

# CONTAMINATION FREE COTTON

## KEEP IT CLEAN AND PURE

**PREVENT LINT CONTAMINATION ... clean cotton means satisfied customers!**

**PROTECT YOUR COTTON FIBER ... and you will preserve your markets!**

Even the tiniest particles can contaminate seed cotton and lint and result in blemished finished goods.

U.S. cotton producers are competing with man-made fibers and foreign cotton in today's global marketplace. One of cotton's greatest attributes - its pure, natural quality - can be degraded by a variety of contaminants. This impairs producers' relationships with textile manufacturers and also undermines the industry's "value-added" promotional activities.

### Guidelines for Cotton Growers

- **Pre harvest**
  - Create a suitable foreign materials watch list:
    - ✓ Plastics (i.e. mulches, poly irrigation ditch liners and pipe);
    - ✓ Roadside debris i.e. shopping bags, articles of clothing or other fabrics);
    - ✓ Grease or oily residues
    - ✓ Other (i.e. accumulated leaf, sand/dust, spindle twist, etc.)
  - Inspect fields for materials that could be picked up by harvesting equipment and remove them.
  - Thoroughly clean and, if necessary, power wash harvest equipment.
- **Harvest**
  - Custom harvest crews and other field workers must understand the consequences of allowing harvesting equipment to pick up foreign material (see foreign materials watch list above).
  - Inspect harvesting equipment daily to ensure that the equipment is not an inadvertent source of foreign material (i.e. are there hydraulic leaks or grease in areas that come in contact with seed cotton, did inspections reveal foreign materials on picker spindles or stripper rollers, etc.).
  - Do not allow modules to be built or dropped at locations where potential contaminants will be picked up with the modules.
  - Do not drop or build modules in standing or shredded stalks.
  - Use a method to identify modules that do not require the marking of seed cotton.

### Guidelines for Cotton Ginners

- **Pre harvest**
  - Inspect premises for foreign materials and remove any.
  - Clean areas in and around module feeders of all debris from the previous ginning season and off season repairs.
  - Renovate module storage yards as needed to make sure they are not inadvertent sources of potential contaminants.
  - Train gin crews on safe techniques for removing and inspecting module covers and wraps.
  - Double check hydraulic equipment -- with a special emphasis on hydraulic hoses, connections, couplings and pumps — looking for leaks that might contaminate lint.
- **Harvest**
  - Monitor module moving equipment to make sure floors, chains or other attachments do not cause seed cotton contamination or damage module covers and wraps.
  - Monitor module storage yards to make sure wind blown debris is not picked up with modules.
  - Make sure module covers and wraps are completely removed prior to ginning.
  - Frequently inspect the area in and around the module feeder for foreign matter.
  - To safeguard workers when removing potential contaminants from machinery, be prepared to shut down a piece of equipment, or the gin, until the job is complete.
  - Avoid using machinery that may result in the reintroduction of non-cotton foreign materials back into the lint stream
  - Make sure all crew members understand that seed cotton and lint streams are not refuse receptacles.
  - Make sure gin employees understand the importance of watching for and reporting foreign materials in seed cotton and lint to their supervisor.

For additional information, please contact the National Cotton Council at [infor@cotton.org](mailto:infor@cotton.org) or [www.cotton.org](http://www.cotton.org); or N.C. Cotton Producers Association P.O. Box 656, Nashville, NC 27856 (252) 459-3130

