

Quality Advancements Benefit Growers

LUBBOCK, TEXAS

Developing new cottonseed varieties that exceed today's commercially available options requires planning and hard work. This year, our efforts have resulted in adding two new cottonseed varieties to the lineup from Stoneville® cotton seed – ST 4498B2RF and ST 5458B2RF – that offer a yield and fiber quality potential advantage for growers.

The development of these new varieties started in late 2000 when we identified an industry need for germplasm improvements and implemented benchmarks into our breeding program. Dr. Lloyd McCall, global cotton breeding manager, and his team of cotton breeders follow standards that do not allow a breeding line to move forward if it does not meet or exceed a specified set of criteria related to yield potential and fiber quality.

"We made a decision to concentrate on the future profitability of U.S. cotton growers," McCall said. "The new varieties we have introduced are showing the fruits of that labor. As the new products we bring to market exceed the fiber quality parameters we established, producers benefit from increased yield coupled with improved fiber quality characteristics and the latest trait technologies."

When we compare the average performance results for our new 2008 varieties to the varieties we were selling in 2001, McCall said:

- Fiber length has increased by more than a staple
- Micronaire has decreased by about 0.3 units

- Yield has increased significantly

These results are the first of many developments to come from our breeding program. Our breeders work with the combined germplasm programs of Bayer CropScience and will offer even greater advancements for growers in coming years. In 2009, we are launching new full-season varieties. To date, our data show these varieties meet or exceed the current options on the market.

While high yield potential remains top-of-mind, we're bringing forward varieties that build upon historic averages and give growers more well-rounded options for their farm. In coming years, we'll continue our gains in yield and fiber quality while adding improved storm and disease tolerance. Our focus is to continue delivering these advantages along with the latest trait technologies growers desire.

We commend McCall and his breeders for the new cottonseed varieties they've developed that offer higher yield and quality potential coupled with the latest trait technologies. In 2007, the fact that ST 4554B2RF was the most widely planted Bollgard II®/Roundup Ready® Flex variety across the Cotton Belt for a second consecutive year reinforces our quality benchmarks offer growers a competitive advantage.

We wish everyone a successful and profitable 2008 season. Please do not hesitate to contact the Bayer CropScience seed and technology representative for your area if you have any questions or service needs. Δ