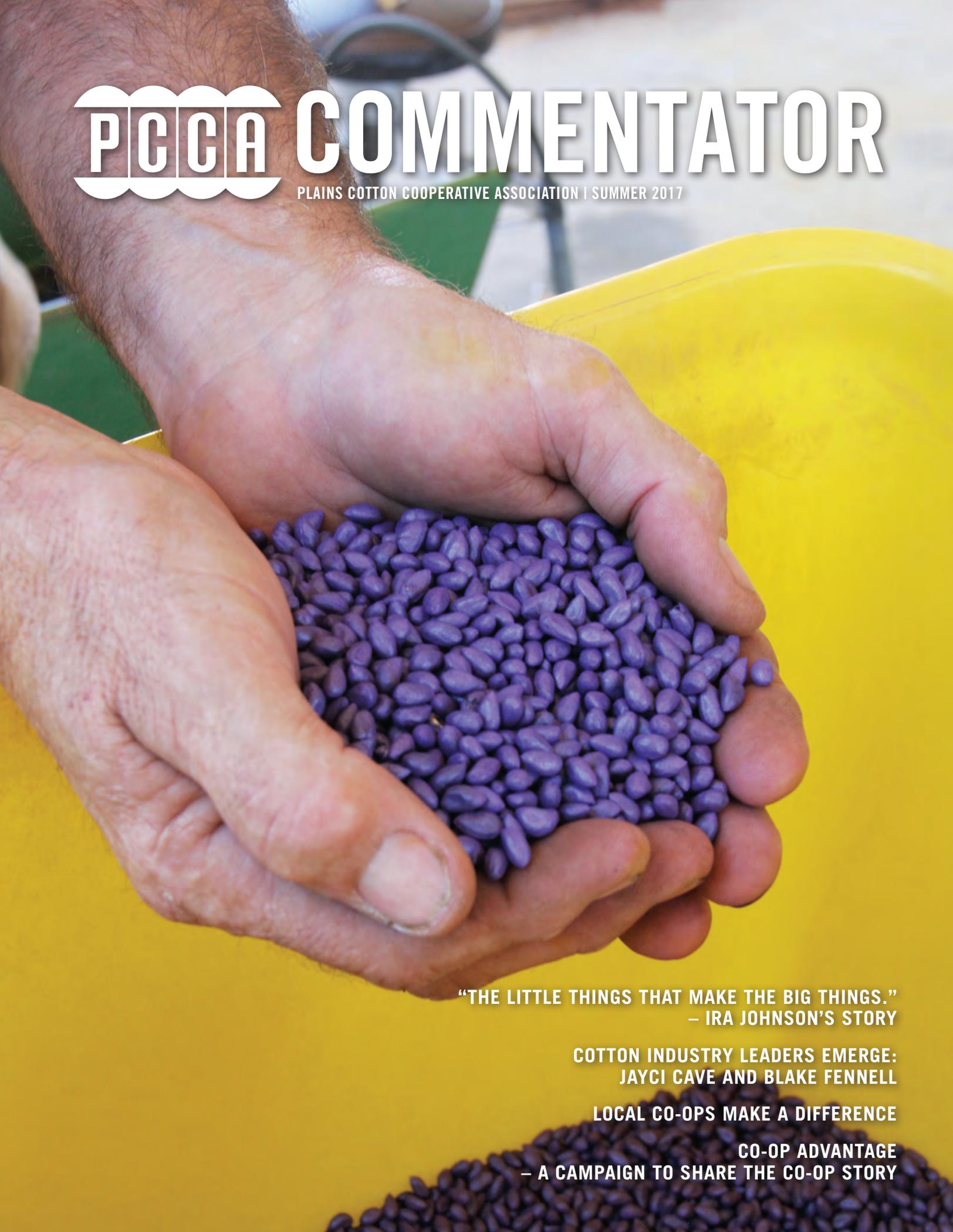




COMMENTATOR

PLAINS COTTON COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION | SUMMER 2017



**"THE LITTLE THINGS THAT MAKE THE BIG THINGS."
– IRA JOHNSON'S STORY**

**COTTON INDUSTRY LEADERS EMERGE:
JAYCI CAVE AND BLAKE FENNELL**

LOCAL CO-OPS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

**CO-OP ADVANTAGE
– A CAMPAIGN TO SHARE THE CO-OP STORY**

COMMENTATOR

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COMMENTATOR is published three times per year as information for its grower-owners 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.



