Season 5 Episode 8 — Cotton Conversation with Steve Brown

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Announcer

The Alabama Crops Report Podcast, your trusted information source for Alabama agriculture.

Scott Graham
Hey, everybody, welcome in to the Alabama Crops Report podcast. Got Scott, Simer, and Amanda with us. And a very special guest. Longtime recurring guest of the podcast Doctor Steve Brown. Steve, good to see you.

Steve Brown
Good to be with y'all this morning.

Simer Virk
Yeah. This is your second time, right, on this one.

Steve Brown
I'm with you.

Scott Graham
Yeah. Since you started. Yeah. So, second time as a retiree or as a semi-retired man.
Simer Virk
Yeah.
Scott Graham
So why don't you, Steve, give us a quick update on what you're doing these days?

Steve Brown
Well, my wife said I couldn't come home and bother her all the time, so I actually teach a class. I taught a class in the fall semester and teach in a class, this semester, in the fall, I taught advanced crop science, and now I'm teaching basic crop science. I'm also on a research grant with Doctor Ortiz, and, actually meet with him tomorrow afternoon. That keeps me a little bit busy.

Steve Brown
Do some volunteer mowing for a camp about 30 miles up the road and I mow. And last Friday I sprayed herbicide and got herbicide all over myself because the sprayer leaked, but, anyway, so I stay pretty busy. And I just came for my workout this morning at the Auburn Rec and Wellness Center.

Scott Graham
Good. You know, every meeting we go to, people ask about you and how you're doing. And I say good. And you're still helping the industry just a little bit different way now helping teach some of these youngins.

Amanda Scherer
You're always still around for us to rope you back in for the podcast and other extension stuff. So, you're never too far from helping the growers, so.

Steve Brown
Yeah, well thank you.

Scott Graham
Yeah, well, we wanted to. We're just getting close to planting cotton time. Simmer and I went yesterday with Ron and met with a couple of farmers, about some on farm trial. Simer's going to do, and they were starting to get ready to plant cotton next week. So today is April 16th. So we'll, we'll start planting soon.

Steve Brown
Well there used to be a saying and maybe holds true further south, but I'm sure it doesn't hold true where we are. That pecan trees, they indicate when it's time to plant. Well, pecan trees have been leafed out in our area and a little farther north, they've been leafed out for a while. Well, so you can raise the question, do pecan trees ever lie?

Steve Brown
And I think the answer is yes.

Scott Graham
Well no frost though.

Steve Brown
Yeah. No frost.

Scott Graham
But cool nights. I'm wearing a pullover right now.

Steve Brown
Seeds rather expensive.

Scott Graham
Yeah.

Steve Brown
And so, no need to get in a hurry. You don't need to practice.

Simer Virk
And you said that I was wondering, so. Will Sanford, yesterday when we were talking to him, he started saying something about the birds on the pecan trees. And I'm like, what is he talking about?

Scott Graham
Well, so I had not heard before the whippoorwill.

Steve Brown
Yeah. I don't know about the whippoorwill.

Scott Graham
Yeah. He said that, one of his neighbors, who normally plants a little bit earlier than he does, even says when you hear your first whippoorwill, it's time to plant. And he said he heard about two weeks ago.
[Laughs]

Steve Brown
Well, we've had hummingbirds for 2 or 3 weeks, and I think at night they needed jackets. But, no need to get in a rush. And really, to me, our biggest concern is soil moisture, not temperature. Because, you know, we're going to turn the page here in a day or so, and we're going to go from here.

Steve Brown
We're having 45 degree mornings or 48 degree mornings till, we're going to have 60 degree nights and 85 degree days. And so we better capture moisture when we got it. And we're probably at that point that what if we have good moisture from here on, you know? Yeah, it's probably time to go by the time you can post this.

Simer Virk
Two weeks.

Steve Brown
So it's yeah, we should be we should be all out, when we got moisture.

Scott Graham
Yeah. Yeah. That was what we talked about it. We're at the point now where if you got moisture they'll get them.

