

I. COTTON PRODUCTION: Cultural Practices

GROWERS HAVE REVERSED THE HARVEST TREND

Charles R. Farr, Agricultural Agent
Robert E. Dennis, Extension Agronomist

During the 1950s when yields declined, it was apparent that numerous growers were irrigating later each fall to increase yields. Unfortunately, the introduction of determinate varieties in the 1960s and the cost-price squeeze accentuated the trend; but now growers have clearly changed their practices to reverse the trend.

The serious pink bollworm outbreak in 1966 brought on the greatest pressure for change since research and experience have shown the need to reduce diapausing larvae in the fall. Final irrigation date comparisons in 1965 and 1967 and Experimental Station research have demonstrated the feasibility of acceptable yields with final irrigations in August. This contrasts with frequent cases in the past of final irrigations in late September and October. Late irrigation, of course, hampers defoliation effectiveness and delayed harvest.

The U.S.D.A., the Arizona Agriculture and Horticulture Commission, the Arizona Cotton Growers Association and the University of Arizona have combined efforts to emphasize effective pink bollworm controls. The Extension Service placed added emphasis on field selection, early stands, fertility and irrigation practices which promote early cotton production and advanced harvest. In turn, growers have carried out extensive insecticide programs, cut-off irrigation much earlier and harvested earlier. Phoenix Cotton Classing office records provide the basis for harvest comparisons in Figure 1.

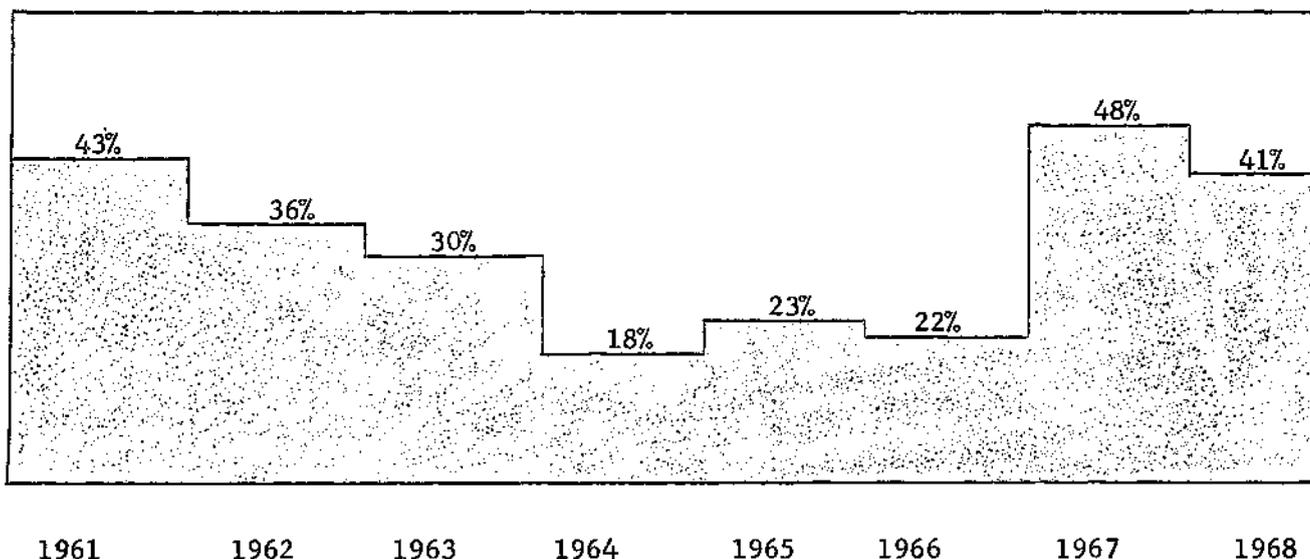


Figure 1. Percent of Upland Cotton Classed by October 31
Phoenix Classing Office