On the cover...

From the first seed planted to the last bale harvested, the true advantage lies in the co-op system. See related story on page 14.

Photo by Jayci Cave.

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Sign up on PCCA's website to receive Cotton Market Weekly.



Letter *from the* President

Amidst all of the uncertainties in cotton agriculture, one thing is undeniable—our grower-owners work extremely hard to nurture a crop from planting to harvest. That fact increases the importance of making sure that we do everything in our power to generate the maximum possible return to them.

Recently, there are three factors that have impacted the value of cotton and are likely to do so well into the future. There are other determinants, but we believe retail demand, synthetic fiber dynamics and sustainability are the driving force behind the moderately better markets recently experienced. Let's break down each one:

RETAIL DEMAND Around the world, there has been an increase in the consumption of cotton apparel and textiles. Some of the growth can be attributed to a strong economic climate and an expanding population of middle class consumers, according to data from Cotton Incorporated. The future direction of the market depends in large part on whether the economic climate can be sustained. You need look no further than a cable TV news channel or mainstream news outlet to find both bullish and bearish scenarios. We believe the world economy wants to grow, but is it enough to overcome issues such as trade and political risks that make daily headlines?

SYNTHETIC FIBER DYNAMICS If you check the pulse of consumers, man-made chemical fibers have been making news lately mostly for the wrong reasons. Research has shown that substances like polyester can actually find their way into waterways and seas as a result of home laundering, according a 2011 study by the American Chemical Society. Fibers that are too small to be seen may be polluting our oceans and thus a large part of our food supply. It remains unclear if consumers will be affected by this news in the long-run. However, cotton's status as an all-natural fiber may help us recapture some market share.

SUSTAINABILITY U.S. cotton growers are the most environmentally responsible producers in the world and yet they struggle to gain recognition for their advances. While it is right to be concerned with conservation and the environment, it is wrong to ignore the reduced use of crop-protection chemicals, water, and land on which U.S. cotton is grown. We believe it is a disincentive to disregard the efforts of U.S. farmers in these important areas. Wisely, many retailers and manufacturers around the world have acknowledged our progress. However, more must be done to ensure that all textile and apparel brands accept U.S. fiber as among the most responsibly-produced in the world. To that end, PCCA continues to explore participation in a number of education and public relations initiatives aimed at sustainability. The most important thing for the U.S. cotton industry to acknowledge is that sustainability concerns from consumers are never going away, and we must adapt our marketing to that reality.

Continued progress in these three important market drivers will help move cotton prices to a profitable level for our grower-owners. We have resources dedicated to ensuring that your best interests are protected to the maximum possible level. I hope we can report improvements in all of these areas in the future.

Sincerely,

Kevin Brinkley
President and Chief Executive Officer

Stay Current

with Cotton Market Developments

Keeping PCCA members informed is one of many priorities for the cooperative's staff, and one communications tool is Cotton Market Weekly. This free service is written and distributed each week, as the name implies, and contains information about cotton futures, U.S. and world supply and demand estimates, crop conditions, and more.

Cotton Market Weekly (CMW) was developed more than 25 years ago by PCCA's Communications Department and originally was mailed only to weekly newspapers to help fill space and keep their readers informed. New technology in recent years made it possible to offer CMW to anyone interested in staying up-to-date on current market conditions and factors affecting cotton prices by receiving the newsletter via email.

CMW is co-written by John Johnson, PCCA's Director of Public Relations and Legislative Affairs, and Chris Kramedjian, PCCA's Director of Risk Management. They monitor and report on weekly and monthly reports from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, and others. CMW is written and emailed each Friday unless a holiday requires the newsletter to be sent on Thursday. 🌱

To subscribe to this free service from PCCA, simply visit the cooperative's website: www.pcca.com.





IN MEMORY OF *David Fields*

BY JOHN JOHNSON

Cooperatives and the U.S. cotton industry lost a loyal and staunch supporter with the passing of Gulf Compress President and CEO David Fields in April. The son of a co-op gin manager, David joined the staff of Gulf Compress, headquartered in Corpus Christi, Texas, in 1995 and became President and CEO in 2008.