Steve Brown
Yeah that's right.

Amanda Scherer
And we're recording this just for our listeners reference on April 16th.

Simer Virk
Yeah.

Scott Graham
Yeah.

Simer Virk
So hopefully it'll be online the last week of April okay.

Steve Brown
Okay. Go all out, all out, if we got more.

Scott Graham
Yeah, and you know something I've been putting my two cents out as my time as the, interim acting self-appointed cotton specialist, is trying to spread out planting dates a little bit and spread your risk in a state like Alabama, where we have very little irrigation capacity. What do you think about that?

Steve Brown
I do think planting date gives us some diversity of risk. I remember dealing with a large farm, enterprise in North Alabama a few years ago, and they planted their entire corn crop in a matter of 36, 38 hours. I mean, it was…

Scott Graham
Wow.

Steve Brown
It was multiple thousands of acres. And they wanted to do cotton like that.

Steve Brown
And I think they did. I would argue against that because I think, like you said, that's probably a mistake because you certainly can't pick it in a matter of 2 or 3 days. So, I do, I do think, different planting dates and you know, we get slow and steady in our planting progress. That gives us some, some diversity of exposure on what the weather's going to be and the stresses are going to be.

Steve Brown
And hopefully we're going to hit well, we're going to work out and do well with some of those. You know, we do the same thing with variety selection. We don't put all our eggs in one basket and there's no single star variety that kicks everything every time, every field. And so, we diversify that way as well.

Steve Brown
And I think the two together, different varieties and different planting dates give us some risk management that helps us in the long run. Yeah.

Scott Graham
You're not going to hit a grand slam home run, but you're not going to strike out on a pitch on the dirt either. Yeah, sometimes just a solid double is. That's right. It's not a bad approach.

Simer Virk
Doctor Ron Smith mentioned yesterday what 10% he would go just plant ten percent.

Scott Graham
Ten percent of his cotton in April. Yeah.

Simer Virk
Do you think that.

Steve Brown
You know it. Every season is different. We've been a little I think we've been a little cool in the mornings, in the last few weeks. The last couple of weeks, in fact, one, one day, I've had some actual frost on my windshield. I do think my truck gets colder than the air, really, but. So, yeah, normally I would say mid April when we got more…

Steve Brown
Sure. We got to go. So, I don't have a problem with that if I'm a dry land producer, when I've got moisture, I got to go and I won't go as long as I can go to get a stand. So. Yeah. In in my former life, where irrigation was abundant, the magic date that was projected was, hey, we want to plant everything on May 10th, which is not possible.

Steve Brown
But one of the reasons a plant in more towards mid-May is that we want to avoid the Labor Day, September, rain events. Hurricane events that come in and soak us for several days and cause boll rot and hard lock, we want to open after that period. So that was sort of their recommendation. Wait, if you can to that kind of time frame May 10th or later.

Steve Brown
But again, I think for us soil temperature is not the issue. It's moisture. So, we got to go when we got it.

Scott Graham
And Amanda, if I remember right, not a lot of boll rot last year right, we were very fortunate because we didn't have a lot of cotton out there anyway.

Amanda Scherer
Yeah. And that coupled with just the last two years really we've been pretty dry right around harvest time. So that's really helped keep the boll rot down just in general and hard lock. And I think this year it's still at a toss up if you look at that, that forecast from the National Weather Service. If we're kind of at equal chances for being, you know, at the yearly average below or above.

Amanda Scherer
So they still don't really know what the hurricane season will potentially do, but that could bring more or less, overall. But the last two years, just overall, we've been pretty fortunate, with that weather and just the drought conditions.

Scott Graham
Yeah. I had a buddy in grad school that says 50/50 chance of rain every day. It’s either going to rain or it’s not.

Steve Brown
I do think the long-term forecasting abilities of our meteorologists is getting better. So they can they tell us about trends. And I do think we we probably should think about and react to trends. You know, every day cause is challenging. But the trend of we're going to be wetter or drier or hotter or cooler, they're getting better and

better at that, I think.

