2008 and Preliminary 2009 U.S. Organic Cotton Production & Marketing Trends

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December 2009

Survey trends & global data
According to data from the Fall 2009 Organic Trade Association's (OTA) survey of U.S. organic cotton producers and *preliminary* data for 2009 from the Texas Organic Cotton Marketing Cooperative (TOCMC), producers have seen a 26% increase in total acres planted in organic cotton from 2008 to 2009. The increase may actually be lower in comparison to 2008 than the preliminary 2009 figures suggest because 2008 planted acreage survey numbers were down for two reasons: 1) crops were temporarily rotated out of cotton and 2) fewer farmers who are not TOCMC members responded to this year's survey (which meant that fewer acreages beyond TOCMC total acreage were included in the results). Therefore, it is likely that actual 2008 planted acres were somewhat higher than these estimates reflect.

Table 1 below features data in organic cotton acreage planted since 1990. The general trend in planted acreage has been upward since 2003; this change may, in part, reflect the acreage data from TOCMC, which was included in 2007 through 2009 totals in the table, and recent acreage coming out of transition into certified organic production. 2008 and 2009 data below include TOCMC figures on acreage planted and lost, added to acreage harvested. Farmers planted an average of 9,680 acres in organic cotton since 1990, using the larger acreage estimate for 2008.

Table 1. Estimated U.S. Organic Cotton Acreage Planted: Trends

Year planted	Planted acres	% change from prior year
Acres Planted in 2009	10,731 (preliminary data)	+26%
Acres Planted in 2008	8,489-8,539 (updated in 2009)	-0.2% to +0.3%
Acres Planted in 2007	8,510	+43%
Acres Planted in 2006	5,971	-6%
Acres Planted in 2005	6,325	+14%
Acres Planted in 2004	5,550	+37%
Acres Planted in 2003	4,060	-55%
Acres Planted in 2002	9,044	-22%
Acres Planted in 2001	11,586	-17%
Acres Planted in 2000	13,926	-17%
Acres Planted in 1999	16,785	+79%
Acres Planted in 1998	9,368	+4%
Acres Planted in 1997	9,050	-16%
Acres Planted in 1996	10,778	-56%

Acres Planted in 1995	24,625	+55%
Acres Planted in 1994	15,856	+28%
Acres Planted in 1993	12,402	+97%
Acres Planted in 1992	6,306	+92%
Acres Planted in 1991	3,290	+266%
Acres Planted in 1990	900	N/A

Percent Change 1999 - 2009	-36 %
Percent Change from 1995 peak – 2009	-56 %
Average Planted Acres 1990-2009	9,680 (using larger acreage estimate in 2008)

The cost per acre to grow U.S. organic cotton in 2008 ranged from $100 to $1,975 and averaged $710 among the five respondents to this question; two did not know their average cost per acre. Two farmers replied that their cost for growing conventional cotton was $150 and $400 per acre in 2008.

According to preliminary global data from Organic Exchange, 23 countries currently produce organic cotton and another five are researching it or have trial programs. Global organic cotton production grew 22% in 2008/2009, totaling 815,061 bales. Although production rose, demand for organic cotton fell 40%. Global sales in 2008 totaled $3.2 billion. Organic Exchange identified the following top ten organic cotton producers, in order of most to least production: Southeast Asia, Middle East, Africa: non-CFA, China, USA, West Africa, Latin America, North Africa, Central Asia, European Union. According to the OTA survey estimates of harvested bales of organic cotton, 2008 U.S. production comprised 0.9% of global total production.

Survey background

In 2009, the Organic Trade Association mailed surveys to 60 locations believed to be farming organic cotton. Surveys were sent to Arizona, California, New Mexico, Tennessee, and Texas, thought to represent all the states with growers of organic cotton in the United States in 2008. OTA identified growers from a list of farmers of organic cotton from the prior year's survey, state agencies and certification programs, several commodity commissions, and organizations and a cooperative in the U.S. that work with organic farmers. In addition, all states in which producers grew conventional cotton in 2008, according to the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, were asked if they knew of producers in their states that grew organic cotton. Cotton Incorporated funded the survey.

Five of the 60 who were sent surveys were removed from the survey population because they did not grow or no longer grew organic cotton. One respondent's cotton was in transition to organic cotton in 2008, and his responses were not included in the tabulations for this report. A total of 25 people from Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas responded to the survey by mail or were reached by telephone or e-mail. Of those contacted, ten of the completed surveys qualified for and were included in the survey analysis because the respondents grew organic cotton in 2008. These ten surveys included eight respondents who are members of the Texas Organic Cotton Marketing Cooperative, and two other qualifying surveys from farmers not associated with TOCMC. In 2009, TOCMC had a total of 27 farmer members in Texas growing organic cotton, with fields in transition to organic cotton, or some combination of both.