Prior to joining Gulf Compress, David spent almost 14 years at Plains Cotton Cooperative Association (PCCA) in Lubbock. He also worked at Acuff Co-op Gin. He was a past president of the Texas Agricultural Cooperative Council and was named its Cooperator of the Year in 2012, and he was honored as Warehouseman of the Year by the Texas Cotton Association. David was a member of the South Texas Cotton & Grain Producers Association and the Cotton Growers Warehouse Association.

"David was a true co-op man," said PCCA President and CEO Kevin Brinkley. "He always tried to provide the best possible service at Gulf because he knew it would help improve returns to his growers. He genuinely cared about everyone including his growers, gin managers, shippers and employees. Our industry was a beneficiary of David Fields' character."

"I truly appreciated David's fiery level headedness," said PCCA South Texas Division Manager Cris Gwinn. "Anytime I needed advice, a sympathetic ear, or just someone to vent to, his door was always open. David's leadership will be missed, not only at Gulf Compress but throughout the entire industry."

COMPRESS
NAMES
ROBERT SWIZE
PRESIDENT
& CEO

The Gulf Compress Board of Directors named Robert Swize the cooperative's President and CEO in April. Robert joined the co-op's staff in August 2008 as Vice President of Administration.

Raised near Houston, Robert graduated from Texas A&M University with a degree in animal science and went to work for the Texas Agricultural Extension Service in Nueces County. For the next four years, some of his duties included working with demonstration plots for cotton varieties and micronutrient management. Robert spent the next nine years as Associate Director and Interim Director for the Santa Gertrudis Breeders International in Kingsville, Texas. He then spent six years as Executive Director of the American Boer Goat Association in San Angelo, Texas.

Robert and his wife of 27 years, Sharon, have three children: Alexandria (Alex), Carolyn, and Justin. 🇺🇸

Cotton Research and Promotion Program Proves Beneficial to Growers and Importers

Jayci Cave

According to a press release dated June 6, 2017, from the Cotton Board, a third-party evaluation recently took place to evaluate the Cotton Research and Promotion Program (the Program) which is done every five years. The release stated,

“The analysis found strong, positive returns to cotton producers and importers as a result of the Program.”

The release also included some prominent results of the evaluation that serve as a good indication of the work the Cotton Research and Promotion Program carries out:

- Producer revenues are up \$175 million annually, on average, or 3.2 percent.
- Annual farm program costs have been reduced \$168.4 million, on average.
- The return on investment (ROI) for cotton producers and government is seven to one.
- The Program generates a benefit-cost ratio of 3.6 for producers.
- Importer after-tax profits increased by \$732.9 million on average.
- Importer benefit cost-ratio is 14.0 over the life of the Program.
- Increase in importer sales revenue as a percentage of historical retail revenue is 12 percent.

According to the release, Janet Ydavoy, current Cotton Board chairman and cotton importer, said the Program has bettered cotton in many areas.