Simer Virk and Scott Graham
Yeah.

Simer Virk
We. You were talking about when there's moisture just go and all that. I was just thinking about, you know, I visited with, some growers in North Alabama and they got these high speed planters and actually two of them, you know, and I was kind of wondering, I'm like, what makes them make an investment in such a technology?

Simer Virk
Because it's not something cheap, right? But they kind of say when they, they're, they said when they when it's time to plant, they like to get everything planted within two weeks. And if they don't have two planters and if they're not running eight, nine miles per hour, they can't cover that.

Steve Brown
Is this the brush type planter that holds the seed also?

Simer Virk
Yeah.

Steve Brown
To the tops at about only 2 inches?

Simer Virk
Yeah. We're going to do a bunch of speed trials with them just to kind of see if we are getting the same type of performance. One plant read those high speeds as you will at 4 or 5 miles, but it kind of brings back chasing moisture in a way, is that maybe the technology give you that opportunity to go and do it with your normal planters.

Scott Graham
Can’t.

Simer Virk
We have, yeah. You know.

Steve Brown
And if you're talking about sizeable acres, which you would be with, with double planters and high-speed planters, then you get some added diversity through different varieties and so forth. So, you know, the smaller grower, that says hey I can do it in two weeks. That's different than what they're talking about. So.

Simer Virk
Yeah.

Scott Graham
You know, one thing that, I've heard the word singulation more times in February this year than I had my entire life combined, maybe times two. But we learned yesterday there's still a fair amount of folks out there. Hill dropping.

Steve Brown
Well, the only reason the hill drop is, is to break through a crust

Simer Virk
Crust.

Scott Graham
Mhm.

Steve Brown
And, you know, some of the varieties that we've loved in recent years have been sort of weak starters. Now it's like golf. It's not how you start, it's how you arrive.

Scott Graham
Unless you are hitting it out of bounds every time off the tee.

Steve Brown
[Laughs] That's true, that's true. But, yeah, I don't know what the percentage is on hill drop versus singulation. What I've heard in some of my even interaction with, Doctor Ortiz in this particular project, we got some people because of cost and because of the market situation, they're stretching singulation out to, to, sort of extreme. They're talking about planting this one seed every nine, ten, 11in.

Scott Graham
Mhm.

Steve Brown
And again, I do think we can make good yields. On on thinner population. I know that's an anathema to the people in North Alabama. I can't imagine that. But it does. It does make it take a little longer. But in the South that doesn't that doesn't mean much.

Scott Graham
If you can plant 20,000 and get 20,000 up.

Simer Virk
Yeah.

Amanda Scherer
Yeah.

Steve Brown
I don't think we're going to get 20,000 up.

Scott Graham
That's the problem.

Simer Virk
In Cotton.

Steve Brown
Yeah, yeah, I think, you know, I think the numbers ranges anywhere from, say, the low 90s to mid-50s. And I think an average would be 80. I also think by the time we really get rolling, our soil temperature is good, that if we got moisture, our cotton's going to come out of the ground very rapidly.

Steve Brown
You know, 4 or 5 days is probably fairly normal. I know as you go further north, they're waiting around 7 or 8 days. And I know in the south, on warm temperatures. It's not up in 5 or 6 days. I'm thinking something's wrong. And so, it springs out of the ground with us when we got temperature and moisture.

Scott Graham
You know, and more. Something I didn't see a lot in Mississippi was a whole bunch of cotton seeds with the seed coat still on the cotyledons. Since I've moved to Alabama, I started seeing that a whole lot more because we don't, you know, back home there planting in late April, first week, May. It's still cool. But here, when those temperatures are right, I mean, you don't have time to kick the seed hole off.

Steve Brown
Yeah. And what I think happens in that is, is if you plant and you don't get any kind of rain or the soil is somewhat dry, you don't get a lot of pressure and resistance to pull that seed coat off as the hypocotyl pulls up through the soil surface. So, I see that, I've rarely rarely seen it take out of, I have seen it take out of stand once or twice, but that's unusual.