On surveys that qualified for analysis in the report, all ten respondents have operated certified organic farms for at least two years. Six of these farmers have been organic producers for between fifteen and eighteen years. On average, the farms have been certified organic for twelve years.

The area farmed by respondents in 2009 totaled 17,849 acres. According to survey replies, of those, 9,368 acres are planted with organic crops, including cotton. Of that managed organically in 2009, 3,494 acres were planted for certified organic cotton production. Survey respondents farmed 8,481 acres conventionally.

2009 total acreage per farm of both organic and non-organic crops ranged from 150 acres to 6,400 acres, and averaged 1,783 acres. Survey analysis shows a total of 10 acres in transition to organic cotton production in 2009. Among the five surveys not otherwise qualified for analysis in the report, another 120 acres were in their last year of transition to organic in 2009, and producers identified an additional 400 or so acres in their final year of transition to organic cotton in 2008.

In 2009, respondents grew other organic crops in addition to cotton; land devoted to other organic crops ranged from 29 acres to 4,000 acres per farm. Responses indicate that producers farmed a total of 5,874 acres of organic crops other than cotton, averaging 734 acres per farm. Two respondents grew no other organic crops.

Other crops and products grown organically included corn, soybeans, small grains (such as oats, barley, rye, and wheat), garlic, processing tomatoes, peppers, peanuts, walnuts, pecans, sesame, beans, peas, dry pinto and black beans, milo, alfalfa hay, fruit, guar, and seed crops for basil, broccoli, mustard and lettuce. Seven grew vegetables, while seven grew small grains. Four farmers produced peanuts, and four grew soybeans. Two grew alfalfa hay. The other crops and products were each mentioned by only one respondent. None of the farmers produced meat animals or ran dairy farms.

As in prior years, a majority of respondents grew organic upland cotton in 2008, and a few grew organic pima cotton (specific numbers are not indicated to protect respondents' confidentiality).

Of the ten surveys, six farmers reported total gross, annual farm sales in 2008 of over $100,000; one reported $50,000 to $99,999 in sales. Five farmers had gross annual sales from their organic cotton of over $100,000, and two reported $25,000 to $49,999 in gross annual organic cotton sales. One farm had gross annual sales from organic cotton of $50,000 to $99,999.

Acreage and Production of Organic Cotton
ACRES PLANTED & HARVESTED

Table 2. Estimated Organic Cotton Acreage

Year	Planted acres	Harvested acres
2009	10,731 (preliminary data)	9,555 (preliminary data)
2008	8,489-8,539	7,289
2007	8,510	8,510
2006	5,971	5,811

According to responses to this year's survey, in 2008 farmers planted 3,975 acres of organic cotton, an increase of 60% from the 2,481 acres planted in 2007, according to last year's survey replies. Respondents indicated they planted 3,520 acres in upland cotton and 455 acres in pima cotton in 2008.

The OTA survey identified 1,150 acres of organic cotton planted by three TOCMC members that were lost to weather in 2008, which is just under TOCMC's estimates of approximately 1,200 to 1,250 organic acres lost to weather. One non-TOCMC member reported having lower yields per acre, but no lost acres, because of cloudy and wet weather; a TOCMC member wrote "dryland" in reference to a

lower yield due to weather, but also indicated no lost acres. According to planted acreage data collected in last year's survey, preliminary data for 2008 total planted acreage was 9,279, higher than the 2009 OTA survey and updated TOCMC data now suggest. That might reflect that last year's respondents included five farmers who are not TOCMC members as compared to this year's two replies from non-TOCMC members. TOCMC acreage is provided by TOCMC for all members, and, since TOCMC acreage data has been available from 2007 to present, this survey adds acreage from non-TOCMC respondents to TOCMC member totals to get total acres planted and harvested.

Survey results concerning certified organic cotton acres indicate that in 2009, the farmers planted 3,078 acres of organic upland cotton and 426 acres of organic pima cotton, totaling 3,504 acres. Data from non-TOCMC members were added to TOCMC data for the 2009 planted acreage totals in Tables 1 and 2. Estimates of 2009 harvested acreage in Table 2 are based on preliminary TOCMC totals only.

