

Data Systems and Information Development Committee
Adopted at the 99th Annual Convention
June 16, 2023

The Data Systems and Information Development Committee recommends that ACSA:

1. Urge collaboration with Cotton Warehouse Association of America (CWAA) and EWR, Inc. to create a calendar-based application that provides the availability of shipment ready dates, such as a report of available open shipments (in bales) by day, by warehouse code, or a report including the number of days out and/or next available date by warehouse for new shipment scheduling; and further, urge adoption by warehouses and shippers;
2. Recommend that software providers facilitate the further improvement to cotton flow by enhancing visibility and communication of the data, such as adding notification alerts when a new batch is received, create a daily email notification to the shipper when receipts have not been canceled for loads past their ship dates within the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) specified time requirement and add an interactive chat / communication tool for on-the-spot discussion and resolve of ready dates;
3. Urge collaboration with USDA-Agriculture Marketing Service (AMS), CWAA, and Cotton Growers Warehouse Association (CGWA) to audit current participation in the electronic phytosanitary application process and establish active outreach to non-participating parties to ensure comprehensive enrollment for shippers and warehousemen in the program;
4. Urge the ACSA ePhyto Working Group to continue communication with USDA-Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to develop and support an electronic interface in addition to the manual process for phytosanitary applications through the Phytosanitary Certificate Issuance and Tracking System (PCIT);
5. Encourage collaboration with USDA-APHIS and other appropriate USDA officials to work with the United Nations ePhyto Industry Advisory Group to assist in initiating full implementation of electronic phytosanitary certificates both domestically and in consuming countries;
6. Develop a working group to modernize system digitalization tools and encourage adoption by all relevant stakeholders;
7. Encourage collaboration with The Seam, EWR, Inc. or other industry resources to educate ACSA members concerning the emerging opportunities and risks associated with artificial intelligence;
8. Urge the appropriate Georgia regulatory authorities to hold warehousemen accountable to compliance standards and industry initiatives similar to those prescribed by the USDA;
9. Recognizing the establishment of the ACSA working group focused on banking procedures and the benefit of outreach to authorities and participants in the Pakistani marketplace, urge similar outreach and advocacy focused on the Bangladeshi marketplace;

10. Encourage Cotton Incorporated (CI) to annually review and upgrade the software parameters of the EFS system to better consider warehouse bale location and sequences when evaluating and constructing loads to increase warehouse efficiency and more appropriately determine the next bale available for a load; further, urge CI to conduct training when changes are made to the system;
11. Urge engagement with the National Cotton Council (NCC), The Seam, EWR, Inc., and other program developers to fully understand data visibility and functionality of the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol;
12. Work with NCC, the USDA, and warehouse system providers to standardize warehouse tariff formats, noting that having standardized tariff formats will enable the USDA and bale owners to understand more clearly normal warehouse charges and any penalty charges imposed on cotton in storage, and further noting the importance that this format is used for the public tariff as well as the loan tariff;
13. Request ACSA members to report to ACSA staff emerging challenges with regulatory processes in consuming marketplaces;
14. Urge the USDA and other federal agencies to utilize electronic filing, processing, and responses, which are currently done manually, for:
 - a) Extra Long Staple Competitiveness filings to the USDA-Commodity Credit Corporation;
 - b) Export Sales Reports;
 - c) Export Declarations and other documents to the U.S. Customs Department;
 - d) GSM Loan documents; and,
 - e) Spot Quotations;
15. Urge USDA-APHIS to:
 - a) Maintain the current fee structure for phytosanitary certificates and amendments; and
 - b) Ensure correct interpretation of regulations and requirements by foreign governments and agencies;
16. Noting the U.S. cotton industry must maintain a post-departure filing option with the Automated Export System (AES), continue to engage U.S. Census Bureau and provide input into the final approved regulations for post-departure to U.S. cotton;
17. Collaborate with USDA officials to resolve issues including:
 - a) Full implementation of electronic phytosanitary certificate issuance for ACSA merchant members;
 - b) Thirty (30) day longevity window policies in all consuming countries for phytosanitary certificates;
 - c) Acceptance of electronic signatures on phytosanitary certificates on plain paper, notably in Vietnam;
 - d) Roller gin / Acala shipment rejections in Turkey due to seed content; and,
 - e) Electronic phytosanitary system disallowing marks to be split between bookings;
18. Urge warehouses, truckers, and/or ocean carriers to provide accurate and preferably in real time or, at a minimum, the same day reporting on load details to the merchant shipper or their agent including but not limited to bales, mark(s), trailer(s) / railcar(s) / container number(s), and seal number(s).