Steve Brown
Normally, it'll sloughed off and pop off.

Scott Graham
Yeah, it normally pops off a day or so later.

Steve Brown
That's a sign of the lack of resistance coming through.

Simer Virk
From the soil.

Scott Graham
Yeah. So, I just think it is just how quickly it is popping off.

Steve Brown
I think it could be that too.

Simer Virk
We noticed a lot. I got some really good pictures here. We're doing a planter downforce trial one time, and then you put a lot more downforce on their seed. And when it was coming up you don't see any.

Steve Brown
Yeah. You got greater resistance. Yeah.

Simer Virk
So that seed is working so hard to just get out of the ground and all that.
Scott Graham
Yeah.

Steve Brown
So what percentage of planters do you think have downforce control capabilities? Just ballpark.

Simer Virk
50%.

Steve Brown
50? Wow that's high I wouldn't have thought it's high.

Simer Virk
Now, there's a I think most planters have some downforce on them. I would even say the newer technology, I would say 20 maybe.

Steve Brown
Maybe I'm thinking about sophisticated downforce.

Simer Virk
Yeah. So 20 to maybe less than 20 percent.

Steve Brown
That's what I was thinking.

Simer Virk
Like even even yesterday. Grower has a brand-new planter, but they didn't have the best downforce technology that's available. But it was still like some air bags and other things which we don't usually recommend in a way.
Steve Brown
Yeah.

Simer Virk
Anymore.

Steve Brown
Well, one of the things that we were as we were talking before, we started recording, we, we have more and more sophistication and more experience with planters because seed are so precious. And so that's really propelled all the possibilities we can do with to tweak planters. You know, I know in the corn world, you hear me say that the corn heroes want every corn seed to come up within 10 seconds of each other, and the cotton is not as critical, but but cotton seed is more finicky than our other crops in terms of stand established.

Simer Virk
I think. So, I was thinking about this. Maybe you have seen it data or maybe know of like in corn. Like you said, when they did all this planting where it all started with singulation, like if you miss a plant, you miss, you have a yield penalty because you…

Scott Graham
You lost an ear.

Simer Virk
You lost an ear, right? It has a direct impact on the yield. I know we keep saying cotton compensates, cotton compensates. I mean, heck, how much can it compensate in a way. Is there any research that says, okay after you have lowered your population. Whatever. Like we always talk about, if you don't have a plant within every foot or something, then you start may want to start to see something.

Simer Virk
Is there any research that ties back to if you lose one cotton plant and your spacing within the rows is this, then you have this much yield loss.

Steve Brown
I don't know that that would be hard to do. I can't imagine, I will say in the old days, if when you were dealing with, a replants question if the answer was, and maybe this was when our yield goal was eight 900 or even 1,000 pounds, not 1,500 pounds, but, the deciding factor was if you could step and touch a cotton plant, whether it was down the row or across the row, then you were okay.

Simer Virk
So that's…

Steve Brown.
On a replant situation.

Simer Virk
That's about a foot right.

Steve Brown
Not, no, no.

Scott Graham
No, that's three feet.

Steve Brown
Yeah, close to three feet.

Simer Virk
Oh oh, take a step?

Steve Brown
Yeah. Now that's not ideal.

Scott Graham
That's. Yeah.

Steve Brown
Yeah, that's not ideal. And clearly when you have a thin stand, it's going to take more time. That's not an issue from here South as you get to North Alabama. I think in their situation it may be, but, you know, I think if we have a plant per foot, we're going to be pretty good. I think we can make it.