To maintain the confidentiality of each farmer, the data do not specify acreage grown on a per state basis, with the exception of Texas. According to the survey, 3,245 acres of 2008 organic cotton were identified as planted in Texas, with 730 acres grown in California, New Mexico, and Texas. Some producers grew in Texas and one of these other states, but did not specify how many acres were grown in which states; again, specifics of which two states are withheld to maintain confidentiality.

As indicated in Table 1 above, planted acreage increased by 26% from 2008 to 2009. The table shows a general upward trend starting in 2004. However, from a broader perspective, 2009 acreage is a 56% decrease from peak production in 1995 (from earliest available data) when total acres in production equaled 24,625. In ten years, planted acreage has decreased by 36%. Data from 1990 to 2002 is provided by OTA's *2003 Beltwide Presentation* referred to in the reference section below. Data from 2003 to present is from annual OTA survey reports during that period, and 2007 through 2009 planted acreage also includes total acreage data from TOCMC. To avoid duplication with TOCMC data in the last three years, survey responses from TOCMC members concerning 2007 through 2009 acreage were removed from the survey acreage data when totals were tallied.

The survey found a total of 2,825 acres harvested in 2008, 2,370 acres of upland and 455 acres of pima. Combined with acreage data supplied by TOCMC, the total acreage harvested in 2008 was 7,289, and this number is used to update the 2008 harvest acreage data in Table 2. In 2008, weather conditions were very difficult for TOCMC farmers, as indicated previously by significant acres lost between planting and harvest, lowering TOCMC's harvest totals. TOCMC data from survey results have been removed from the totals to avoid duplication of acreage from TOCMC's member producer totals.

TOCMC anticipates only small losses in the 2009 harvest that would increase its data for total acreage planted; the acreage planted includes an estimated 500 acres planted and lost to weather, added to the 9,555 acres harvested to estimate total acres planted in 2009. Also added were 676 non-TOCMC acres identified by the survey as planted in 2009. The survey did not request preliminary information on 2009 harvest acreage.

BALES HARVESTED

Table 3 features the total number and details of 2008 harvested **bales** of organic cotton identified through this farm survey and the TOCMC data. Survey data show a total of 2,492 bales of organic cotton harvested in 2008, with 1,932 bales of upland cotton and 560 bales of pima.

For 2008, TOCMC reported a total of 6,053 bales of organic upland cotton from its farmers, in contrast to 12,306 bales recorded by TOCMC in 2007. TOCMC believes that the large harvest in 2007 reflects

excellent weather conditions that year. Planted TOCMC and survey acreage combined totals in 2007 and 2008 were roughly equivalent, so weather conditions in 2008 likely lowered yields.

Data analysis of the survey results and TOCMC data showed a total of 6,466 harvested bales of *upland* organic cotton for 2008. Texas harvested the largest number of bales, with New Mexico and California harvesting significantly fewer bales. Because of the small number of farmers in the survey population, the harvest data is not provided on a state-by-state basis to ensure the confidentiality of farmers who responded to the survey.

In addition, 560 bales of organic pima cotton were harvested in 2008. Including TOCMC member totals, the total harvest of both organic upland and organic pima cotton in 2008, therefore, was approximately 7,026 bales.

Table 3. Harvested bales of organic cotton in 2008

Source of data on harvested bales	**Total bales harvested**
TOCMC organic upland cotton data	6,053
OTA farm survey organic upland cotton data, excluding TOCMC-member organic upland cotton data in the survey	413
OTA survey organic pima cotton data	560
Total harvested bales of organic cotton in 2008	**7,026**
Total harvested bales of organic cotton in 2007	14,025
Percent Change bales harvested 2007-2008	**-50%**

Comparing the 7,026 total bales harvested in 2008 to the 14,025 total bales harvested in 2007, the total number of bales decreased by 50% in 2008, reflecting extremely difficult weather conditions for TOCMC members, including wind, hail and drought, in contrast to 2007's excellent growing conditions and resulting high yields for TOCMC members. This is likely the most accurate reflection of the overall change in production in organic cotton over time because it reflects data from all TOCMC members. TOCMC data on acreage were unavailable in 2006; therefore, any comparison between 2006 and 2007 *acreage* data may not be valid. On the other hand, trends in bales harvested over the years reflect both survey and TOCMC data since at least 2003, and are therefore the most accurate reflection of production trends. Trends on harvested bales are shown in Table 4 based on prior OTA surveys and the *Beltwide Presentation* cited in the reference section. Producers averaged 8,552 harvested bales between 2001 and 2008.

