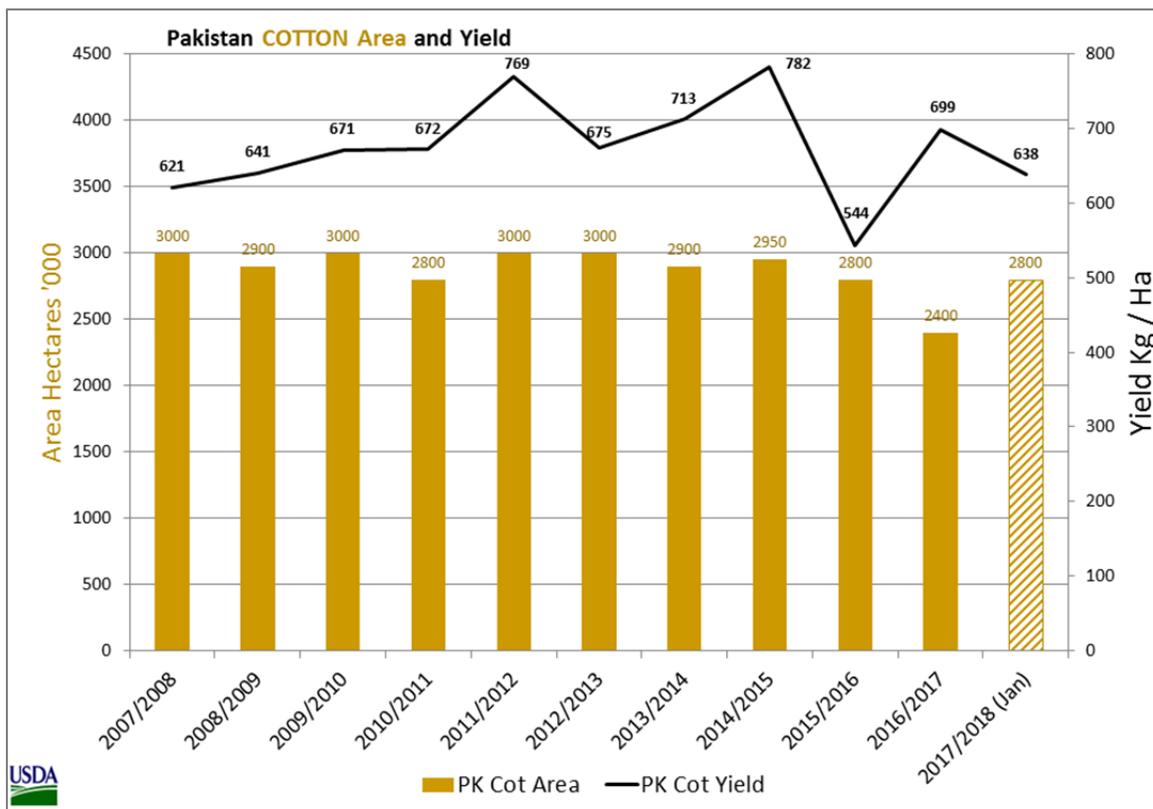
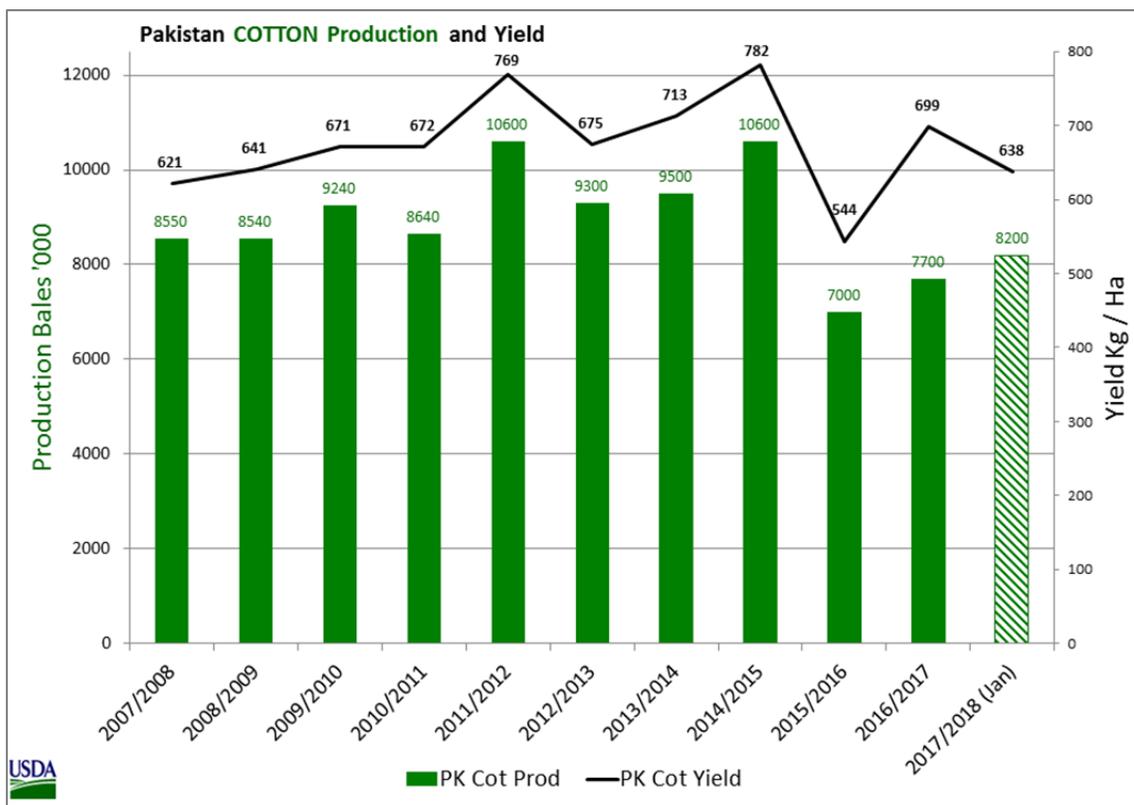