Steve Brown
Now, I hear farmers say that when you have a thin stand, it's harder to pick. They don't have is consistency of harvest. And I can't answer that. Maybe you may…

Simer Virk
On the lowers, it's more uneven or all that. I don't think it's that bad of an issue. If it's more if it's a lesser standard in a way. Yeah. You're still running the bigger through. It's probably got a little bit more efficiency because these pickers the way like the Deere are designed all that I learned couple of years ago with it, a training on picker with the agents and he was saying, like, if you're not running 5.78 or 5 point eight miles per hour, everything is just so sync together or whatever, that that's the best efficiency you're going to get for something.

Steve Brown
Yeah.

Simer Virk
So any time you slow down, speed up all that those parts are not doing what they're supposed to be doing. I've always heard it's harder, actually, and I've seen it when it's too thick of a cotton or aggressive variety or something. Then you consistently have to, like, either slow the picker down or stop to make sure you don't have any, you know, heads that are stuck or any corn stalks stuck in there.

Simer Virk
I think on the other side, I think we're we're okay. It's just like, you're not you're not feeding a consistent except for the part they're not it's not feeding the consistent cotton to the head. I think.

Steve Brown
When you get a lot of vegetative branching, it probably is, you know, a little more loss. And so for that, I did have an experience one time. And this was when we were fighting or dealing with the bark issue, and how aggressive the planters were said and running and so forth. So, a farmer said, you know, why we run is fast as we do.

Steve Brown
I said, no, I don't, he said, because we can't run any faster.
[Laughs]

Steve Brown
You know, it's a, you know, at harvest maybe, I think less slow at planting, but at harvest, hey, let's get it done. At planting, we need to be taking our time because as we drive over the field, we're doing so much and expanding so much and so much needs to be right. We need to take our time to make sure it’s good

Simer Virk
Well, it goes back to all, and this maybe started in the Cornwall, but it's equally relevant to the cotton side is you make that one pass right. It's not like you can go back and correct it. So you better spend the time to make sure

that you make a perfect pass, because if not, then any penalty is mistakes or anything.

Simer Virk
You're going to watch those the whole season. Then you might, you know, get mad at yourself or of course, you know, whatever. But that's the opportunity to do anything is before you make that pass. Not once you made it.

Scott Graham
And speaking of taking your time, I've said this on the podcast before, but the coolest data that Simer has shown in my opinion since he's been here and he shows some really cool stuff, is the difference, if you get into his 4 row planter, the difference in how deep seeding depth can be from one unit to the next when you set on the same settings.

Scott Graham
And so that, checking all those before you get going is important. And it's one thing I like about it, Steve, it kind of looks like it's playing like you say, you know, I don't do science, I just play. It's nothing overly scientific about it. But if you're two inches off, that throws everything off.

Simer Virk
And it matters more in cotton, you know. We're barely putting it under…

Scott Graham
That's right.

Simer Virk
The soil. And if you have a quarter to half inch variability between row unit, you're putting seed on the ground on one side of the planter where you're.

Amanda Scherer
And that kind of goes back to something we were talking about in the last podcast episode that we did. Was that just with the cost of seed, and especially if you're doing that premium seed treatment seed, that's going to give that extra cost, you know, making sure you're going in at the, you know, the proper seeding rates, the proper depth, you know, you want it.

Amanda Scherer
All of that impacts all the way through the season. And even if we see with seeding rates, if you have too dense of a population, that can increase your risk for disease later in the season. And so with the the cost of things right now and the current outlook, you know, that could even impact your fungicide applications later on.

Amanda Scherer
So it's just starting out on the right foot. Going down is going to be critical, especially I think this year, just because of just our economic state that we have.

Steve Brown
We've had situations, we've had varieties that were so ticklish, that a minor, minor change in depth meant success or failure. And so, and we probably still have some of those varieties in the marketplace today.

Simer Virk
What we're talking about seeding rates and stuff. You know, I know, when we met with consultants one time two weeks ago, I think they were they were saying that some of their growers, because of the commodity prices, all that. So they were, the two biggest things, I think they kind of pointed out was like, they're backing off a little bit on the fertility side.

Simer Virk
And then other was the seeding rate, you know, in your experience, I guess I know our seeding rates vary significantly from north to south Alabama. You know, how would you kind of suggest growers manage that?