Table 4. Harvested bales of organic cotton 2001-2008

Year harvested	**Total bales**
2008	7,026
2007	14,025
2006	8,116
2005	9,360
2004	6,814
2003	4,628
2001	9,897

[Note: No 2002 data are available.]

Sales & Marketing
Nine farmers responding to the survey indicated that they sell their organic cotton directly to a farmer cooperative such as TOCMC (five of these indicating 100% sales to a cooperative; one selling 50% to a cooperative). Two sell their organic cotton directly to a mill, one selling 100% to a mill, the other selling 50% (the other 50% is to a cooperative, as mentioned above).

Farmers use the following marketing techniques: eight farmers use word of mouth to market, all but one checking the "Other" subcategory" and five of these naming TOCMC. One markets by exhibiting at trade shows, fairs and other public events; another markets by listing its product in OTA's *The Organic Pages Online* directory. The Internet and "traditional cotton marketers" are other means of marketing.

Six farmers indicated that the farmer cooperative to which they sell their cotton determines the percentage of organic cotton sales for export; all six are TOCMC members. TOCMC sold approximately 25% of its 2008 organic cotton internationally, and the remaining 75% to domestic markets. One farmer sold all of his organic cotton to the international market. Two respondents are not sure to which market their product was sold. One stated that 100% of its 2007 organic cotton was sold domestically but that its 2008 crop has not been sold.

Five respondents indicated that competition from international organic cotton producers presents their single biggest challenge in getting their organic cotton to market; one of these five commented, "Is it true organic? Organic by whose standard?" Two checked that finding a market that will pay value-added costs of organic products is their biggest challenge. One noted, "Low prices, low demand," while another checked "Other" challenges but did not specify what types of concerns. Two have no challenges getting their product to market. Two producers provided two answers to this question, though they were asked to check only one.

Farmers indicated the following when asked what their greatest barriers are to *planting* more cotton in 2010. Six checked, "Finding a market for the cotton;" four checked "Finding a market that will pay value-added costs of organic products." Three checked the "Production challenges" category, providing the following responses: "Weeds and insects." "Weed control." "Labor costs." Three also believe that competition from international organic cotton producers is their greatest barrier, and one answered, "Cost of transition to organic."

The survey analysis indicates that the average price per pound farmers received in 2008 decreased from the previous year. Prices ranged from $0.52 to $1.35 for organic upland cotton in 2008, compared to $1.00 to $1.50 for 2007 organic upland cotton. Four farmers had not yet finalized their prices, not yet received final payment, or not sold all their organic upland or pima cotton, so their prices are estimates. One of these four had not yet received an organic premium. Organic pima cotton prices ranged from $1.05 to $3.00 in 2007, compared to $1.75 in 2008, with some pima not yet sold.

Farmers suggested the following changes to the national organic standards to enhance their ability to market organic cotton: "They need to continue to allow us to use acid-delinted cotton seed for planting, because without it there will be NO organic cotton." "Promotions geared toward organic products." "Greater enforcement of foreign (false) certifications." "Demand is the problem—not markets. Allow biotech crops—BT in organic. Down the road there will be drought resistance in GM crops—to me when that happens, biotech crops will be more sustainable than organic unless this changes." "None."

Educational and Economic Resources

Most responding farmers do not view cooperative extension as a strong resource for organic production assistance. Three respondents checked that cooperative extension offices are not knowledgeable about organic production. Four respondents believe that they are somewhat knowledgeable on the subject. Only two respondents work with their local cooperative extension agents on organic farming issues; seven checked that they do not work with extension, one explaining that it also does not seek their assistance for conventional farming.

Four farmers have seen an increase at extension in educational resources about the National Organic Program since last year. Three have not seen an increase since last year, and two were not sure.

Farmers have stayed current with organic standards using the methods indicated in Table 5, with most farmers staying informed through the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA), by communicating with other farmers, by using OTA resources, and by checking related web sites. One specified that TDA's inspectors notify them of changes in the spring.

Table 5. How farmers stay current with organic standards

Methods for staying current with organic standards	# Respondents
Certifying agency/state organic program	4
Communicate with other farmers	4
Use Organic Trade Association resources	4
Check related web sites: 1-CCOF, 1-Organic Exchange, ATTRA, SARE	4
Read trade publications	3
Use OTA's HowToGoOrganic.com website	2
TOCMC	1

Organic cotton farmers have used a range of government agencies and programs for information or funding in relation to organic production. Eight use the organic certification cost-share program. Six use EQIP. Three farmers work with the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Two use the Farm Service Agency and two use ATTRA. One response fell into the "Other" category, noting "Cotton Council International," and one uses Cotton, Inc.

