Current project on Glandless Cotton

Glandless cotton is a cotton variety without gossypol, a toxic substance that limits the feeding of cottonseeds to non-ruminants. Glandless cottonseeds, free of gossypol, can serve as peanut alternative (lacking allergens) in human food and can also be fed to non-ruminants and aquatic animals such as shrimp and catfish. Glandless cottonseed could create an added value product with a big market for cotton growers in New Mexico, who have been struggling due to fluctuating lint prices.

Previous trials with glandless cotton in the Southwest showed its high susceptibility to chewing, piercing and sucking insect pests such as lygus and boll weevil. Eradication programs of the major cotton pests that have taken place in NM may favor the growth and acceptable yield of glandless cotton.

A new line of glandless cotton is currently being tested in NM through a grant from Cotton Incorporated. Current results are promising, indicating that the glandless cotton could become profitable in NM.

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Mission Statement

Integrated field crop production and management extension program addresses the educational needs of producers across a wide spectrum of stakeholders, ranging from large scale producers to small scale and home gardening clientele. Specifically, needs of growers, extension educators and consultants are addressed through the provision of relevant information related to crop and soil management in New Mexico.

Program Areas

- Land preparation and other tillage manipulations of the soil in field crop production systems
- Input optimization for a better economic returns in field crops
- Cultural practices to prevent field related losses of crops
- Soil health management to improve soil productivity and prevent environmental degradation
- Enhance profitability of cotton production in NM

Current Activities

Recent extension presentations and publications have focused on the following areas:

- Glandless cotton production in New Mexico
- Impacts of pesticides on soil health
- Soil health in organic production systems
- Soil health management for sustainable agriculture
- Soil health in vineyard production systems
- Soil health in forage production systems
- Soil fertility management in cotton
- Reducing field related losses in forage production systems

Impact

Over a thousand growers, educators and other stakeholders were reached through the activities of the integrated field crop production and management program in the past one year. Contacts were achieved through numerous presentations, emails, phone calls and field visits to address specific crop and soil issues in New Mexico. Specific questions were answered and recommendations made on different aspects of crop production and soil management.

Applied on-farm trials were set up at different locations in the State, to help refine production related issues of glandless cotton in NM. These trials have been the focus of field meetings, during which growers were able to ask questions and obtain information on glandless cotton.

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