

THE 2007 CROP YEAR IN REVIEW

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The 2007 production season was another in which we made more cotton than we thought we would or should. Persisting drought, which had limited planting of corn, cotton, and peanuts, was interrupted the first week of June, allowing a rush of activity just beyond the normal planting window. Parts of the state never recovered from the drought. Broad, general rains occurred only around Labor Day. The Boll Weevil Eradication Program certified 1,024,615 planted acres as of August 30, 2007. Still, despite the drought, some growers and counties made their “best crop ever.” Variability marked the end results – good and bad yields were adjacent in many areas. The final tally will be about 1.65 million bales, with production averaging close to 785 lb/A.

Quality of the 2007 crop was better than anticipated and nearly the same as the 2006 crop. Given the extreme heat and drought of the season, high percentages of short staple, high mic cotton were expected. Final numbers on both will be slightly greater than 20 percent. Georgia still ranks at the bottom of the national average in uniformity.

Table 1. Average Cotton Acreage and Production Since 1980.

Time period	Planted acreage, x 1,000		Yield, lb/A		Total bales, x 1,000	
	Average	Range	Average	Range	Average	Range
1980-84	162	120-180	516	243-771	175	86-281
1985-89	269	225-350	573	395-696	321	185-370
1990-94	549	355-885	707	548-834	828	405-1,537
1995-99	1,426	1,350-1,500	610	512-739	1,810	1,542-2,079
2000-04	1,399	1,284-1,495	667	557-785	1,874	1,663-2,220
2005	1,214	—	849	---	2,140	---
2006	1,380	—	765	---	2,120	---
2007	1,025	—	784	—	1,650	---

*Yield based on planted acreage and total bale production estimate as of January 2008.

Table 2. Fiber Quality of Bales Classed at the Macon USDA Classing Office, 2006 and 2007.

	Color Grade 31/41 or better (% of crop)	Bark/ Grass/ Prep (% of crop)	Staple (32nds)	Leaf Grade	Strength (g/tex)	Mic	Uniformity
2006	49 / 97	0.7/0.4 /0.1	34.4	3.3	28.4	47	80.4
2007	39 / 97	all < 1.0	34.3	3.4	28.6	47	80.0

Bales classed short staple (< 34) and high mic (>4.9)
 2006: 20 % and 21 % 2007: 22 % and 20 %

DP 555 BG/RR again dominated the state's acreage, with almost 84 percent of crop planted to that variety (USDA AMS Survey). The USDA Survey estimated that about 98 percent of the Georgia crop was planted in transgenic varieties, primarily in Bollgard/Roundup Ready varieties. Other technologies, including Bollgard II, Widestrike, Liberty Link, and Roundup Ready Flex, have been planted on limited acreage but will likely gain in future seasons. In addition to problems associated with prevalent drought, herbicide resistant Palmer amaranth (pigweed) loomed large as a production challenge across much of the state.

Table 3. Technology Distribution of Cotton Planted in Georgia in 2007.

Bollgard/Roundup Ready	Roundup Ready	Conventional	Other
92.3	2.4	0.1	2.8

USDA Agricultural Marketing Service Survey, September 2007.