX. 🌱

PCCA HOSTS ITS FIRST

COTTON SUMMIT

By Lynette Wilson

HISTORICALLY HIGH COTTON PRICES

inspired Plains Cotton Cooperative Association (PCCA) to conduct a first-of-its-kind event that convened representatives from the cotton, denim, spinning, and apparel industries. On November 3, 2010, the cooperative hosted its first Cotton Summit at its headquarters office in Lubbock, Texas.

Attendees included both denim and cotton customers from companies including Parkdale Mills, Williamson-Dickie Manufacturing Company, Levi Strauss & Co., Carhartt, VF, Abercrombie & Fitch, Lucky Brand, Gap, and Hanes Brands.

The invitation-only event placed an emphasis on facilitating dialogue between PCCA and its customers as the cooperative shared its outlook on the cotton situation for the coming year and discussed how the other industries planned to deal with rising prices. For the first time since the

American Civil War, cotton prices are well over one dollar per pound.

"The number one reason for the rise in cotton prices is tight supply," said PCCA's Director of Sales Grady Martin. "The second reason is weakness of the dollar as commodity prices are inversely related to currency values. As the currency (dollar) gets weaker the relative value of the commodity increases," he explained.

As the raw material prices increase, cost to manufacture denim and other cotton fabrics also increases. Manufacturers ultimately will pass the increased costs to the consumer, and depending upon availability and cost of alternative fibers such as polyester, some manufactures may modify blend levels. Thus, a 100 percent cotton product may be modified to an 80/20 cotton/polyester blend.

"Higher cotton prices will necessarily result in higher priced fabric and jeans," said Martin. "Based upon what we are hearing from our customers, retail prices for jeans are likely to increase several dollars per pair," he concluded.

"Our hope was to make the relationships in the cotton, denim, and apparel supply chain more 'collaborative' and less 'combative,'" said Wally Darneille, PCCA President and CEO. "At the summit, we shared the information we have about past, current, and future trends in cotton and offered ideas on ways we can work together better by cooperating to create mutually beneficial opportunities," he explained.



A visit to an operating cotton gin was a unique experience for Cotton Summit participants.



W H I T

IN ADDITION TO EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS IN

which the cotton market, prices, and trade were discussed, PCCA emphasized a “hands on” cotton experience for its guests in order for them to see the entire process from “field to fashion” first hand.

In order to facilitate an understanding of the labor involved in harvesting a crop, summit attendees visited cotton farms where each of them rode a cotton stripper with a PCCA member-farmer.

“We really liked the idea of our customers going out into the field, meeting a farmer, riding on a cotton stripper, and having a psychological connection to feeling the ground under their feet and the cotton in their hands,” Darneille said.

An excursion to a cooperative gin also was on the agenda. Splitting into three groups, the visitors toured either Lubbock Cotton Growers, Citizens-Shallowater, or Liberty Cooperative Gin. Managers at each location explained the ginning process, discussed cotton characteristics, and answered a myriad of questions from the summit participants. Later, denim manufacturing was highlighted by visiting American Cotton Growers (ACG) in Littlefield, Texas.

To complete the field to fashion education process, the summit concluded with dinner and a fashion show in PCCA’s Boardroom. As electrifying music filled the air, models wore high-fashion jeans created by designers at Denimatrix, PCCA’s garment manufacturing facility, to a highly attentive crowd of summit guests.

“In the minds of our customers, I think this summit really set us apart from other cotton and denim supply companies,” said Jack Mathews, PCCA’s Vice President of Fabric Sales and Product Development. “Our total verticality and the resulting knowledge we have in all aspects of the industry truly differentiates us from any other business. As a result of this meeting, we hope to be perceived as a resource to our customers rather than just another supplier,” he concluded. 🌱

Cotton Summit participants were treated to a fashion show featuring the latest collection of jeans from Denimatrix such as the pair shown above.