Pakistan Cotton Production Forecast to Surpass Last Season

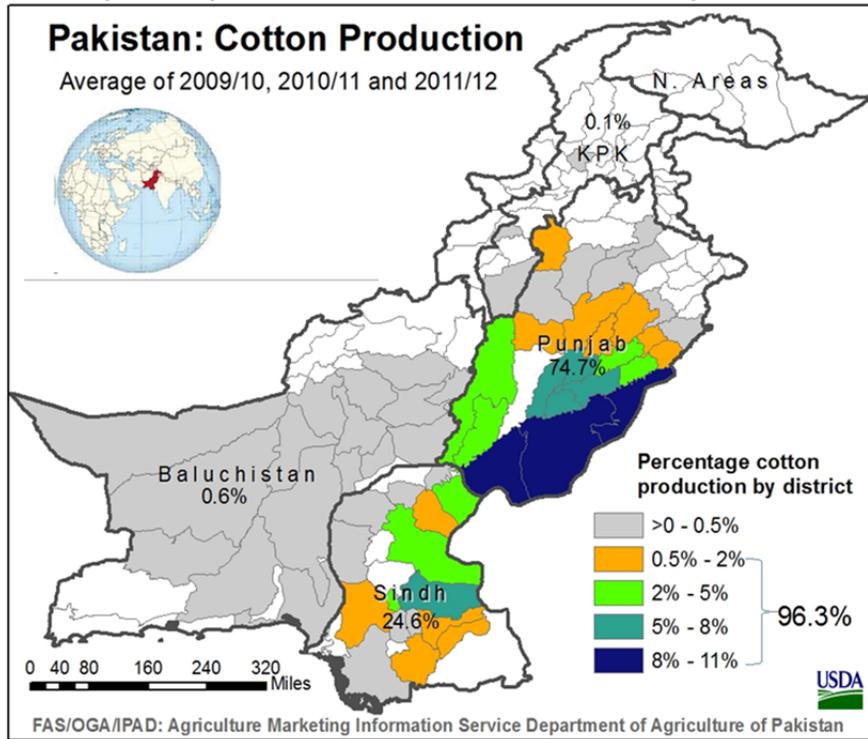
Pakistan cotton production for 2017/18 is forecast at 8.2 million 480-pound bales, an increase of 6 percent from last year. The increase is driven by a recovery in area, which is estimated at 2.8 million hectares (mha), up 0.4 mha or 17 percent from last year. This year's higher area is largely a reflection of the higher prices for cotton at the start of the planting season relative to other crops, and adequate reservoir levels.