Farmers stated that they could use help from USDA for their organic cotton production. Six would like research, with three specifying the following types of research needed: "weed control," "seed development," and "production, harvesting options." Three indicated the following needs under the "Other" category: "Help fund organic farms." "FSA not to treat organic as unwanted stepchild." "Educate public re: chemical use." Three farmers requested market data, one specifying "Give annual organic production results." One noted EQIP under the "Conservation funds" category.

When asked how they rate USDA's effectiveness in addressing their concerns related to organic production, two farmers rated USDA as very effective, two as somewhat effective, three as not effective, and two checked, "Does not apply/ Not sure," one indicating that it was not sure.

Responding farmers work with the following certifiers: most use the Texas Department of Agriculture, and the remaining farmers use California Certified Organic Farmers or the New Mexico Organic Commodity Commission.

When asked what would prevent conventional cotton farmers from adopting organic farm practices, they responded as follows:

- "Weeds, insects, peer pressure."
- "Cost, time, trouble, red tape, paperwork and no markets."
- "Inability to use chemicals/other farming practices."
- "Thin markets—no stability—low prices—reduced demand."
- "Market."
- "Risk, stress, intense management, weak market."
- "Education."
- "Roundup withdrawals."

Responses from surveys otherwise not included in this report because they did not grow organic cotton in 2008 echoed some of the same themes:

- "Electric rate for irrigation, natural gas rate for irrigation, honest people to hoe weeds."
- "Farms too close together, other farmers would spray and it would drift to organic fields."
- "Worries about weed control. Labor shortages due to lack of guest worker program limit farmer's ability to contract weed control."
- "Three-year transition program."
- "Production costs."

Respondents provided the following replies when asked what would entice farmers to adopt organic farm practices:

- "Price."
- "Money."
- "Increased value of goods."
- "Same as above—improvements" (Referring to prior comment: "Thin markets—no stability—low prices—reduced demand.")
- "Market at fair prices."
- "Education."
- "Unknown."
- "$2.00/# for organic cotton."

Several replies to this question from farmers who did not grow organic cotton in 2008 continued these themes:

- "Higher transitional prices."
- "Price incentives in the form of production cost support."
- "Improve farm labor availability."

No farmers know other cotton farmers who are interested in converting their farms to certified organic farms, and one knows a cotton farm that has adopted certified organic farm practices in the past year.

When asked, considering all sectors of the organic industry, from farm through retail, what could be done to improve support for the long-term economic sustainability of U.S. organic farms, farmers made the following comments:

- "Stable price and market."

- "Marketing value-added crops."
- "Sales slowed down dramatically with the recession and it is now much harder to find interested buyers. Other than this, everything seems to work smoothly in producing and distributing crops."
- "Organic crop insurance, increase consumer demand."
- "Build a stronger, fairer market."
- "Consumer education—particularly the amount of pesticides applied to conventional products."
- "Education."
- "Outreach programs to educate public."

Farmers suggested the following ways to improve USDA programs regarding organic production: "Increase payment limits—separate limits under EQIP." "Crop Insurance (RMA) needs to acknowledge production and price." "Federal Crop Insurance for organic price." "Educate public."

Survey respondents provided the following additional comments for helping OTA promote the profitable production and marketing of organic cotton in the U.S.: "Organic storage." "Emphasize the importance of cleaning up our own backyard' by purchasing U.S. grown organic." "Don't know." And this from a non-qualifying survey: "Regulations of other countries. U.S. companies should buy U.S. products, not go overseas. Price needs to be at least 1 ½ to double conventional."

Future Projections, General Trends & Conclusions

Survey data show an overall upward trend of planted organic cotton acreage since 2003, totaling a 164% increase from that low production year.

No farmers plan on increasing their organic cotton production in 2010, while five plan a decrease, two of these five expressing that they are not sure of their plans. Four plan no changes to their organic cotton production. In 2010, five farmers project a total decrease in organic cotton acreage of as much as 793 acres below 2009 planted acreage. Adding an additional 50 acres expected to be grown in 2010 by a respondent who did not grow organic cotton in 2008, the decrease is a maximum of 743 acres.