Steve Brown
I'm, I'm really comfortable with two seed per foot. And we go from here south. I know farmers doing less than that. And I think the research data would support that. I think in cotton we should think, hey, we're going to get up 80%. I think in corn that number may be closer to ninety.

Simer Virk
95 to 90, yeah.

Steve Brown
Better than that. So I'm comfortable with two. If I knew my ground and I was a farmer and I had, I knew I had good moisture, I might cheat there, I would cheat that, I would cheat that. But that is, as a recommender, I probably wouldn't recommend below that.

Simer Virk
Yeah.

Steve Brown
As you go further north, they're going to be closer.
I really think they're going to be closer to three and maybe plus a little bit I would encourage them, particularly those that can just change the planter. Plant population with, or seed population, with a dial. Yeah. Try some, dial it back to to 30,000 and see what you can. I think they can get by with two and a half as you go further north. But that's what I think.

Simer Virk
That's what we're doing. I mean Scott and I was like, my first year of planter trials, we're not looking at something too crazy.

Scott Graham
Yeah.

Simer Virk
We're just like, hey, what's the population doing? You think you have opportunity to lower some seeding rate, especially the planters we have today of what you were saying, all you got to do is sit in that cab, punch a number, make a pass, see what it does on the farm.

Simer Virk
You know, instead of planting three seeds. What if it's two and three quarters or two and a half seeds or whatever, right. That's a lot of seed costs that you can just save if you make the same yield.

Steve Brown
Right. And I, my observation on own research stations, for people that weren't paying for the seed, they always planted too much. Yeah. And I would comment on the, the first fertility, that you might, I do think we can probably skate by with some dialing back on our nitrogen. Now, again, everybody they know, people farmers know their ground better than you and I do.

Steve Brown
And what it will do with how aggressive a plant it will grow. But I think if we're, you know, 90 seems to be the magic number. If we're, plus 90, I think we can back up. I think most of in my experience, when we've had the nitrogen trials, first year out, we hadn't seen huge differences in response.

Steve Brown
So I think even if we've done 90 and 90 and 90, we might can cut that back to 80 or 75 and get by. You know, it's not that we don't want dark green, aggressive plants in late September. We want them to begin to look ugly and beginning to make that turn, probably in the first week or so of September, if it's a normal planting date.

Steve Brown
So, I think nitrogen might be something we can tweak back and save a few dollars. Seeding rate, we probably, most people have tinkered and probably played and, cut it, cut it, cut it. So, they probably know how low they can go.

Scott Graham
And in my most recent specialist speaking that I did, I kind of tried to make that point that, you know, particularly for crop protection materials, insecticides, fungicides, herbicides. We've cut as far as we can basically, but even went to a certain point seeding. Right. Fertilizer was you still gotta have your potential that can that can break even or more.

Scott Graham
Right. And so you can only cut back so much. Christy, we talked to Christy yesterday and she said that she had a guy calling about maybe using litter for the first time. And how can that help me cut back on my synthetic fertilizer. So that's something else. People are starting to look at.

Steve Brown
I think chicken litter is great. And the standard approach probably ought to be two tons a litter. And then dial your side dress application back to 40 or 50. We've had people putting litter on. They're still putting 80 or 90 units. That's too much.
Scott Graham
Yeah.

Simer Virk
I was going to say I just had some meetings with some growers where they're like, we put two ton and then go back still put another 90 out. And I'm like, you're not really helping.

Scott Graham
Yeah, that’s what…

Steve Brown
And you create some of, you know, you create some of your, disease issues. If you're so aggressive that way.

Scott Graham
Plant bugs too.

Steve Brown
Yeah.

Amanda Scherer
Yeah. Those high nitrogen rates just it doesn't matter what crop you're in. If you're too high in nitrogen, that's going to increase your risk for diseases just in general. That's just a good rule of thumb.

