

**MINISTRY OF TEXTILE INDUSTRY**  
**Government of Pakistan**

**Press Release**

**March 25, 2017:**Sixth meeting of Federal Committee on Cotton (FCC) was held under the chairmanship of Dr. Khalid Abdullah, Cotton Commissioner, Ministry of Textile Industry, Government of Pakistan on March 25, 2017. The representatives from Pakistan Central Cotton Committee (PCCC), Pakistan Metrological Department, Federal Plant Protection Department, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Zarai Tarqati Bank Limited (ZTBL), State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Federal Seed Certification & Registration Department (FSCR&D), Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP), Agriculture Department from Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakthunkhawa and progressive cotton farmers attended the meeting.

Dr. Khalid Abdullah, Cotton Commissioner stated that a target of 14.1 million bales was set for the year 2016-17. However, cotton sowing fell short by 20.82% in the Punjab province, leading to overall 15.78% less sowing at national level. The reasons for less cotton sowing was mainly attributed to low cotton prices during 2015-16. The representative from Meteorological Department stated that below normal rainfall is anticipated in the cotton belt during March to May 2017. The representative from State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) stated that an amount of Rs.700 billion have been allocated for agricultural loans to be disbursed by commercial banks and microfinance institutions. Out of this target, Rs.10 billion have so far been disbursed to 35,000 cotton farmers of Punjab and Sindh province from July to December. The SBP has also launched Mandatory Crop Insurance Policy for five major crops (Wheat, Rice, Sugarcane, Cotton, Maize). The representative of Zarai Tarqati Bank Limited (ZTBL) stated that financing for cotton crop-specific loans have been targeted at 60% of the total loan disbursement by the bank. The representative of FSCR&D stated that 38,000 metric tons seed of cotton (certified and approved ) will be available against the requirement of 40,000 metric tons during the season 2017-18. Hence, there will be no shortage for quality seed. Dr. Khalid Abdullah, Cotton Commissioner urged the representative to direct all seed dealers to market cotton seed as per standard germination of 75 percent and there should be no comprise on standards. He further stated that since there is almost 100% availability of certified seed, therefore, campaign should be launched for sowing of only certified seed.

The representative from the Federal Plant Protection Department stated that sufficient pesticides, weedicides are in the import process. The farmers members stressed upon the availability of irrigation water and stated that since the Punjab government has banned cotton sowing before 15<sup>th</sup> April, therefore, farmers would have only 30 days period (15<sup>th</sup> April to 15<sup>th</sup> May) left for sowing of cotton crop. Therefore, during this period, the government should ensure supply of irrigation water to the farmers so that the cotton is sown as planned. The farmer members also urged the government to announce the support price for cotton crop which will encourage the farmers in enhancing cotton acreage. The house unanimously agreed to fix the cotton area and production target for the year 2017 as below:

	<b>Area (million hectares)</b>	<b>Production (million bales)</b>
Punjab	2.429	10.000
Sindh	0.650	4.000
Balochistan	0.038	0.038
KPK	0.001	0.002
<b>Pakistan</b>	<b>3.118</b>	<b>14.040</b>