TOCMC data this year provide transitional acreage. For 2008, TOCMC tallied 1,543 harvested acres in transition to organic. Adding an estimated 1,200 to 1,250 acres in transition that was planted and lost to weather, 2008 TOCMC planted acres of transitional cotton totaled 2,743 to 2,793; most of this transitional cotton appears to have been in its final year of transition, as reflected by a similar increase in TOCMC's organic acreage in 2009. For 2009, preliminary TOCMC numbers show 574 acres harvested that were in transition to organic. Another 10 acres in transition was reported in this survey. No TOCMC data is available yet on 2009 transitional acres planted and lost to weather.

Over the next five years, four respondents project a maximum total decrease in planted organic cotton acreage of about 830 acres, factoring in one anticipated increase. Six plan to keep their organic cotton acres the same. Adding in anticipated increases from a respondent who did not grow in 2008 due to rotation, the projected maximum total decrease is 580 acres.

Farmers explained why they expect a change in their organic cotton production: "Age of producer." "Not bringing enough money." "Right now—uneconomical to grow—other crops return much better income." "Decrease due to lack of demand for U.S. grown organic cotton." "Economy."

However, the absence of survey responses indicating projected increases from land in transition to organic cotton production over the next five years suggests that 2009 TOCMC preliminary data on transitional harvested acreage was not included in survey replies regarding five-year projections.

Adding in TOCMC's 2009 estimated 574 acres of land in transition to organic cotton production, the projected decrease in overall organic cotton acreage is offset and projected acreage remains about the same.

Total bales harvested continue to be the most accurate reflection of production data over the long term because TOCMC has historically tracked that data from all of its members and not all TOCMC members responded to this survey. TOCMC believes that the sizeable decrease in harvest from its members from 2007 to 2008 reflects the fact that the weather brought extremely difficult growing conditions in 2008 and, in contrast, 2007 was a terrific growing year, with timely rainfall throughout the growing season. Production of harvested bales among TOCMC members decreased by 50% from 2007 to 2008, the same decrease reflected in the total harvested bales of organic cotton production according to analysis of survey data in combination with TOCMC data. TOCMC production on a year-to-year basis can be expected to be volatile because most TOCMC members farm without irrigation and are therefore subject to weather fluctuations.

In 2009, TOCMC preliminary data show 9,555 acres harvested, significantly more organic upland cotton than compared to TOCMC's 6,559 harvested acres in 2008, because of better growing conditions in 2009.

Given that organic upland cotton prices in 2008 decreased sizably from 2007, with the lowest average price per pound ranging from $0.48 less than 2007's lowest price and the highest price being $0.15 lower than last year's highest price, it is not surprising that surveyed farmers anticipate growing fewer acres of organic cotton in coming years. Organic pima cotton prices were $1.25 less than last year's highest price, and several growers of either upland or pima cotton had not yet sold some or all of their cotton.

Interestingly, despite lower prices and weak demand for domestically grown organic cotton, organic cotton production in the U.S. shows an increase in *planted* acreage from 2008 to 2009 and a general upward trend since 2003, although the overall acreage is still well below peak production acreage of 24,625 planted in 1995. Five-year projections show acres planted with certified organic cotton will likely remain about the same in that time period unless prices, demand, and perhaps government support for organic go up significantly.

Farmers frequently cited low prices, low demand, and the current recession as challenges to their sustainability as organic cotton farmers, some citing these as reasons for decreasing their production. Many expressed concerns about foreign competition, some believing that international organic cotton is not being held to the National Organic Program (NOP) standards, so U.S. growers who comply with NOP rule are at a disadvantage. Some see a need for crop insurance that reflects organic prices, and others to educate consumers on the reasons to buy U.S.-grown organic cotton and organic crops in general.

Acknowledgements
This annual survey is only possible because U.S. organic cotton farmers generously contribute their limited time during the growing and harvest seasons to complete the farm survey and respond to telephone calls and e-mails. Their time and sharing of data about their farming operations are greatly appreciated. Many have contributed information on a yearly basis, making this survey a reality.

Many thanks to Kelly Pepper of Texas Organic Cotton Marketing Cooperative for sharing his time and data on the cooperative, which was invaluable in developing an accurate profile of 2008 organic cotton production trends and a preliminary look at 2009 data.

Thanks, too, to Organic Exchange for sharing its preliminary 2008/2009 global trends to make it possible to place U.S. production in a global context.

Most importantly, thanks to Cotton Incorporated, which made this survey possible with a grant to the Organic Trade Association.

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