

Report of Activities of the UGA Cotton Micro Gin

March 29, 2007

The following is a progress report from the UGA Micro Gin in Tifton. We finished our third year of ginning in March. The operation of the gin has come a long way three years. Understandably, there were many start-up problems and challenges during the initial season, but those problems have been resolved.

For the 2006-07 season, The ginning process was also streamlined by moving the suction pipe inside near the bale press. This allows more efficient use of time and energy by the gin workers. An additional telescoping suction pipe was added outside to facilitate ginning large samples from trailers. These two additions greatly improved our efficiency of handling samples. In previous years samples were ginned at a rate of 10 to 12 bags per hour. Currently we are able to handle bags at a rate of 16 to 18 bags per hour depending on the weight. The final addition for the '06 season was two saw type lint cleaners; these were installed late in the gin season. The new cleaners were not used much this season due to the time required to get them operating properly. We have since worked out the bugs with these new cleaners and will be putting them in to operation next season. The new lint cleaners will allow the option of using one or two lint cleaners similar to commercial gins. The next addition to the Micro Gin facilities will be the renovation of the support buildings. This will include a shop and storage area as well as offices, labs, and meeting rooms. This addition will allow for the facility to be used by researchers for lab experiments as well as provide space for groups to meet.

In 2006, the number of samples decreased slightly due to the loss of 2 researchers. The total number of bales produced was significantly lower this season due to not ginning large bulk samples as in the two previous seasons. This year we have ginned studies from farms here on the Tifton Campus as well as many other locations across the state, from Research and Education Centers and from county agents. In addition to Georgia cotton, samples have been received from Alabama, North and South Carolina, Virginia, Texas, Arizona, Florida, Louisiana and Mississippi.

In addition to ginning samples, the UGA Micro Gin has been a great educational tool. The Micro Gin has provided exposure to Georgia cotton by onsite tours with audiences including growers, educators, students, and governmental officials. We are also regular presenters at offsite learning experiences geared to elementary age school children. These presentations include history of cotton as well as production and use of cotton.

Season	# of Tours	# visitors	# Samples Ginned	# Bales	Lbs of Lint
2004	10 – 12		800	64	13824
2005	27	455	2296	105	28914
2006	15	202	1770	56	15675
Total		657	4866	225	58413

Personally, I have had opportunities to make presentations and to advance my professional training. I was invited to deliver a presentation at the 2005 Cotton Ginning Symposium, a training program led by the USDA Ginning Lab in Stoneville, MS, for county agents and other academic professionals (non-ginners) from across the entire Cotton Belt. I also presented a poster presentation at the 2006 Beltwide Cotton Conference. In addition to educating others about the merits of the UGA Micro Gin, I have tried to advance my own education. I have completed and passed the test for the Certified Ginner program lead by the National Cotton Ginners Association. I plan to continue in the continuing education portion of this program. I believe it is important for the advancement of the Micro-gin that I learn all I can about the process of ginning cotton and the industry as a whole.

I feel the UGA Micro Gin program provides an important research and educational service to the UGA Tifton Campus. I look forward to future opportunities to promote the UGA Micro Gin program as well as Georgia cotton in general.

Respectfully Submitted,
Andy Knowlton, Research Engineer and Gin Manager

Report forwarded to the Georgia Cotton Commission, Dr. Scott Angle, Dean of the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, Assistant Dean for the UGA Tifton Campus, Associate Deans for Research and Extension, the Southeastern Ginners Association, and the UGA Cotton Team.