Simer Virk
Yeah. How true is this? I heard this a few years ago when we were doing some cotton work on farm, and one of. I think I may have been with just a guy or someone, and he said a lot of some of our growers are really used to growing cotton, where they put a lot of nitrogen, lush of the plant and all that.

Simer Virk
It's like over application, we do aggressively on the nitrogen, and then we come back aggressively with PGR to manage it, you know, so it's like you first you just have it all and then try to control it. This you know.

Scott Graham
Yeah, yeah.

Steve Brown
It's, that's the principle. And on that date we've been playing with picks, for 40 plus years or 45 years almost. And and that was hey, the light bulb went off even the first years. I remember being involved in a study at Tennessee Valley, and it was an irrigation nitrogen study. And hey, the idea is, hey, I can stomp the gas with irrigation and nitrogen, might get a more robust plant, and then I can also jam on the brakes with my PGR, and I can grow magic.

Steve Brown
It really doesn't work that way. I think picks or PGR or a common place in our management, but we're not. It's not going to be the magic to, to high yields. We got we're going to manage the plant. Yes, but we got it. We just don't want to overdo nitrogen. I think that's a mistake.

Steve Brown
And yet sometimes if we have our brag patch and you're looking at it, you think, oh, man, I want my cotton to be green. And robust. Well, no, that's not it. You want to make fruit and, you know, and y'all know more about peanuts than I do for sure. But if a peanut when peanuts stressed with a whole load of pods, you know, it doesn't look quite as strong and healthy as if it's got nothing under it.

Steve Brown
And so we won't. We don't need green and robust cotton in the second week of September. We want it to be on the decline and…

Scott Graham
Nitrogen in particular, correct me if I'm wrong, indirectly contributes to yield by produced by. You know, having a bigger leaf, more photosynthesis. But it's really potassium that’s filling those bowls right.

Amanda Scherer
Yes.

Steve Brown
Potassium is the element that I'd be very reluctant to cut back on. We've seen too many issues where we have potassium deficiencies and we get premature defoliation. We get some secondary diseases and so forth. So yeah, potassium is the one element I just, we're better. We better have a good program there.

Amanda Scherer
And especially if we, we have, you know, our dry line production, more specifically. And if you have drought too, then you're going to be more at risk, especially with the potassium and potash deficiencies later in the season. You're going to get more Stemphylium. And then if we just have enough moisture, something like airline mildew can come through.

Amanda Scherer
And really defoliate that that lush green cotton. And so it's yeah, that's definitely one I would not cut back on.

Scott Graham
Well, Steve, we appreciate your time. Any anything else we need to talk about? We're getting short on.

Steve Brown
Oh, we really need a good year. No question about it. And I, I had a conversation with a graduate student, who? You know who you tried to recruit? He went to work with Cam, but, he comes from a farm family, and he's thinking, hey do I go on for a PhD or do I go back to farm?

Steve Brown
And he says, I don't see how these people are making it. And so there's tremendous pressure on us. The economic structure of of agriculture. And my graduate student Friend says, but, hey, cows are good. Yeah. And his family grows grow some beef cattle as well as peanuts and cotton. So…

Scott Graham
I spoke to the Cherokee County Young Farmers Monday, and I, I told them I, you know, I really admire y'all for getting into this right now, but it also they made the same. Yeah. Cows are cows are we can make a little bit of money.

Steve Brown
So it's a tough time. We got to mind our P's and Q's. And we hope we have favorable weather conditions to make a really good solid crop.

Scott Graham
This year I was talking with an industry guy, seed guy, last week, and I said, you know, Steve Brown always says we just need an inch of rain every Friday at 5:00. And, he said, I kind of rather it be at noon.
[Laughs]

Scott Graham
Yeah, well, Steve, we appreciate your time, Simer, Amanda, and enjoy the conversation. As Steve said, we're hoping for a good year this year for everybody. And, if anybody at Extension can ever help at all, please don't hesitate to reach out and let us know. And we'll be back with another episode soon.

Announcer

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