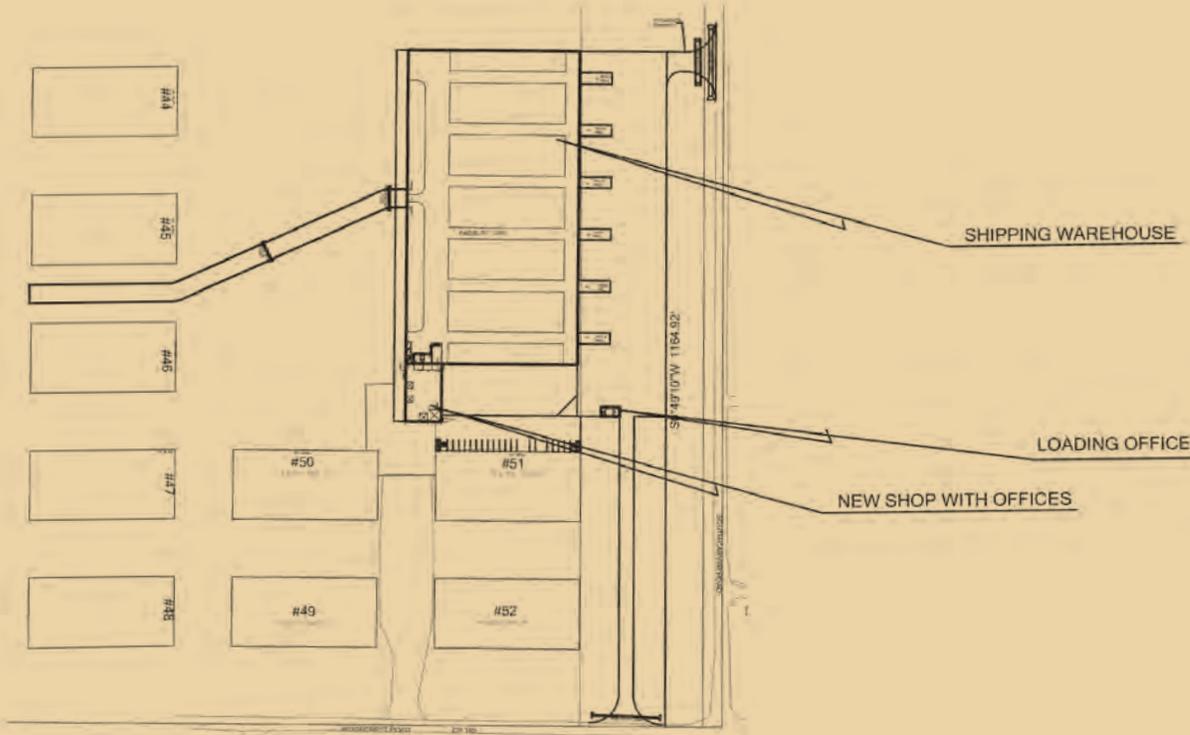
“The report concludes that the program has enhanced cotton demand, augmented U.S. cotton yields and production over time, generated a positive return to both cotton producers and importers, and reduced the dependence of cotton producers on government farm programs,” Ydavoy said. “We believe this is a very positive report and is a strong, objective measure of the returns generated by the program.” 🌱



Cotton Research and Promotion Program

PCCA Warehouse Division

HAS RECORD YEAR BY JAYCI CAVE



PCCA'S WAREHOUSE DIVISION received a record 1,742,315 bales for the 2016-17 crop. This broke the division's previous record of 1,610,000 bales in 2007. However, handling this crop did not come without its challenges. Jay Cowart, PCCA Vice President of Warehousing, said they had to make adjustments in order to accommodate this large crop.

"For the first time since 2010, we opened the Memphis, Texas, plant," Cowart said. "We also block stacked most of the cotton and did a lot of restacking to recover space after shipping."

PCCA's Altus Warehouse location is currently in the process of building a new shipping facility which should be complete late this summer. Cowart said this change is long overdue.

"The increased crop sizes in past years has overwhelmed current bale sorting, staging and shipping areas," Cowart said. "This new facility will be able to hold all of the cotton that is ready for shipment and will increase the storage capacity in Altus by around 30,000 bales. It will be located where

we can remove the outbound traffic from the rest of the plant, and it is designed for truck shipments which is going to create an orderly flow of outbound shipments in a more effective and safe atmosphere. The old facilities were designed around rail shipments and were not very effective."

Cowart said this change is coming at a good time because of the increase in planted acres in 2017-18.

"Based on planting intentions we may see a little larger crop in the Rolling Plains and a larger crop in Oklahoma and Kansas," Cowart said. "If this crop gets planted and has average or better yields, the Warehouse Division could have another full and challenging year ahead." 🌱

"THE LITTLE THINGS THAT MAKE THE BIG THINGS."

IRA JOHNSON'S STORY

BY JAYCI CAVE

WORLD WAR II VETERAN. FARMER.

For Ira Mitchell Johnson Jr. these two things go hand-in-hand. He enlisted when he was 18 years old and served in the Army under General George S. Patton during World War II.

"I never did get to see him, but he kept us busy day and night," Johnson said. "We would hit them on one front during the day and then at night we would move out and hit them on another front until they were tore up and didn't know what they were doing. He [General Patton] was smarter, and he had more men to work with. You need to hit the enemy the fastest with the most. That is what I learned, and you know, that applies to farming and everything else. You have to get out there and have it done quick and fast and then you move on to another job."

After serving in the Army for two and a half years, Johnson returned home to farm. At the age of 91 Johnson still manages his 2,600-acre farming operation in Southwest Oklahoma today. He said he primarily grows cotton and is farming more land than ever before with less help.

"It's all I know. I started farming when I got out of the army in 1945 and I have been farming ever since," Johnson said. "I bought my first farm of 80 acres for \$1,385. Dad bought one for \$2,000 at a county courthouse sale. That is the kind of farming I started with. On this first farm, it had places on it where you couldn't drive with a tractor except from one side."

