



# Cotton Objective Yield Survey

United States Department of Agriculture

National Agricultural Statistics Service

2009

Conducted annually by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), the Objective Yield Survey program gathers vital data used to determine USDA's official estimate of crop yield and production. This program allows NASS to collect physical field measurements to monitor crop progress throughout the growing season.

## HOW ARE COTTON DATA COLLECTED?

Beginning the last week of July, NASS representatives will contact selected producers in the six major cotton-producing states to participate in the Objective Yield Survey. These six states account for nearly 80 percent of the total U.S. cotton production and include:

- Arkansas
- Georgia
- Louisiana
- Mississippi
- North Carolina
- Texas

During the initial visit, NASS representatives will conduct a brief interview with the producer and ask permission to enter the selected field. Once in the field, they will establish two sample areas to monitor during the growing season. On future visits NASS representatives will count and measure the cotton crop within the sample areas. These monthly visits will not require any additional time from the producer.

In addition to regular monthly measurements, a portion of the fields will be selected for the post-harvest gleaning sample. These samples are used to determine harvest loss.

## HOW IS THE INFORMATION USED?

The Objective Yield Survey is a crucial tool used to estimate cotton yield and production in the United States. Once results of the survey are compiled and analyzed, NASS will publish the information in a series of reports. These include the monthly *Crop Production* report and the annual *Crop Production Summary* in early January.

All sectors of the agricultural industry rely on NASS yield and production estimates to help make sound business decisions. For example:

- Farmers use the information to evaluate expected prices and to determine when and how to market their crops.
- USDA agencies use the crop yield data to determine crop insurance and disaster aid payments along with other program benefits.
- Agribusinesses that provide farmers and ranchers with inputs, equipment, and other goods and services use the information when developing their future marketing strategies.

The information provided by survey respondents is confidential by law. NASS safeguards the privacy of all responses and publishes data only in aggregate form, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified.

All reports are available through the NASS web site: [www.nass.usda.gov](http://www.nass.usda.gov). For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Agricultural Statistics Hotline at (800) 727-9540.