

Making a Difference

2016 Commodity Marketing and Precision Agriculture Education

Developed by:

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Relevance

Cotton, grain Sorghum, soybean, corn, and rice production continue to be a major economic force in Wharton County. The 2015 Texas Community Futures Forum identified that crop producers will need to keep abreast of marketing opportunities, precision agriculture practices, and variety/seed technology developments to remain competitive in the industry. The use of commodity pricing strategies and precision agriculture technology will be important to maintain a crop producers' economic sustainability in the years to come.

Response

The Wharton County Row Crops Committee and the Western Rice Belt Conference Planning Committee were both instrumental in developing, delivering, and evaluating educational programs in 2016 that addressed commodity marketing and use of precision agriculture technology. The following educational conferences and seminars were conducted in 2016:

- Pre-Harvest Commodity Price Management Workshop – June 3, 2016. Dr. Mark Welch, Extension Economist Grain Marketing gave a grain market update, and gave examples of a feed grain marketing plan based on current, actual trends in the feed grain market. Dr. Thomas Wynn, Coastal Rice and Futures, Inc – East Bernard, Texas presented a current Rice Market Outlook.
- Remote Crop Sensing Seminar and Demonstration – June 9, 2016. Dr. Juan Landivar, Texas A&M AgriLife Research presented an overview of drone technology research in Texas. This was followed by a drone demonstration by Mr. Joe Jett, J2 Aerial Imaging using a fixed-wing drone utilizing Enhanced Multi-spectral Imagery.
- Crop Decision Aid Workshop – November 15, 2016. Mr. Mac Young, Extension Program Specialist-Risk Management with the AgriLife Research and Extension Center in Corpus Christi taught a hands-on workshop that introduced program participants to the Crop Analyzer-Crop Decision Aid Tool. This was a hands-on workshop held at the Northside Education Center's Computer Lab in El Campo, Texas. Participants worked from individual computers to develop specific crop budgets to fit their individual operation and needs, while determining breakeven costs and what crop mix might generate the best returns.

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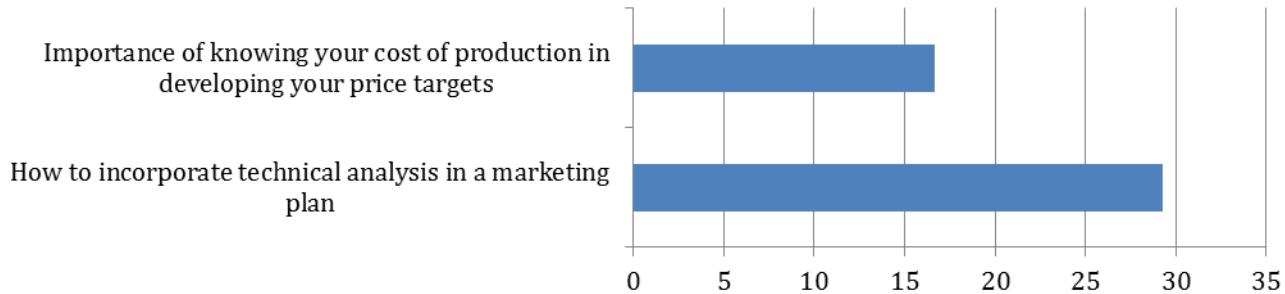
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Results

Pre-Harvest Commodity Price Management Workshop

To determine the programmatic results of Pre-Harvest Commodity Price Management Workshop a retrospective post evaluation instrument was administered the day of the conference. 8 of 16 (50%) completed evaluations. 5 of 5 (100%) of the participants intend to develop a personalized budget with break-even cost of production. Participants report a total anticipated economic benefit for the operation of \$43,827.

% Client Change Level of Understanding: Pre-Harvest Commodity Price Management Workshop



Remote Crop Sensing Seminar and Demonstration

To determine the programmatic results of the Remote Crop Sensing Seminar and Demonstration a retrospective post evaluation instrument was administered the day of the conference. 14 of 30 (46.7%) completed evaluations. Participants reported 10,425 acres managed, and a total anticipated economic benefit to their operations of \$46,750, or \$4.48 per acre. With drone technology use in agriculture still in development, 33.3% of the participants indicate an intention to adopt drone technology for crop production; 50% are presently undecided; and 16% indicate that they will not adopt drone technology for crop production.

Crop Decision Aid Workshop

A retrospective post evaluation instrument was administered the day of the workshop. 11 of 14 (78.5%) completed evaluations. 10 of 11 (90%) estimate an economic benefit from participating in the Crop Decision Aid Workshop. Participants reported 16,951 acres managed, and a total anticipated economic benefit to their operations of \$79,228.50, or \$4.67 per acre. 5 of 11 (45%), and 5 of 11 (45%) indicated that they Probably Will, and Definitely Will utilize the crop decision aid too to make crop management decisions, respectively; 1 of 11 (10%) was undecided.

Client Change Level of Understanding: Crop Decision Aid Workshop

TOPICS	Mean Value BEFORE	Mean Value AFTER	Percent Increase
Understanding how to develop a working crop budget	2.45	3.54	44%
Understanding how the crop decision aid tool can assist producers in making management decisions by allowing them to analyze the optimal crop mix to plant under both irrigation and non-irrigation.	1.72	3.63	111%