Growing up in the Great Depression, Johnson said he learned many valuable lessons about life and farming from his parents. He said his dad was a very good farmer.



Ira Mitchell Johnson Jr.

"He helped organize this part of the country and we bought a lot of sorry land that we built up and made good land. It is the little things that make the big things," Johnson said. "You need to do a super good job no matter what you are doing. You need a cover crop on your land all the time. My daddy taught me that when I was just a boy. See, I grew up during the depression when we didn't have anything to eat."

After farming for 72 years and living in the home he bought for \$5,000 in 1954, Johnson shared the secret to his success and happiness.

"First advice is to not buy a lot of machinery," Johnson said. "Buy what you have to have and that is all. After my first 20 years of farming, I worked in the shop mostly. The factory job on the equipment wasn't quite adequate. If you want to make a living farming you need to work 12 hours a day, six or seven days a week. If you don't care about getting ahead fast, five days a week will be enough."

"I CAN'T EMPHASIZE ENOUGH HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO KNOW THE RIGHT PEOPLE," JOHNSON SAID. "KNOW GOOD PEOPLE, AND THEY WILL HELP YOU UP AND DOWN THE ROAD."

It wasn't all work for Johnson. In his younger years, he said he would go out dancing on Friday and Saturday nights. It was at one of those dances where he met the love of his life and wife, Charlene. Johnson said his wife was the definition of a true farm wife.

"She always fixed me breakfast. I didn't get up early enough that she wasn't fixing breakfast for me when I wasn't ready. You know, that is half of farming. You just need a good wife," Johnson said. "She would work cattle until 11:30 then go in and make lunch for the whole crew. Then, after she cleaned up, she would go back to working cattle." Johnson said his wife was the heart of the family and taught them the true meaning of love.

"One great thing about her was all the kids loved her. She liked everybody and everybody liked her. She was great. You can't hardly do it all by yourself, you just need a good partner," Johnson said with a smile. "She taught us just to love everybody I guess. The more you love kids the more they love you, too."

Jimmy Rhoades, Johnson's grandson-in-law, said Johnson hired him when he was just nine years old for a dollar an hour. Later, he married Johnson's granddaughter. He said Johnson taught him the value of hard work.

"I used to work a lot of hours for him," Rhoades said. "One time I asked him for a raise in the 1980s when I was making four dollars an hour. He said, 'I can't give you a raise, but I need another hired hand. If you want to work another 40 hours per week, I will let you.' So I did." Rhoades said he tried to pass these values down to his children.

"Hard work is the main thing he has taught me, and I tried to teach my kids," Rhoades said. "He taught me from the time I was young that when it is time to plant cotton or when it is time to cut silage, when it is time to do anything, jump off in it and bust your butt for however many days and get it done. I think that goes into life, just work hard at it." In farming and in life, Johnson said surrounding yourself with good people is the key to it all.

"I can't emphasize enough how important it is to know the right people," Johnson said. "Know good people, and they will help you up and down the road." 🌱



Johnson with his son, Terry, and his grandson-in-law, Jimmy Rhoades.

Cotton Industry Leaders Emerge: Jayci Cave and Blake Fennell



By Blair McCowen

On April 27, 2017, the National Cotton Council announced its selections for the Emerging Leaders Program class of 2017-18. The program was launched in 2012 to provide participants with a greater understanding of the cotton industry, as well as the operations of the National Cotton Council (NCC). According to the NCC, the program also exemplifies how the organization competes for cotton's profitability in an often-uncertain market, whether locally or around the world, and is supported by a grant to The Cotton Foundation by Monsanto. Twelve individuals were selected from the entire nation to participate in this year's class, including two hard working and devoted members of the PCCA family.



Jayci Cave

Raised on a dryland cotton farm near Ackerly, Texas, by a multi-generational farming family, Jayci Cave has always supported agriculture, and more specifically, cotton. While earning her bachelor's degree in agricultural communications at Texas Tech University, Cave was hired by PCCA as the communications intern in 2012. Now, almost five years later, Cave is a full-time member of the PCCA staff and holds the title of Communications

Manager. Currently, she is earning her master's degree in agricultural and applied economics from Texas Tech and plans to graduate in December.

Cave said growing up on a cotton farm is what inspired her to begin her agricultural education journey and make it come to fruition today.

