



The Cotton Chronicle

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July 2023

Volume 33, Issue 7

Industry Calendar

July 19, 2023
American Pima
Grade Standards
Guide Box Review
and Standards
Matching
Visalia, CA

August 29, 2023
Supima Annual
Meeting
Coalinga, CA

Sept. 12, 2023
Research Com-
mittee Meeting
Fresno, CA

Sept. 13, 2023
CCGGA Board
Meeting
Fresno, CA

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2023 American Pima Grade Standards Guide Box Review And Standards Matching

Wednesday, July 19, 2023
Visalia, CA Classing Office
10:00am

Please join us to review, comment, and approve the six guide boxes of the 2023 American Pima Grade Standards. Once approved, the guide boxes will be used as the reference to match all the 2023 American Pima Grade Standards. The guide box review and the standards matching will both take place the morning of July 19th.

Industry participation is key to this process, we hope you all can come and be a part of this important annual event.

For additional information please contact:

Greg Townsend, Area Director
E-mail: greg.townsend@usda.gov
Visalia Classing Office
7100 West Sunnyview Avenue
Visalia, CA 93291
Phone: (559) 651-3015

or
Gretchen Deatherage, Director
E-mail: gretchen.deatherage@usda.gov
Standardization and Engineering Division
3275 Appling Road
Memphis, TN 38133
Phone: (901) 384-3030

State Water Board Proposes Fee Increases

Last month, State Water Board accounting staff provided their second program fee proposals for the 2023-2024 year. The proposal was typical for the agency, another increase levied on processing facilities that hold waste discharge permits, and growers who participate in the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP). In all, staff is anticipating increasing

fees to the ILRP program by 6%. For years, the Association has pushed staff to detail where these annual fee increases are being allocated. In response, staff has provided general staffing increase needs with no explanation as to whether those added staff are even being used in agriculture specific programs. The Association is typically one of a small handful of agricultural organizations who are track-

ing this issue, and who push back on the annual increases to the program. There are several frustrating components of the state agencies' strategy. As growers and processing facility managers, you are under an intensifying microscope of regulatory requirements specific to water quality. You have been regulated to the point of reporting fertilizer use and nitrogen removals from the field post-harvest. As these limits become tighter and tighter, your impact to water quality lessens and lessens. This in turn, leads to less staff time to review submitted reports, and less time having to process enforcement actions. Additionally, State Board staff has recognized that their base acreage that is subject to the ILRP program has plateaued, and in future years will likely decline. To that point, State Board staff indicated at this past meeting that as acreage declines, those still able to produce a crop will have to pay more in order to "help sustain the program we have developed". Strategies like this are harmful to our industry, and the Association will push for oversight and review however we can.

Association Presents on Indoor Heat Illness

In a special unprecedented presentation, **Association President/CEO Roger Isom** testified before the CalOSHA Standards Board on their proposed new standard "Heat Illness Prevention in Indoor Places of Employment." The presentation occurred during the CalOSHA Standards Board regular Board Meeting, but the presentation by the Association was the only item on the agenda and the Board allowed Isom 15 minutes to present the topic. As a reminder the proposed standard is triggered when indoor places of employment hit 82 °F, and requires engineering controls to bring indoor temperatures to below 87 °F. This would apply to any cotton gin, nut huller or processor and any farm warehouse or shop building. The requirement to cool the buildings to below 87 °F is the primary issue and presents the biggest and most expensive challenge to meeting such a low target temperature. Isom provided cost estimates from \$1 million for a single building to \$9.5 million for multiple

buildings to install air conditioning, but also stated it would present operational issues with cotton gins and almond hullers as those operations require large volumes of air to either move products from point A to point B, or is used to pull hulls, shells, and dust from the conveyance of products. The proposed regulation states this is only required unless it is not feasible, but "feasible" is not defined. The lack of a definition is what causes the most concern as it leaves it up to enforcement discretion and subjectivity. The Association emphasized the need to define "feasible" in the context of this regulation. No other presentation was provided and we will now have to wait and see what CalOSHA does with the proposed regulation in response.