In recent years farmers have faced increased prices of agricultural chemicals and relatively lower cotton prices, but cotton prices have risen significantly since the beginning of the 2017/18 growing season.

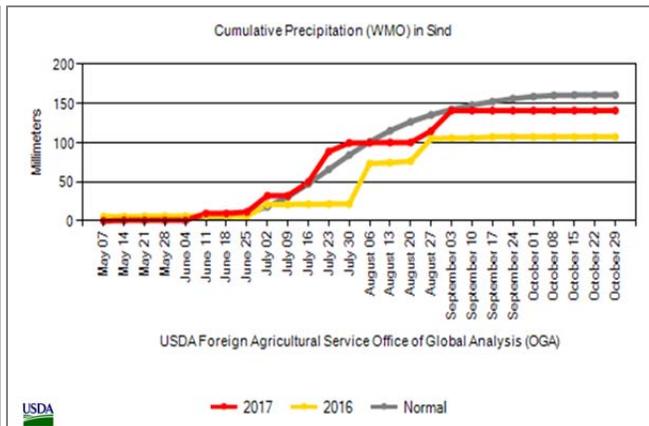
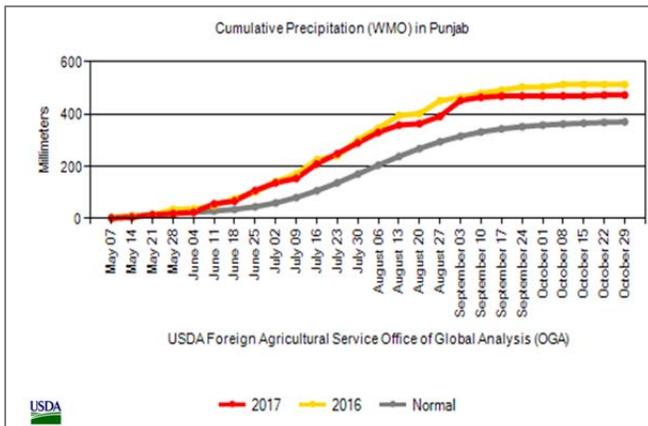
According to the USDA Office of Agricultural Affairs in Islamabad, for MY 2017/18 (Aug/Jul) farmers appear to have taken advantage of a \$625 million support package that provided fertilizer subsidies, reduced electricity rates for tube well pumps, reduced interest rates, and, in addition, lowered the sales tax. Higher cotton prices also encouraged better crop management. Seed-cotton prices have strengthened during the season. As of December 2017, prices for seed cotton were 40 cents per pound, compared to 37 cents per pound a year ago. Final production depends in part on the number of pickings during harvest, and higher prices this season are expected to prompt farmers to extend pickings late into the season. In order to determine how many pickings to conduct, farmers must first decide on how much to invest in labor and other harvest-related inputs, and this season's increase in prices encouraged these investments.

