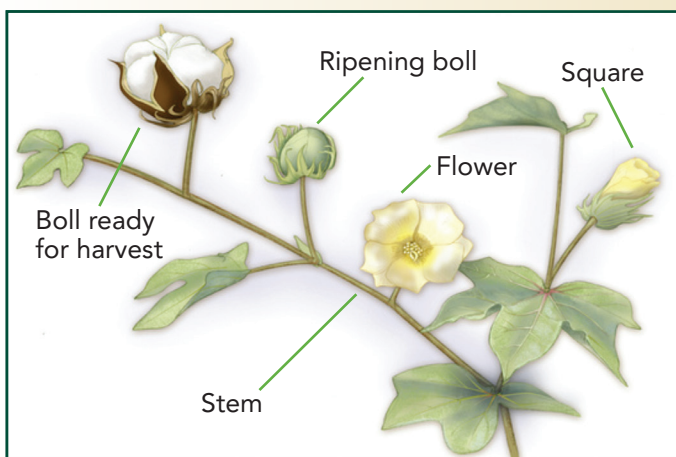


COTTON USES:

plastics, paper products, films, yarns, cosmetics, clothing, soaps, shoe strings, pillowcases, denim, dollar bills, cooking oil, salad dressing, livestock feed, natural fertilizer for lawns, cosmetics

WHAT IS COTTON?

Cotton is one of the most important crops grown in the United States. Cotton is a soft, fluffy staple fiber that grows in a boll around the seeds of cotton plants. There are three primary products derived from cotton production: cotton lint, linters and cottonseed. Cotton lint is used in clothing, shoe strings, pillowcases, denim, towels and dollar bills. Linters are used in plastics, paper products, films, yarns and cosmetics. Cottonseed is crushed into three separate products—oil, meal and hulls. The oil is the cottonseed's most valuable by-product. It is obtained by crushing the cottonseed kernel. The oil is used in cooking oil, salad dressings, soaps, cosmetics and in preparation of snack foods like chips, crackers and cookies. The hulls are used in livestock feed, fertilizer, fuel and packing materials. The meal is the second most valuable by-product of cottonseed. Meal is made by grinding the cottonseed and is used in livestock and poultry feed, as well as natural fertilizer for lawns, gardens and flower beds.



VOCABULARY

BALE: a bundle of cotton fiber, tightly compressed and secured with twine.

BOLL: the seed-bearing part of the cotton plant in which the cotton fibers are formed.

DYE: a natural substance used to add a color to or change the color of something.

FIBER: a fine, threadlike piece, produced by the cotton plant.

FURROW: a narrow groove made in the ground, especially by a plow.

GIN: a machine that quickly and easily separates cotton fibers from their seeds.

HULLS: the outer covering of the cottonseed.

IRRIGATION: the artificial application of water to land to assist in the production of crops.

LINT: the raw fiber from the cotton plant which is pressed into bales at the cotton gin.

LINTERS: short fibers that cling to the seed after the lint is removed.

MEAL: the second most valuable by-product of cottonseed. Meal is made by grinding the cottonseed.

SPINNING: to make (yarn) by drawing out, twisting and winding fibers.

WEAVE: to interlace (threads, yarns, strips, fibrous material, etc.) so as to form a fabric or material.

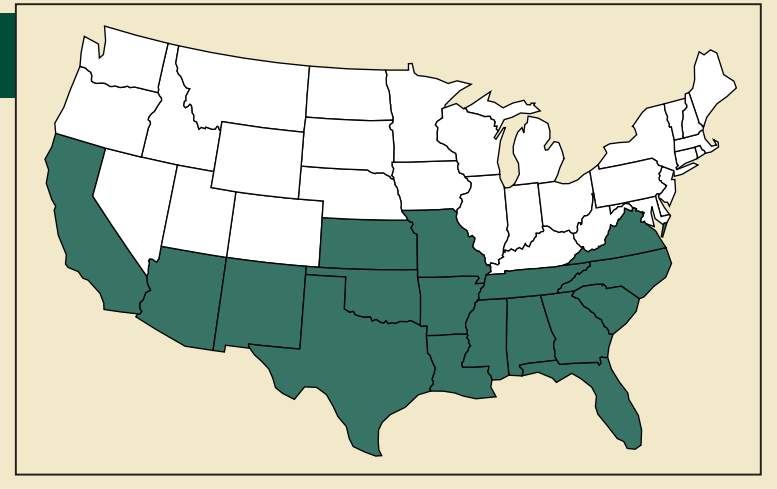
YARN: a long continuous length of interlocked fibers.

COTTON

UNITED STATES COTTON PRODUCTION

Cotton Belt (top producing states) —

Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia



COTTON TIMELINE

12,000 B.C. — Cotton cloth was used to wrap mummies in Egypt.

3000 B.C. — Archaeologists have found cloth fragments, proof that cotton was being grown in the Indus Valley of India (Pakistan). Natives of Egypt's Nile Valley were making and wearing cotton clothing.

800 A.D. — Arab merchants brought cotton cloth to Europe.

1492 — Columbus came to America and found cotton growing in the Bahamian Islands.

1500 — Cotton was generally known throughout the world. Later, the Coronado expedition sighted cotton crops grown by Native Americans in the early 1500's.

1616 — American colonists were growing cotton along the James River in Virginia.