By Emma C. Matkin

PROMOTING U.S. COTTON IN WEST TEXAS





Worldwide visitors traveled to the Texas High Plains seeking a contemporary glimpse of U.S. cotton production and sharing multicultural perspectives with industry professionals.

In late 2010, West Texas welcomed a Japanese film crew, and German and Thai magazine editors and photographers for a unique opportunity to experience "cotton culture."

In coordination with Cotton Council International (CCI), Plains Cotton Cooperative Association's (PCCA) Public and Legislative Affairs staff assisted the Council in planning and organizing location sites for filming, photo shoots, and tours for these delegations in the West Texas region.

In October of 2010, in the midst of the West Texas harvest season, TV Osaka shot a television documentary featuring U.S. cotton to be broadcast to 35 million households in Japan.

According to the CCI Web site, the documentary was entitled, "Attractive Texas: Fashion, Food and Cowboys' Spirit". The 75-minute special chronicled two famous Japanese actresses as they visited cotton fields in West Texas and the American Cotton Growers denim mill in Littlefield, Texas.

"The objective of this program was to give consumers in Japan - the third largest consumer market in the world - a better understanding of the advantages of U.S. cotton," CCI Communications Consultant Jennifer Jackson explained.

The CCI Web site also reported before broadcasting the program, TV Osaka ran 24 ads introducing the show. The network has six stations located in all major urban areas in Japan, and its broadcasting area covers approximately 70 percent of total Japanese households.

Visitors from Thailand also came to Lubbock in October representing 'Praew', a Thai fashion magazine. Photo opportunities involving cotton fields, stagecoaches, barns and other "rustic" elements were captured as a professional model exhibited U.S. cotton-rich dresses. These garments were designed by a team of student designers from Chulalongkorn University in Thailand, winners of the COTTON USA Design Challenge. The clothes were made with COTTON USA-qualified 100 percent cotton fabrics from Thai mills sponsoring the challenge which has been promoted in Thailand for the past five years.

"The COTTON USA Design Challenge creates awareness among young designers that 100 percent cotton fabrics can be used as a raw material for fashion apparel," Jackson said. "The cotton fields in Lubbock during harvest time were the ideal backdrop for showing off these cotton fashions."

The group also included individuals from a TV crew called I-Teen that airs in Thailand. To inform its viewers about current events in the U.S. cotton industry, I-Teen asked PCCA President and CEO Wally Darneille to comment in an interview.

In November of 2010, CCI and PCCA continued to promote U.S. cotton. 'Brigitte' is a women's fashion magazine published twice a month in Germany. This particular magazine is very committed to COTTON USA, according to CCI, and wanted to publish a feature about U.S. cotton.

One of the new philosophies of 'Brigitte' is to work without professional models. Thus, the magazine prefers shooting authentic people in their natural environment. Jackson worked with the magazine crew on how to capture this idea and promote U.S. cotton.

A portion of photo shoots for this article took place in the West Texas region featuring women within the cotton supply chain. PCCA staff searched for suitable models that had a background in the industry and desirable locations for the actual photo shoot. Ashley Mimms, who is a member of PCCA, participated in the photo shoot as a model.

"It was such a great experience," Mimms said. "I was so honored to have the opportunity to be part of a project promoting U.S. cotton." PCCA Communications Intern Britton Barrett, and her mother, Jana Barrett, also were asked to participate in the photo shoot as models.

The 'Brigitte' is scheduled to publish this article in March. Other locations outside of Texas also will be featured. 🌱



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LUBBOCK, TEXAS 79408



Cotton Pickings

photo by Lynette Wilson

NEW DELEGATE BODY REPRESENTATIVES AS OF FEBRUARY 16, 2011

Gregg Newton	Big Spring
Mike Braddock	Grassland
Andy Bennett	Hart
Jason Kristinek	Liberty
Steve Graham	Olton
Rex Henard	Tri-County

NEW GIN MANAGERS

Jeff Watkins	Big Spring
David Carreon	Loraine

