



## Cotton & Tobacco Program



# Four-Bale Module Averaging Pilot 2.0: 2025 Season Updates and FAQs

**The goal of the USDA AMS 4-Bale Module Averaging Pilot Program is to enhance the efficiency of cotton marketing and logistics by allowing bales to be grouped in sets of four (or multiples of four) and assigned averaged USDA classing data across all eight quality factors.**

### What's New for 2025?

- **You no longer need to submit bales in groups of four.** Send in any number of bales (from 2 to 50), and we'll group them for you.
- **We'll handle the grouping and averaging.** We'll automatically group your bales by their order and check if they qualify for averaging.
- **Leftover bales? We've got it covered.** If you submit a number that doesn't divide evenly by 4 (like 19 bales), we'll group as many full sets of 4 as possible. Any 2 or 3 bales left over will still be averaged—if they meet the quality standards. A single leftover bale will be classed on its own.

### How do I participate?

The gin will do two things:

- Specify the permanent bale identification (PBI) numbers to be included in each module.
- Submit 2 to 50 bale ranges electronically with the letter "R" to designate them for this pilot program.

### To qualify for the Four-Bale Module Averaging Pilot 2.0, your bales must:

- Have the same color grade. Eligible color grades are: 11, 21, 31, 41, 12, 22, 32, or 42.
- Meet quality requirements for all 8 quality factors, including: micronaire, strength, length, uniformity, color Rd, color +b, trash percent area and trash particle count.
- Have the same level of Extraneous Matter—or none at all.
- If these requirements are met, the 2-, 3-, or 4-bale groupings will be averaged: all bales in each grouping will have the same official quality data. No more than four bales will be grouped together.
- If a group does not qualify, it will be outturned and traditionally module averaged.

## What If Color Grades Don't Match?

- If the bales in a group have different color grades, they'll be outturned and traditionally module averaged. Only four quality factors—micronaire, strength, length, and uniformity—will be averaged.

## What if a bale is missing?

- The gin can request a module to be released and then that module will be traditionally module averaged.

## How can I tell if my bale is part of a 4-bale average?

- The module type is designated in column 21 of the data record. The number “3” signifies that this record is part of a 2-, 3-, or 4-bale module, and all bales in the grouping will have the same quality data for all measurements (see below for module type codes).

Code	Type
0	Single Bale
1	Module Average
2	Trailer Average
3	Round (4-Bale) Avg.

## Will This Show Up on Form-R?

- Yes. If your bales were averaged, the results will appear on Form-R. If they were part of a 4-bale group, the module type will be listed as “R” for Round.

## Can I Request a Review?

- You can request a review of any individual bale but not of the entire 4-bale group.

## Is the pilot program voluntary?

- Absolutely! The pilot program is completely voluntary:
  - Participate on a module-by-module basis by designating the modules with an “R.”
  - Submit any number of modules (up to 50 bales each).

**More questions?** Contact the Cotton Grading Division: **901-384-3010**. Deputy Director: Byron Cole; [Byron.Cole@usda.gov](mailto:Byron.Cole@usda.gov). Assistant to the Director: Ray Scroggins; [Ray.Scroggins@usda.gov](mailto:Ray.Scroggins@usda.gov).