



South Texas Cotton and Grain Association, Inc.

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May 16, 2001

Ms. Whitney Rick, Chief
Research and Promotion Staff, Cotton Program
USDA – Agricultural Marketing Service
Stop 0224
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-0224

RE: Comments on Cotton Research and Promotion Program

Dear Ms. Rick,

South Texas Cotton and Grain Association is one of nine certified cotton producer organizations in Texas and represents cotton producers in 33 counties in South Texas. In 2000, cotton producers in our region harvested approximately 650,000 acres of cotton that yielded approximately 1 million bales of cotton.

The members of South Texas Cotton and Grain Association recognize the important role that promotion activities supported through the cotton check-off program play in increasing the demand for our commodity. In addition, new technologies developed through check-off funded research continue to improve the efficiency with which cotton is produced and allow our producers to be more competitive in today's global market. Because the benefits from research and promotion accrue to all cotton producers, our members believe the 1990 Amendments to the Cotton Research and Promotion Act provide the most equitable means for funding the program.

The members of South Texas Cotton and Grain Association do not believe a mandatory continuance referendum is warranted. It is our opinion that a mandatory referendum would unnecessarily divert scarce funds from much needed research and promotion programs. We also feel that producers have an available mechanism, via the sign-up or petition process, to call a continuance referendum when desired.

Our membership supports continuation of amendments to the Cotton Research and Promotion Order as provided for by the Cotton Research and Promotion Act Amendments of 1990. We appreciate your consideration of our position.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey D. Nunley
Executive Director