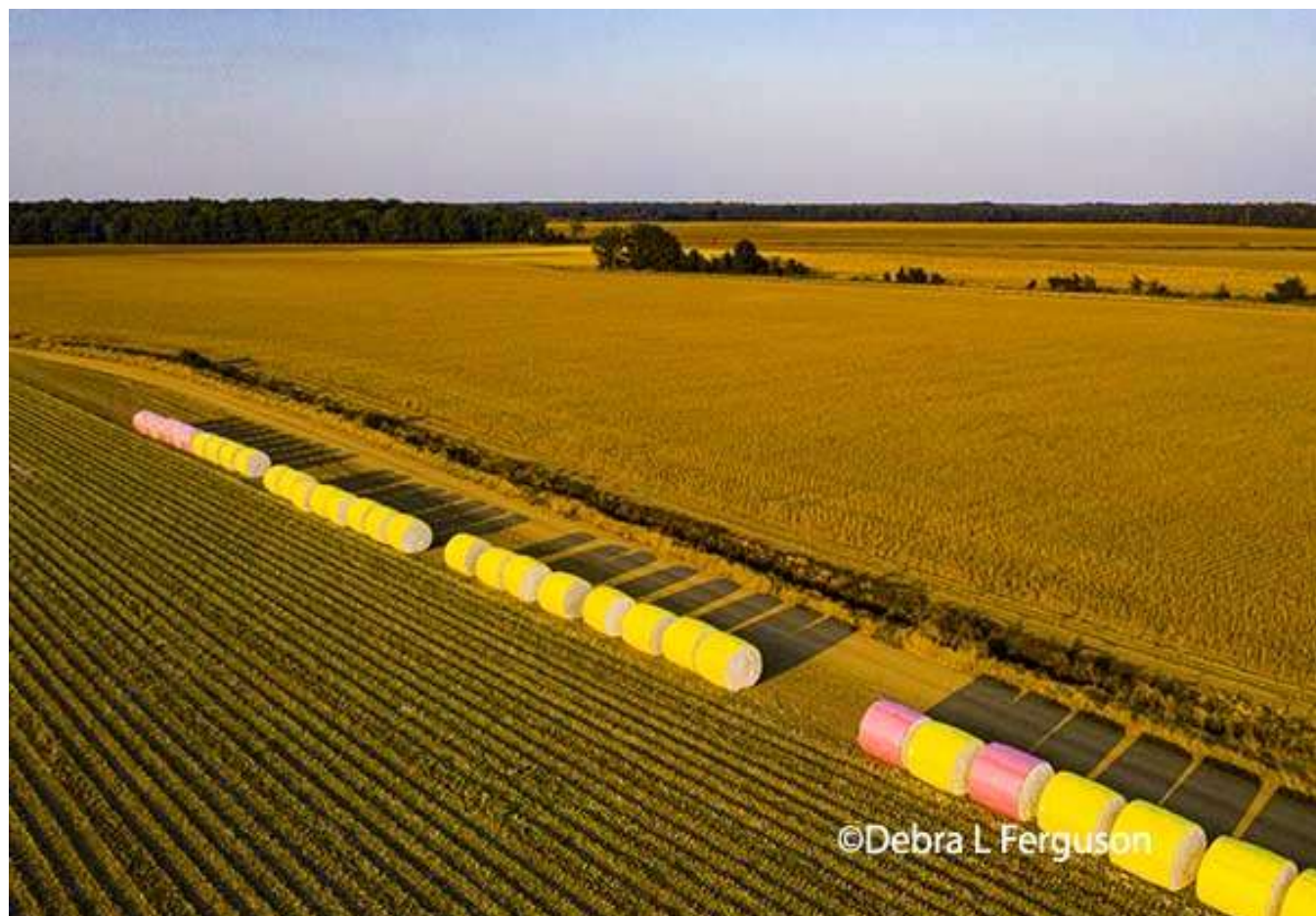


Thompson On Cotton: Southeast Quality Much Improved Over 2018

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Recent rains have interrupted what has been a near-ideal harvest season. Hopefully, it's only temporary, and tremendous progress has been made in getting this crop out of the field.

The latest crop conditions report shows the Southeast has harvested approximately half its planted acres, while the Southwest has covered a third of its ground. Both regions are ahead of their five-year average pace.

As a result, yield and fiber quality have benefitted greatly. Countless reports have been made about yields approaching three bales to the acre across the Southeast. Illustrative of

this, Alabama has a very real chance of producing over a million bales for the first time since 1955.

More notable, it will be from a third fewer acres than were planted back then.

Big Improvement Over 2018

Unfortunately, the weather in the Southwest hasn't been as favorable. Late-season drought conditions followed by an early freeze have set yields back, even though abandonment will still be below normal.

Grades are as different as night and day when compared to last year's monsoonal harvest. That isn't surprising, considering that little or no rain fell on the cotton from the time it opened until harvest in many places. The most notable improvement in fiber quality over last year has been the reduced incidence of bark. At this same time last year, over 10 percent of the cotton classed in the Southeast contained bark.

Blame was being placed on everything from varieties, weather to foliar diseases. At present, bark contamination is at a more historical level of less than one percent.

Obviously, widespread rains primarily caused last year's bark issue. Cotton plants were much healthier entering harvest compared to those water-logged plants from a year ago.

Below is a summary of grades from cotton classed through last week. These excellent grades may eventually decline, but look for some continuation as there is a great deal of cotton in gin yards or waiting to be picked up that was harvested prior to the recent rains.

State	31>Color	Staple	Ext. Matter	Strength	Mike	Leaf	Uniformity
AI	90%	36.1	0.8%	29.02	4.33	2.89	80.74
FL	84%	36.8	3.6%	29.03	4.48	2.98	81.16
GA	87%	35.9	1.5%	28.99	4.47	2.79	81.10
NC	84%	36.4	1.5%	31.05	4.72	3.14	81.58
OK	86%	35.5	0.2%	30.87	4.38	2.43	80.62
TX	69%	35.9	1.1%	30.49	4.38	2.61	80.96