1793 — Massachusetts teacher and inventor, Eli Whitney, revolutionized the cotton industry when he invented the labor-saving cotton gin. He called it a "gin," short for engine, and claimed it replaced the work of 50 men, mostly enslaved laborers.

1849 — Denim jeans, or "levis," were created for miners during the California Gold Rush.

1860 — America's cotton crop reached almost a billion pounds or about 2/3 of the world's supply.

1879 — The first light bulb manufactured by Thomas Edison used cotton filament.

1892 — The boll weevil migrated from Mexico through the area of Brownsville, Texas and spread rapidly throughout the Cotton Belt.

1900's — Samuel Morse invented the telegraph and a language called Morse Code to send messages over long distances. The messages were sent over electrical wires. Cotton was used to insulate the metal wires.

1905 — Wilbur and Orville Wright covered the wings of their first airplane with cotton.

1914 — World War 1 broke out, fine cotton fibers were used to make a smoke-less gunpowder.

1969 — Astronauts returning from the moon wear all cotton isolation suits.

1970's — In the late 1970's, the National Boll Weevil Eradication Program was launched by the United States Department of Agriculture.

1982 — Over 38 thousand farms in the United States are growing cotton. These farms produced 5,742,240,000 pounds of cotton.

2012 — Cotton Inc.'s "go green" campaign, "Cotton. From blue to green." is launched and very successful.

FUN FACTS

One bale of cotton can make **313,600 \$100 bills**.

The word "cotton" is an English version of the **Arabic "qutun" or "kutun,"** a generic term meaning **fancy fabric**.

The average American owns **seven pairs of blue jeans** made from cotton.

There are **150 yards** of cotton in a **regulation baseball**.

COTTON

CAREERS:

Agricultural Engineer, Farmer, Agronomist, Biochemist, Climatologist, Irrigation Specialist, Soil Scientist, Weed Scientist

SPOTLIGHT ON CAREERS:

CLIMATOLOGIST – **Climatologists** study climate change, climate variability, and the effects of climate on the biosphere. They use computers to predict the effect of weather or climate on the growth and development of crops.

WEED SCIENTIST – **Weed Scientists** teach, perform research and work in extension at universities. Some work for state and federal agencies conducting research, enforcing weed laws, and developing regulations for biological and chemical control agents. Some diagnose problems in the field or establish weed management systems for private crop management or consulting companies.

COTTON IN THE UNITED STATES



(Planting) Farmers prepare the ground for planting by creating furrows in the soil. This lets the soil warm faster in the spring and directs irrigation water across the field. When the soil reaches 65 degrees, mechanical planters will place the seed in the soil. Cotton planting can begin as early as February and as late as June.



(Growing) Seedlings emerge from the soil within one to two weeks after planting. The plant grows 2-5 feet tall and will bloom at about 8-10 weeks. Within three days, the flower will pollinate itself, change from a creamy white color to pinkish red and then wither and fall off, leaving behind the developing boll. The cotton boll develops at about 10 weeks.



(Boll opening) Cotton bolls open 50-70 days after bloom, letting air in to dry the white, clean fiber and fluff it. Now the cotton crop is ready to be harvested.



(Picking) The mechanical cotton picker or brush stripper is used to remove the fiber from the plant. Today's modern cotton harvesters can cover up to 6 to 8 rows at a time and can harvest up to 190,000 pounds of cottonseed a day. Cotton harvesting can begin as early as July or as late as October.



(Modules) Cotton from the picker is dumped on the ground and compressed hydraulically with a module builder to form a module. Modules can be left in the field for storage until it is time to haul the cotton to the gin.



(Ginning) The modules are taken to the cotton gin where the cotton will be dried, cleaned and have its seed and fiber mechanically separated. The gin contains revolving circular saws that pull the raw fiber through closely-spaced ribs that prevent the seed from passing through.



(Cottonseed) The cottonseed is processed into cottonseed meal, cottonseed oil, hulls and linters.



(Cotton lint) The raw fiber, now called lint, is pressed into bales. These bales are banded with 8 steel straps, tested for classing, wrapped for protection and then shipped to storage yards, textile mills and foreign countries. Textile mills process these bales in stages until they produce yarn or cloth.

Source: <http://www.beagsmart.org/>

COTTON

DID YOU KNOW?



One bale of cotton weighs about 480 pounds and is about the size of your refrigerator.

Cotton is one of the top five soft commodities along with cocoa, coffee, wheat, and sugar.

Cotton is over 8,000 years old.

Cotton plants need to grow for over 200 days.

There are four different types of cotton. Pima cotton, Egyptian cotton, Upland Cotton, and Organic Cotton.



WOULD YOU EVER EAT COTTON?

There's a good chance you have eaten cotton before without even knowing it. Cottonseed oil is a cooking oil used in the snack foods we eat every day, such as potato chips, cookies, and crackers. It also can commonly be found in salad dressings, mayonnaise, and baking ingredients that make your food moist and chewy. Most fast-food restaurants use cottonseed oil for deep frying because it makes their food more flavorful.

However, cottonseed oil contains a toxin named gossypol. Gossypol can cause many different health problems, so before it makes its way into your favorite foods, it must go through a process called "refining." In a cottonseed mill, there is a six-step process that takes place in order to make it safe to eat. Cleaning, Shelling, Flaking, Cooking, Pressing, and Refining are the steps cottonseed oil must go through on its journey from the farm to your plate.