"The cotton industry is all that I have known," she said. "Growing up on a cotton farm taught me so much about the industry at the farm level that I wanted to expand my knowledge to understand more about other levels of the supply chain when I went to college."

After learning of her nomination to the Emerging Leaders Program, Cave said she felt honored to be considered for such an opportunity and is looking forward to expanding her network through meeting new people in the industry. The Communications Manager also plans to use the experience to enhance her work at PCCA.

"At PCCA, our mission is to ensure the long-term profitability of our grower-owners through value-added marketing programs and through services to their gins," she said. "With this, everything we do as employees of PCCA is to better our farmers in some way. I will be able to use what I learn in this program to help me serve our grower-owners. The more I know about how the industry works and how the political process works the more effectively I will be able to advocate for and communicate to our growers."

Kevin Brinkley, PCCA President and CEO, said Cave is the type of advocate the industry needs.

"Jayci Cave is just what the cotton industry needs more of; someone from a farm background dedicated to telling cotton's story to the rest of the world," Brinkley said. "Jayci is a role model for individuals starting their careers or still in school. She looks for every opportunity to sharpen her leadership skills."

With a thankful smile, Jayci added, "I am very honored and proud to have the opportunity to invest in and help prepare for my future."



Blake Fennell

PCCA grower-owner and Earth, Texas, native Blake Fennell also has cotton running deep in his veins. Fennell is a fifth generation cotton farmer who earned his agronomy degree from Texas Tech University in 2012, started farming in 2013, and carries out his passion today.

"Ever since I was a little kid I have worked with my dad on the farm," he said. "Agriculture has been my passion, and just

to be able to continue to do that and care for the land, care for what God gave us and to continue the family tradition is why I farm."

Along with being passionate about agriculture, Fennell said being nominated for the Emerging Leaders Program was an excellent opportunity to learn something new.

"The opportunity was presented to me, and I felt like it was one worth taking," he said. "To me, that is something that I can go and learn more about sides of the cotton industry that I don't know much about and further support the industry and help me in my own operation as well."

Fennell said he is most looking forward to gaining a new perspective from the program and creating networks.

"It gives you a new perspective when you come back, but also the networking, getting to meet new people and make new contacts across the cotton industry is one thing I am looking forward to," Fennell said. "I am also looking forward to having that knowledge behind me to further help my industry along and for future endeavors."

Fennell said participating in the program also will add to his agricultural advocacy efforts.

"It can be little things or it can be big things like this Emerging Leaders Program," he said. "We see new avenues such as this to tell the story of agriculture and what you are doing. Even in a farming community you would be surprised how many people don't know what you are actually doing out there in the field." Brinkley also commented on Fennell's dedication to the cotton industry and telling its story.

"Blake Fennell is an innovative young grower keen to make sure the competitive landscape is favorable for his generation," Brinkley said. "It's great to see young producers engage in learning industry issues and how to help advance cotton's position in agriculture and public policy. We are excited that Blake is willing to devote time and energy to help the industry."

Continued on page 10...

...continued from page 9

“The Emerging Leaders Program provides a place to expand your network of like-minded individuals in the cotton industry. It would take years of effort to accomplish this on your own.”

Going Forward

Participants from each sector of the cotton industry were selected to participate in this year’s Emerging Leaders Program: Fennell, one of five in the nation to represent cotton producers; and Cave, the only one chosen to represent cooperatives. Both young professionals are heading toward bright futures and experiences that will serve them well in their respective careers.

“It’s encouraging to see young professionals eager to strengthen their leadership skills,” Brinkley said. “The Emerging Leaders Program provides a place to expand your network of like-minded individuals in the cotton industry. It would take years of effort to accomplish this on your own.”

In the year ahead, the NCC says participants will learn about the following parts of the industry while also growing in the areas of professional development and communications:

- The U.S. cotton industry infrastructure and the issues affecting the industry’s economic well-being.
- The U.S. political process.
- The NCC’s programs and policy development and implementation process.
- Cotton Council International’s activities aimed at developing and maintaining export markets for U.S. cotton, manufactured cotton products and cottonseed products.

