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## **Budget Agreement Eliminates Generic Base** *NCPC releases tool to aid farmers in planning*

DOTHAN, Alabama – Congress cleared a budget agreement and disaster-aid package that has a significant impact on farmers for the 2018 crop year. The budget agreement passed the House by a vote of 240 to 186 and passed the Senate by a vote of 71 to 28. The President has also signed the legislation.

The legislation includes \$90 billion in disaster assistance for communities impacted by storms, tornadoes, hurricanes, wildfires and flooding. The legislation also includes provisions for cotton farmers by making seed cotton eligible for Title 1 Agriculture Risk Coverage and the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs.

Due to the new provisions for seed cotton, the generic base acres for farmers are eliminated for the 2018 crop. Growers will have to choose whether or not to move generic base acres to seed cotton base only or using the 2009-2012 crop year history and moving generic base acres to other covered commodities such as peanuts and seed cotton. Additional details will be forthcoming as the United States Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency publishes details on how this will function for the 2018 crop.

To assist farmers in planning, the National Center for Peanut Competitiveness (NCPC) plans to launch the “2018 Seed Cotton Generic Base and Payment Yield Updating Calculator” this week.

The calculator was developed by the NCPC after reviewing the text of the seed cotton provision in the recently passed budget agreement and disaster aid package. The contents followed the procedures outlined in the 2014 Farm Bill for the other covered commodities payment yield updating and base

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reallocation provisions. Thus, the NCPC was able to utilize their previous decision aid built in 2014 that was based on the 2014 Farm Bill.

“The decision calculator program is easy to complete as it uses the software program Microsoft Excel,” says Dr. Stanley Fletcher, NCPC’s director and professor emeritus at the University of Georgia. “Farmers can follow the step-by-step instructions provided in the program in order to complete the calculator and determine their base acreages and payment yields. It is important for farmers to review all instructions before proceeding with the decision calculator.”

Peanut grower checkoff funds helped with the development of the decision calculator. Funds were derived from the members of the Southern Peanut Farmers Federation (SPFF). The SPFF is comprised of the Alabama Peanut Producers Association, the Florida Peanut Producers Association, Mississippi Peanut Growers Association and the Georgia Peanut Commission. Funding also came through the Southeastern Peanut Research Initiative of the National Peanut Board and farmer checkoff dollars from Texas.

“It is imperative for producers to begin the process of collecting the necessary data now rather than later, given the 90-day deadline in the law,” Fletcher says. “Documents needed by the producer for this process will include the 2018 FSA-156EZ and the 2008-2012 FSA-578 forms for each farm serial number and the associated tracts for that farm serial number.”

The NCPC developed the calculator to assist producers in developing farm strategies and decisions based on their individual needs. The calculator will be available for download on the Alabama Peanut Producers Association website, [www.alpeanuts.com](http://www.alpeanuts.com). For additional questions, contact Dr. Stanley Fletcher, NCPC director, at 404-277-2319 or email at [smf@uga.edu](mailto:smf@uga.edu).

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