

Bale Weight Management

Why Should The Cotton Industry Be Concerned About Bale Weight?

Producing a marketable cotton bale involves more than pressing, tying and bagging cotton lint. Bales of uniform size and weight are essential if the U.S. cotton industry is going to successfully compete in the global arena. Simply stated, bales of uniform size and weight will handle, transport, store, merchandise and process more efficiently than bales that are not uniform.

At the NCC's 2003 Annual Meeting, the following resolution was adopted:

"In cooperation with Memphis Cotton Exchange, National Cotton Ginners Association and state/regional ginner associations, engage in an educational program for producers and ginner with the primary goal of reducing the incidences of **lightweight** and **heavyweight bales**."

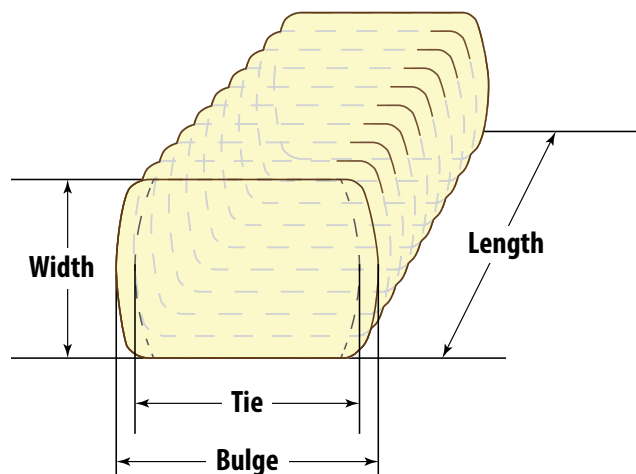
What Causes Bale Weight Problems?

- **Poor Bale Press Management**
 - Inadequate hydraulic pressure
 - Improper platen separation
 - Improper tie length
 - Improper maintenance and tie application associated with automated systems
 - Worn, misaligned or poorly maintained press components (boxes, sills, doors)
- **Poor Trampler and Lint Feeder Management**
 - Uneven lint distribution
 - Lack of daily maintenance
 - Lint fly build up
 - Proper charge weight management
 - Fluctuating trampler pressure
- **Poor Lint Slide and Condenser Problems**
 - Non-uniform lint batt
 - Improper size and/or position of machinery
 - Worn or missing flashing
 - Excessive air resistance—volume and discharge
- **Poor Moisture Management**
 - Moisture levels outside the range acceptable for ginning

Simply stated, bale weights that are too light or too heavy can only be minimized by systematically implementing solutions at the gin that address each factor influencing bale size and weight.

What Is The Role Of Trade Rules And International Agreements When It Comes To Bale Weights?

- **Trade Rules**
 - Local or regional rules govern contractual obligations and may establish bale weight penalties
 - Primarily used by merchants and mills, but also may apply to producers, ginner and others
- **International Phytosanitary Agreements**
 - The U.S. is a party to the "Agreement on the Application Of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures" that are negotiated with trading partners and designed to reduce the risk of spreading pests and diseases
 - Compliance based on size and weight
 - Gin UD bales meet the criteria established in these agreements



The Gin Universal Density Bale	
Net Weight	500 pounds
Length	54–55 inches
Width	20–21 inches
Average Bulge Thickness	33 inches or less
Volume	17.4 cubic feet
Density	28 pounds per cubic foot
Note: These are approximate values and some normal variations are to be expected.	
TIE LENGTH	
8-WIRE	87 to 89 inches
6-WIRE	88 inches or less
6-Plastic Polyethylene Terephthalate	86 inches or less

Where Can You Go For Help?

An obvious place to start is with your gin machinery manufacturer. Other sources of technical information include USDA ginning laboratories, extension engineers and gin associations. If you have questions, please contact the National Cotton Council (www.cotton.org) or the National Cotton Ginners' Association (www.cotton.org/ncga/).

Summary of Memphis Cotton Exchange Revised Penalties	
Only Applicable to Invoices Averaging Less Than 485 Pounds (NET) (Effective with the 2021 crop or August 1, 2021)	
From 463 to 430 pounds	\$3.00
From 429 to 400 pounds	\$6.00
Under 400 pounds	\$20.00 or Rejection
Over 600 pounds	May be Rejected

A Message From

National Cotton Council | Memphis Cotton Exchange | National Cotton Ginners' Association | Southeastern Cotton Ginners Association | Southern Cotton Ginners Association