CCIRC Research Request for Proposal

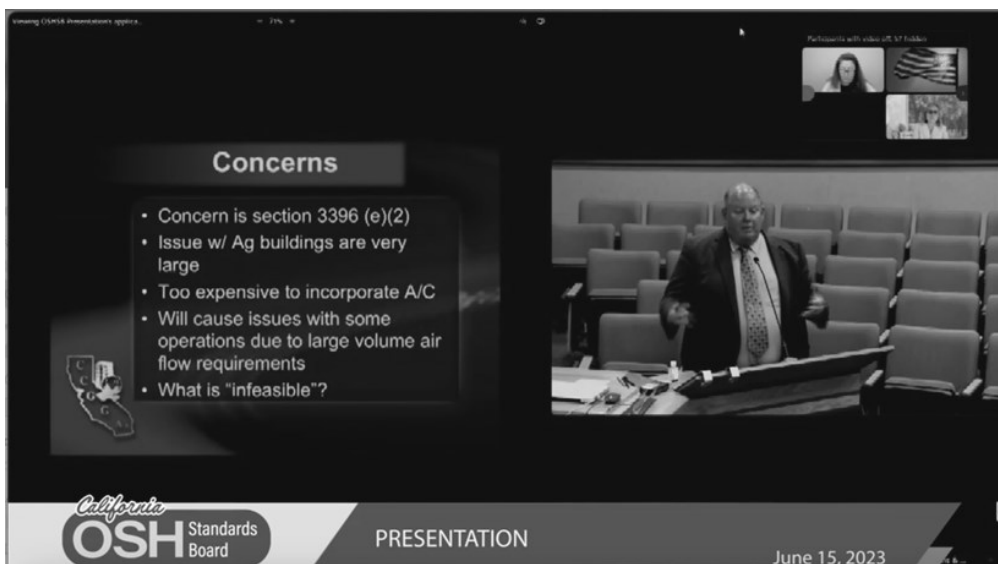
The California Cotton Industry Research Committee, made up from the three principal funding groups for California cotton research, sends out a "Request for Proposal" each year to researchers and educators known to the cotton industry as having interests and involvement in research that could benefit the cotton industry in California. By combining the research funding efforts from these three groups into one, projects are funded through a more streamlined process and effective process. This research request is for 2023-2024 projects. The deadline for receipt of proposals at the address shown below is 5:00 PM (close of business day) on Monday, August 29, 2023. This is a firm deadline. No extensions will be granted due to the need to reproduce proposals, distribute them to the committee, and allow time for review prior to the Committee meeting. If you have any questions, reach out to priscilla@ccgga.org

Workplace Poster Update

Some changes have occurred to the posters you are required to have in the workplace. Be sure to get yours updated. Changes have occurred to the Federal Minimum Wage poster (WH1088) and the Know Your Rights: Workplace Discrimination is Illegal poster. The Federal Minimum Wage poster now contains information allowing nursing mothers a reasonable break to express breast milk and must provide a place, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from others to do so. The EEPC poster now contains provisions from the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, which went into effect June 27, 2023.

USDA Releases June Cotton Acreage Report

This past month, the USDA released its 2023-24 U.S. Cotton Plantings report, which estimates total US acreage at 11.09 million acres, down 19.4% from 2022. For California, USDA is estimating 13,000 acres of upland cotton and 70,000 acres of pima for a





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total of 83,000 acres of cotton for 2023. This is about 16,000 acres less than the estimate put forth by the California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association, which had estimated 20,000 acres of upland and 79,000 acres of pima for a total of 99,000 acres statewide. Either way, despite record setting rainfall this past winter, statewide cotton acreage is down in 2023 for California. For pima cotton, USDA is estimating 109,000 acres nationwide, which is down from the 182,000 acres planted in 2022.

Save the Date for July's Cotton & Coffee

Join Cotton Incorporated for Cotton & Coffee on July 18, 2023. Don't miss Season 4, Episode 7: Why Fiber Quality Matters. We will hear from Cotton Incorporated's Vikki Martin about the research she and her team conduct on cotton fiber, fabric quality, and why it's important. Cotton & Coffee Zoom sessions are open to all U.S. cotton producers, importers, and industry partners. Pre-registration is required to attend. Please visit <https://www.cottonboard.org/cotton-coffee> to register.



Climate Smart Cotton Program Applications Sought

U.S. cotton producers can apply through September 1, 2023, for the Climate Smart Cotton Program, a five-year project led by the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol. The program aims to measure and improve the U.S. cotton industry's carbon footprint while building on the four pillars of Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) practices. Participating producers will receive technical and financial support as well as other benefits that can enhance their operations, profitability, and environmental stewardship. The program's goals are to: 1) provide technical and financial assistance to U.S. cotton producers; 2) advance adoption of CSA practices on 1.2 million U.S. cotton acres; 3) produce 4.2 million bales of Climate Smart Cotton™ over five years; 4) enroll 1,650 U.S. cotton producers, including 330 producers from historically underserved communities; and 5) reduce CO₂e emissions by 1.14 million metric tons. The program brings together leaders and partners from supply chain outreach, academia and sustainability. Program partners include Cotton Council International, Cotton Incorporated, the Soil Health Institute, Texas A&M AgriLife Research, Agricenter In-

ternational, Alabama A&M University and North Carolina A&T State University. Climate Smart Cotton Program applications will be approved on a first-come, first-served basis. To be eligible, cotton producers must first complete enrollment in the Trust Protocol by September 1, 2023, and upload their 2023 bales by March 1, 2024. Producers are encouraged to get started at www.TrustUSCotton.org to secure their entry into the program and to maximize benefits. Producers can view a video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=htWaXmE0gHY for step-by-step instructions on how to apply. For assistance email info@trustuscotton.org.

