



01-12-09

At Farm Bureau: more bad news for cotton in '09

By Agri-Pulse Staff

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Cotton farmers can expect another challenging year in 2009, according to Sharon Johnson, senior cotton analyst with First Capitol Group in Atlanta. She was speaking at a crop outlook seminar at the American Farm Bureau's 90th annual meeting in San Antonio, Texas "Cotton prices are under significant pressure as consumption and trade are negatively impacted," Johnson said.

The global recession is weakening demand for cotton products. "Nobody is going to the stores, and they're certainly not buying many cotton items," Johnson said. The past few years have been tough for cotton producers. In 2007 and 2008, world cotton consumption declined by its largest percentage in 65 years.

Cotton acreage has been losing to corn acreage since 2006. For 2009, cotton acreage will also be impacted by input costs, versus competing crops and credit availability. For 2009, Johnson projects cotton acreage at 8.3 million acres with harvested acres at 7.8 million acres. She sees a potential yield of 860 pounds per acre, indicating a crop forecast of 14 million bales with a range of 12 million to 15 million bales.

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