In addition to learning about all things cotton, the new Emerging Leaders also will have the opportunity to travel the country on three trips. Having already been to Memphis and St. Louis in June 2017, they will later travel to the NCC annual meeting in February 2018 and to Washington, D.C. at a later date in 2018. 🌱

Other Program Participants: (Names courtesy of NCC press release dated 4/27)

PRODUCERS:

Jesse Flye, Jonesboro, Arkansas
Richard Heiden, Buckeye, Arizona
Justin Jones, Smithville, Georgia
Rose Robertson, Coolidge, Arizona

GINNER:

Cacky Sobral, Wilson, Arkansas

MERCHANTS:

Wesley Rentz, Greenville, South Carolina
Beau Stephenson, Richardson, Texas
John Stevens, Memphis, Tennessee

WAREHOUSER:

Joe Tillman, Memphis, Tennessee

MANUFACTURER:

Kimberly Bamonte, Gastonia, North Carolina

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LOCAL CO-OPS

Make a Difference

BY BLAIR MCCOWEN

From supporting their grower-owners to local schools, cooperatives across PCCA's service area work tirelessly to better their communities. Support is defined as the act of bearing all or part of the weight or giving, and in agriculture, is what makes everything come together. In their contributions, whether timely or monetarily, cooperatives give back to their communities as their communities give to them. In doing so, the testament of "strength in numbers" is revealed.

True cooperatives follow seven principles:

Open and Voluntary Membership

Member Controlled

Economic Participation and Ownership

Autonomy and Independence

Education, Training and Information

Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Concern for Community

The last principle, though not the least, is where the support found in rural communities stems from, no matter their size. Where agriculture is found, strength and support for the community are present too. The land of cotton and cooperatives harbors individuals keen on keeping each other afloat in good times and bad.

Cooperative gins are no exception to this rule as each is made up of individuals who care about the community and its success. Larry Black, Central Rolling Plains Cooperative Gin Manager, said there is more than one reason co-op gins give back.

"We give back to the community because we are interested in our producers not only from a production standpoint, but also from a family standpoint because the producers are our family," Black said.

Producers' families often extend beyond blood relations which is another aspect of the cooperative system that provides support to all within it. Rex Ford, Manager of Farmers Co-op Gin of Stamford said another benefit of community engagement is aiding future generations to do the same.

"I believe in it and have always done it," Ford said. "The youth are our future and I think it is money well spent."

Support also can come about when individuals are simply members of the community doing what they do best, Meadow Farmers Co-op Manager Dan Jackson said.

"If you are going to be involved in the community, you need to support it," Jackson said. "One thing I am proud of is that we support the school and we support the kids. If you are going to have a business in the community you have to support the town."

Concern for the community is not only a guiding cooperative principle, it is a key aspect of the foundation of the cotton industry. When one community is supported by its members, that support then can be transferred to other communities across the state and nation. It is through this example that "united we stand, divided we fall" rings true. 🤝

THE FOLLOWING COOPERATIVE GINS SUPPORT THEIR COMMUNITIES IN THE AREAS LISTED BELOW.

CENTRAL ROLLING PLAINS COOPERATIVE

- Local sports programs
- Fellowship of Christian Athletes
- Local stock shows
- School agriculture department
- Donations

MERETA CO-OP GIN CO

- Booster Club
- Local sports programs
- Church
- School agriculture department
- Donations

TEXAS STAR CO-OP GIN

- School donations
- Local sports programs
- Local stock shows
- Donations

MILES COOPERATIVE GIN CO.

- Fun Runs (Color Run, Mud Run, etc.)
- Prom
- Fellowship of Christian Athletes
- Sports Programs
- Donations

LONE STAR AG

Gin manager Lloyd Seely currently serves as a firefighter in the Brownfield community. Even after moving to Texas from Colorado and becoming a gin manager, Seely kept his previous occupation as a firefighter. Seely said having this background knowledge comes in handy when accidents happen.

"I just wanted to give back to the community," he said. "When someone has an accident or a house catches on fire, it is pretty important that someone be there to help. That is kind of my thing, to help other people."

