

IS THE COTTON WINTER NURSERY APPROPRIATE FOR EVALUATING FIBER QUALITY?**Lori Hinze****Richard Percy****USDA/ARS****College Station, TX****Don C. Jones****Cotton Incorporated****Cary, NC****Abstract**

Researchers routinely use the Cotton Winter Nursery (CWN) in Tecoman, Colima, Mexico, for advancing breeding materials a generation and for seed increases of progeny lines. With little difficulty, fiber samples can be obtained from materials in the nursery and evaluation of fiber properties performed. However, the typicality of fiber samples obtained in the CWN needs to be established and a means of comparison for unreplicated samples needs to be created. For these purposes, we have created a standard panel of cultivars whose fiber properties represent the range of commercially available fiber. The panel, which includes Acala Maxxa, FM832, TM1, 3-79, Pima S6, Acala 1517-99, SG747, AllTex Atlas, MD51, and CAMD-E, has been grown in the CWN for three consecutive years and its fiber properties evaluated. Six of these cultivars have been entries in the National Cotton Variety Tests. We will establish the utility of the CWN for fiber evaluation by comparing the performance of these six cultivars in the CWN with their performance across US environments. If the CWN environment gives fiber values within the range of the US environments, we propose that fiber obtained in the CWN can be used for evaluation purposes. It is our intention to include the panel in the CWN yearly to serve as a reference standard for monitoring fiber quality.