Map: Crop Production Distribution by District



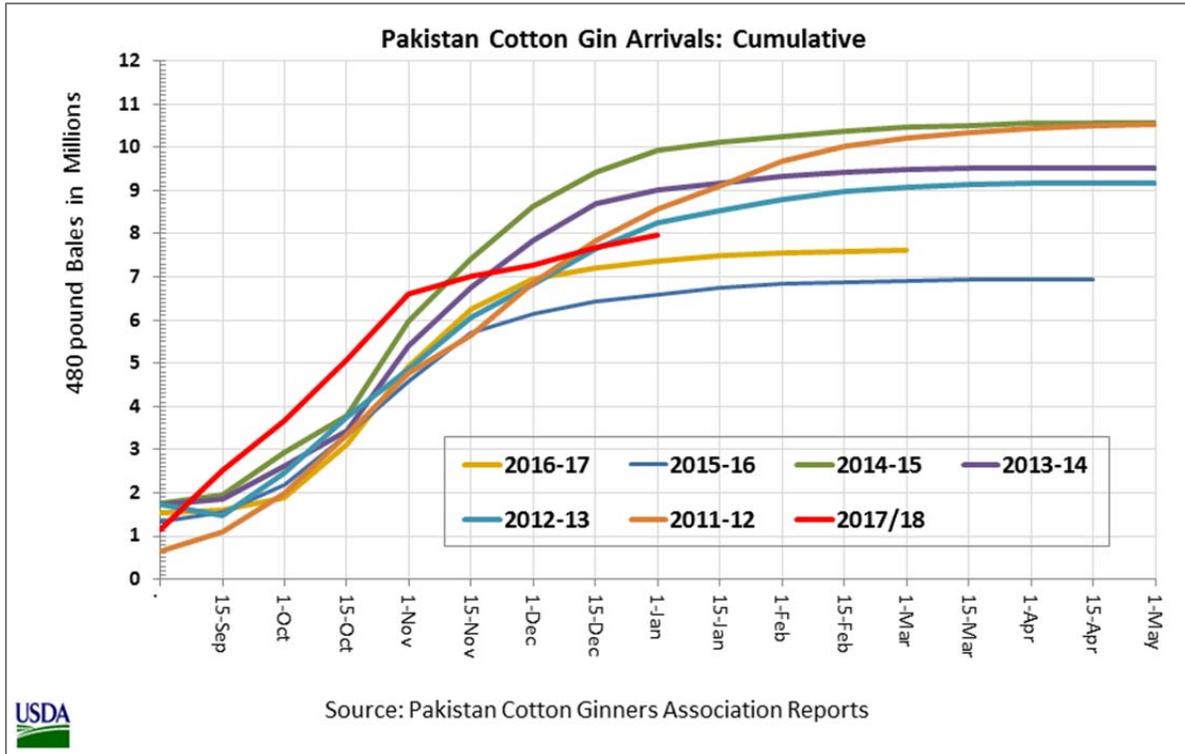
SEASON TO DATE

In Sindh province, cotton is sown during March and April. Precipitation in Sindh during the growing season was slightly below normal, but irrigation water was in ample supply. In Punjab, most planting takes place during May and June. This season, sowing continued until the end of June. Punjab seasonal precipitation was slightly above normal for the growing season. Cotton is an irrigated *kharif* (summer) crop. This season's widespread monsoon rainfall benefitted cotton by recharging irrigation supplies.



HARVEST AND ARRIVALS TO DATE

Harvest of the early crop (sown in February) started in June; harvest of the late crop (sown in May) began in September. Harvest is complete but seed-cotton arrivals will continue to trickle in throughout February. According to a January 3, 2018, report from the Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association, seed-cotton arrivals to date are up 7 percent over last season. Reported arrivals are up 4 percent in Punjab, which accounts for approximately 75 percent of Pakistan's total cotton crop. The slowing pace of arrivals indicates that farmers have delivered most all of their harvested cotton. Arrivals appear to be on pace to reach a total crop of 8.2 million 480-pound bales of lint.



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Current USDA area and production estimates for grains and other agricultural commodities are available on IPAD's Agricultural Production page or at [PSD Online](#).
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