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Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

High Plains Cotton Agronomy Newsletter

Spotlight : Agronomist



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Leading the Cotton Agronomy program for the South Plains district, Mark Kelley took over the reins in October 2011 but is no newcomer to the Lubbock area having worked with his predecessor Dr. Randy Boman. Dr. Kelley was the Extension Assistant in 1998 then the Program Specialist in 2003. He received his PhD in Agronomy from Texas Tech University, Masters in Crop Science from Texas Tech University and Bachelors in Ag Business/ Animal Science from Cameron University in Lawton, Oklahoma. His current primary research objective is variety trials across the Texas High Plains. Other research Dr. Kelley is involved in is looking at irrigation timing with Jim Bordovsky and Dr. Dana Porter, spinning studies with Dr. John Wanjura- USDA ARS and Dr. Eric Hecquet- Texas Tech FBRI, working with Drs. Jane Dever and Glen Richie in developing a salt tolerance index for commercial cotton varieties, and with seed companies to better improve their varieties. Kelley has been married to his wife for 24 years and has 1 son, Josh. In Dr. Kelley's spare time he likes to be outdoors caring for his yard and garden.

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Cotton Planting Off To A Slow Start

Continuing drought, high winds, and hot temperatures are on the minds of cotton farmers across the High Plains but others seem a bit more optimistic and have their planters rolling this week. The past month, pre-plant watering was observed across much of the area especially in places where irrigation capacities are low or under sub-surface drip. With a 5 day



forecast filled with chances of rain some producers with sub-surface irrigation are getting their seed in the ground hoping the moisture will meet. Fields that were planted earlier in the month may have been exposed to cooler temperatures causing chilling injury to the young tap

roots. Although these plants will still produce cotton they might not be as vigorous. Whether producers have pre-watered, planting dry and watering to a stand, or relying on moisture from precipitation, planting into a firm, moist seedbed is ideal as seed to soil contact is crucial for plant establishment.

Have ideas for our future newsletters?

Submit your suggestions/
stories to Kristie Keys at
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