

**50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL COTTON VARIETY TESTING PROGRAM****W. R. Meredith****USDA****Stoneville, MS****John R. Gannaway****Texas Agrilife Research****Lubbock, TX****Fred M. Bourland****Northeast Research And Extension Center****Keiser, AR****Abstract**

This year makes 50 years of National Cotton Variety Testing. It originally started with four locations from California, Texas, Mississippi, and South Carolina. Currently, there are 12 states involved in the Upland variety evaluations and 2 other states involved in Pima evaluations. The objective of this summarization is to cover the organizational structure, experimental design, traits to be evaluated, and publishing of the results. The cooperators in these studies are commercial and public plant breeders. All work is done on a volunteer basis with ARS covering the costs for fiber and seed analysis. ARS also conducts the summarization of data and reporting of the results. Membership is confined to breeders and geneticists that are actively involved in the breeding process. The impact of these tests concerning testing environments, association of traits, breeding progress, and changes in cotton breeding will be discussed.