



FFA Contest! Robert Lee High School FFA had four teams present their LDE projects at the Garden City Invitational Contest last month. The Ag Advocacy team (bottom left photo), which includes Ammileigh Smith, Kailey Freeman, Kenzie Galicia, and Natalie Immel placed first. The Senior Skills team also placed first and includes (top left photo) Eli Bradshaw, Kailey Bradshaw, Rhetic Hayes, and Wyatt Bosworth. Robert Lee also had a second place Senior Skills team (bottom right photo) which includes Kylan Pitcock, Maci Lee, and Maggie Immel. The Public Relations team, which includes Abbigayle Smith, Alex Munoz, Rhett Rangel, and Kristen Moreno, placed second.



irrigation.”

West said 2011 was a tough year that taught cotton farmers just how expensive a drought could be.

“In 2011, we ended up with irrigated fields that basically made below average dryland production, and we had enormous production expenses in it,” he said.

“As a result of that and those memories, we realized that unless we got a rainfall in the summer in July, that we were really fighting a losing battle and would be best for us to try to save our water and irrigation.”

Farmers will collect some crop insurance, which is based on historical averages.

“Crop insurance will not make you whole, but it allows us to sustain weather events like this,” West said.

The impact of a lost crop goes far beyond the field. Cotton is the state’s top crop and the state’s largest agricultural export. That means thousands of jobs in other sectors rely on farmers to make a crop.

“Reduced production from this year’s cotton crop will not only impact farmers who are already facing a challenging time due to drought and high input costs but will also have an impact on the local economies that rely on cotton,” Brant Wilbourn, Texas Farm Bureau associate director of Commodity and Regulatory

Activities, said. “As less cotton is produced, downstream users - such as gins, warehouses and shippers - will oversee less cotton. That will lead to a loss of economic activity.”

Some cotton gins may not hire as many workers because there won’t be as much cotton to process.

And it’s not just agricultural jobs that will feel the impact. It’s local business - restaurants, dealerships and others - who also feel the loss of income.

“There are many people in and around rural American that depend on us. It starts with these acres out in the field,” West said.

“We buy fuel, fertilizer, seed, equipment. All those dollars funnel to many other people in the communities and obviously our workforce.”

In late summer and early fall, rains began to fall across portions of the state, including the High Plains area. Unfortunately, it was too late to

help this year’s cotton crop.

But like the cotton plant itself, Texas farmers have deep roots in the soil. And they’re optimistic

that next year will be better.

This article appeared in the Fall 2022 Texas Neighbors magazine.

More than 79,000 dead on Texas roads. It’s time to care.

The cell phone video from Easter Sunday shows the convertible Chevy Corvette going 110 mph on Dumas Highway in Amarillo.

“Joey! Chill, bro!” is what the passenger, Dyego Mendoza, shouted over the roaring engine. But it was too late. The car

flipped and rolled for several hundred feet before it flew across a highway below, slammed into the side of an overpass and slid down the embankment.

In the video just before the horrific crash, David Elizalde’s 17-year-old daughter, Andrea,

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