

**QUALITY OF THE 1999 CROP**  
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**Abstract**

The 1999 American Upland crop was higher in quality for several quality factors. Classer color grades of 41/32 and higher at 91.1 percent were the highest since the separation of color and leaf in 1993. The classer leaf grade average dropped to 2.8, the lowest leaf content since color and leaf were separated in 1993. Extraneous matter, namely bark and grass, were at the lowest percentage levels in over 35 years. The percentage of bark was only 1.7 percent, down from 3.7 percent a year ago. The percentage of grass dropped to .8 percent, down from 1.4 percent for the 1998 crop.

The micronaire average for the U.S. crop remained at a high level of 4.5 for the second consecutive season. The strength average for the U.S. crop increased slightly from 28.0 in 1998 to 28.3 in 1999. The staple length average dropped again to 34.1 thirty-seconds down from 34.3 in 1998 and 35.1 in 1997. The shorter staple length attracted industry attention. All classing offices territories averaged lower except for Corpus Christi and Florence. Length uniformity averaged 81.4 for the fourth consecutive season.

The percentage of American Pima, Grade 3 and higher at 99.6 percent was at an all-time high. The Pima mike average dropped to 38, the lowest since the 38 average for the 1995 crop. Pima staple length dropped back to a 46.0 average down from 46.4 in 1998 but higher than other recent years. The Pima strength average was at an all-time high of 40.0 grams per tex.

**Introduction**

The quality of the 1999 Upland and Pima cotton crops based on USDA classification has been compared with crops from the previous four years for the most important quality factors. Classers' color grade and leaf grade for Upland cotton, classers' grade for Pima cotton, and extraneous matter plus HVI mike, strength, length, and length uniformity were the quality factors compared. Quality factors not compared in this report were HVI color and trash (Upland). Comparisons were made for the entire United States Upland and Pima crops with regional comparisons made for Upland: the Southeast, the Mid South, Texas-Oklahoma, the Desert Southwest, and the San Joaquin Valley. The regional breakdown and classing office groupings by region are as follows:

**REGION**

Southeast  
Mid South  
Texas-Oklahoma  
  
Desert Southwest  
San Joaquin Valley

**CLASSING OFFICES DATA INCLUDED**

Florence, Macon, Birmingham  
Rayville, Dumas, Memphis  
Corpus Christi, Abilene, Lamesa,  
Lubbock  
Phoenix  
Visalia

**Discussion**

**Classers' Color Grade**

The percentage of 41/32 and higher color grades for the 1999 crop was 91.2 percent, the highest percentage since the separation of color and leaf in 1993. The Southeast had 81.6 percent 41/32 and higher, the highest in many years. The percentage of 41/32 color grades continued at a very high percentage in the other regions: 94.2 percent in Texas-Oklahoma, 99.6 percent in the Desert Southwest and 99.7 percent in the San Joaquin Valley.

**Classers' Leaf Grade**

The trend toward leafier cotton reversed itself in 1999. The current average of 2.8 is the lowest leaf grade average or the cleanest crop since the separation of color and leaf in 1993. Three regions also had the lowest leaf content since 1993: Texas-Oklahoma – 2.6, Desert Southwest – 1.8 and San Joaquin Valley – 2.3.

**Extraneous Matter (Grass and Bark)**

The 1999 crop had only 1.7 percent bark through December 9. If this holds up it will be the lowest percent of bark since the 1964 crop. Grass amounted to only .8 percent, the lowest since records on grass were started in 1961.

**Mike**

Mike averaged 4.5 for the 1999 and 1998 crop years, the highest on record. The Mid South averaged 47, Texas-Oklahoma 43 for 1998 and 1999, and the Desert Southwest 48 for other highs.

**Strength**

Average strength for the 1999 crop was 28.3 grams per tex, up from 28.0 in 1998. The Texas-Oklahoma average of 27.5, the Desert Southwest average of 27.6, and the San Joaquin Valley average of 31.8 were lower than any of the previous four crop years. The Southeast average of 28.1 and the Mid South average of 28.3 were up from 27.5 and 27.4 respectively for the 1998 crop.

**Length**

The U.S. Upland crop averaged 34.1 thirty-seconds of an inch, the lowest since 33.6 in 1981. The Southeast, Mid South, and San Joaquin Valley had the shortest length of any of the four previous years. The Texas-Oklahoma crop at 33.2

was unchanged from 1998 and the Desert Southwest at 35.4 tied the 1997 crop average.

### **American Pima**

Grade 3 and higher amounted to 99.4 percent in 1999 for the U.S. crop, higher than any recent year. The American Pima mike average dropped to 38 after three consecutive years at 40. The length average was 46.0, down from 46.4 in 1998 but higher than the three preceding years. The AP strength averaged an all-time high of 40.0 grams per tex.

### **Summary**

The 1999 U. S. Upland crop was one of the best on record for color grade, leaf grade and extraneous matter. Conversely, the mike average was tied with the 1998 crop for the highest on record. Length continued a shorter trend from a year ago and the length average was the shortest since 1981. The length uniformity and strength averages were about average.

American Pima grades were higher, length was about average, mike was slightly lower and the strength average was the strongest on record.