FARMERS CO-OP GIN OF STAMFORD

- School donations
- Local sports programs
- Local FFA chapter
- Chamber of Commerce
- Economic Development Board
- Donations

SOUTHWEST COTTON GROWERS

- Local stock shows
- Youth sports camps
- School fundraisers
- R.J. Rowden Scholarship
- Community cleanup projects

LIBERTY CO-OP GIN

- \$1,000 Liberty Co-op Scholarship to dependents of customers or landlords
- Local FFA programs
- Local stock shows
- School sports programs

MEADOW FARMERS CO-OP GIN

- Scholarships: \$500 and \$3,000 Don Carroll Leadership Award per year to select Meadow High School seniors
- Local sports programs
- Other school activities
- Booster Club
- School agriculture department
- Stock shows
- Donations

LAKEVIEW FARMERS CO-OP

- Stock shows
- Local sports programs
- Other school activities
- Volunteer time
- City labor assistance
- Fire Department
- Donations

IF YOUR GIN GIVES BACK TO THE COMMUNITY, CONTACT THE PCCA COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT TO SHARE YOUR STORY.



A Campaign to Share **THE CO-OP STORY**

Do you know the benefits of doing business with your local and regional cotton co-ops?

With the new joint effort between Plains Cotton Cooperative Association, Farmers Cooperative Compress, PYCO Industries, Inc., and Producers Cooperative Oil Mill, all farmers have the opportunity to learn. The regionals are coming together to further promote the cooperative structure. This campaign is an effort of the regional cotton co-ops to help raise awareness for their respective businesses. **The co-op system is there to add value throughout each level of the cotton supply chain.**

When you join your local and regional co-ops you are opting in to receive all the benefits that come with real ownership. These benefits include keeping money local as well as reducing the risks associated with your farming operation. **Grower-owned co-ops strive to make money for you, not from you.**

True co-ops operate under seven principles, one of which is cooperation among cooperatives. This campaign is a testament of this principle. **When all the regional co-ops work together, the grower-owner benefits.** It provides them with more long-term profitability when the profits of the organizations are returned to the grower-owners at the end of the year. 🌱

For more information, visit
coopadvantage.com

Enhancing profits through **REAL OWNERSHIP.**



Reduced Risks.

Strategic and innovative marketing strategies minimize the risk associated with production cotton farming. Regional neighbors help ensure long-term success by cooperating instead of competing.



More Total Value.

Co-ops get cotton from the field to the market, creating additional value every step of the way. These benefits stay in your communities. Co-ops make money for you, so you can protect your investment.



Better Control.

Farming gets more expensive every year, and it's time to get your voice back. As an owner of your local and regional co-ops you control how your crop is marketed, stored and processed.



Peace of Mind.

Transparency ensures you stay in the know when it comes to your business finances. Open books policies mean your local and regional co-ops offer solvency you can see.



and **Producers Cooperative Oil Mill**





Texas Cotton GINNING TRADITION

By Jayci Cave

LAKEVIEW CO-OP GIN, ONE OF THE OLDEST CO-OPS IN TEXAS, was established in 1929 and has a history all its own. As an active business in the community, Dusty Byars, Lakeview Co-op Gin Manager, said they try to give back whenever possible.

"We are really active in both the Hall and Donley County Stock Shows," Byars said.

"Wherever our producers are, we try to support the kids at the stock shows. We also volunteer at the school to help clean up for events like homecoming, and we support the sports programs at Memphis, Texas. We also try to help out the local fire department."

One Lakeview grower-owner, Everett Williams, recently took a step back after 46 years of farming. He has been married to his wife, Gladys, for 52 years, and together, after moving to Texas from Missouri, they have built a life and a family in Memphis, Texas. Gladys was a teacher for 33 years; however, Williams said she helped him a lot on the farm.



"She could drive a tractor as good as any farmer in Hall County," Byars said of Gladys, "and drive a combine better than anybody in the county. She also taught my kids when they were in school." Williams said in farming both family support and hard work are important parts of being successful.

"We have had a lot of tough times during the years, especially during the 1980s," Williams said. "It was awful bad. The only way I survived was to work more and try to find something else to do to make a little extra money. The only thing I know to say is to work hard and don't give up." Williams said he enjoys being a member of the co-op gin because it helps the individual farmers' operations.

"I feel like they have helped us get better revenue from our crop, from the cotton especially as they have kept the gin costs down," Williams said. Byars said he enjoys working for a co-op and seeing the farmers work together for a common goal.

"The biggest part is trying to do a good job ginning their cotton and making sure the gin is doing all it can do," Byars said. "The reason farmers should be members of the gin is in the end the money comes back around to them. The more members we get with us the more money we usually generate and the more money we get to return to them. There is going to be a day and time that we all need each other. To me it is easier to get along than it is to not get along." 🌱

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