COVID-19 Regulation Definition Changes Once Again

Last month on June 20th the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) updated its guidance and changed the definition of "outbreak" in its State Public Health Officer Order for COVID-19 Disease Control & Prevention. The new definition changes the timeframe for tallying COVID-19 cases that make up an outbreak from 14 to 7 days. The CDPH change redefines the definition of an outbreak for purposes of Cal/OSHA's non-emergency COVID-19 standard as well. Now, as an employer you only need to implement the more stringent outbreak provisions of the COVID-19 standard if there have been at least three COVID-19 cases within an exposed group during a 7-day period. CDPH states "This update brings California Department of Public Health (CDPH) outbreak definition for non-healthcare settings into alignment with updated Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists' definitions as well as CDPH's current healthcare outbreak definition and reflects the shortened incubation period noted with the Omicron variant (average 3.4 days) compared to earlier variants." The new definition of "outbreak" is:

For the purposes of defining an outbreak in non-healthcare settings, such as to determine when employee COVID-19 cases are part of an exposed group, the following definition shall apply:

"Outbreak" is defined as at least three COVID-19 cases during a 7-day period.

Be sure to update your COVID-19 Prevention Program to reflect this latest change to the definition of an outbreak.

Association Welcomes Michelle Franco to the Team!

The Association is pleased to announce Michelle Franco as the newest member of our team. Michelle is the Association's new Secretary/Bookkeeper and will manage office activities including all clerical and bookkeeping responsibilities. Michelle is a graduate of San Joaquin College of Law's Paralegal program. Michelle worked at the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District for 16 years, most recently serving as their Deputy Clerk of the Boards. At the District, she provided a variety of support services to the District's

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Governing Board, Hearing Boards and Citizens Advisory Committee. Her management position was also responsible for supervision of the District's support staff, documentation of Board actions, coordination of Board activities, and publication of legal notices and related documents. Please join us in welcoming Michelle to our team!

Heat Illness Prevention Program Tool Kits Now Available

The kit consists of a rugged plastic folder with tabs and materials inside. The kit includes:

- Heat Illness Prevention Supervisor Training Guide,
- Safety toolbox talks,
- Heat Illness cards,
- Heat Illness Prevention Poster,
- Heat Illness Fact Sheets,
- Urine color chart, and
- Tabs for your heat illness prevention policy, emergency numbers, and address/field maps as required by the heat illness standard.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Company Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____



Please fax form to (559) 252-0551.

For more information, contact our office (559) 455-9272.

Heat Illness Prevention Program Tool Kit Order Form



Quantity	_____
Heat Illness Tool Kits	@ \$13.00 each
Total Amount Due	\$_____
Payment Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Invoice (mail check) <input type="checkbox"/> PayPal (fees apply)

Temperatures are increasing, and heat illness prevention training remains at the forefront. To aid in helping our members and clients stay in compliance, the Association has developed a Heat Illness Prevention Program Tool Kit to carry in your supervisor's pick-ups. The updated kit consists of a rugged plastic folder with tabs and materials inside. This kit includes heat ill-

ness cards, safety toolbox talks, and places for your Heat Illness Prevention Policy, Emergency Numbers, and Field Maps as required by the Heat Illness Standard. The cost is \$13.00 each, and we recommend you purchase one kit for each vehicle used by supervisors or foreman. Below is a link to the Heat Illness Prevention Program Tool Kit Order Form. Just complete the form and mail back to the Association offices with a check, or pay online via PayPal through a link in the upper right of our homepage, and we will immediately fulfill your order. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the Association office at (559)455-9272.

Thank you for your continued interest in the Cotton Chronicles, the monthly newsletter for the California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association. To help reduce costs, we are asking everyone to consider receiving the electronic version of the Cotton Chronicles instead of paper. If you are willing to switch to the electronic version of the newsletter, please send an email to Michelle at michelle@ccgga.org requesting the change. Thank you for your consideration.