

ARKANSAS BOLL WEEVIL ERADICATION FOUNDATION (ABWEF)

Eradication Program Executive Director: Regina Coleman

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ABWEF is an Arkansas nonprofit corporation designated by the Arkansas State Plant Board to operate the Arkansas boll weevil eradication program. All Arkansas cotton growers are members of this foundation. ABWEF and the boll weevil eradication operations are overseen and regulated by the Arkansas State Plant Board. The Arkansas State Plant Board implements regulations and administers enforcement for laws that impact agriculture and the general public in the State.

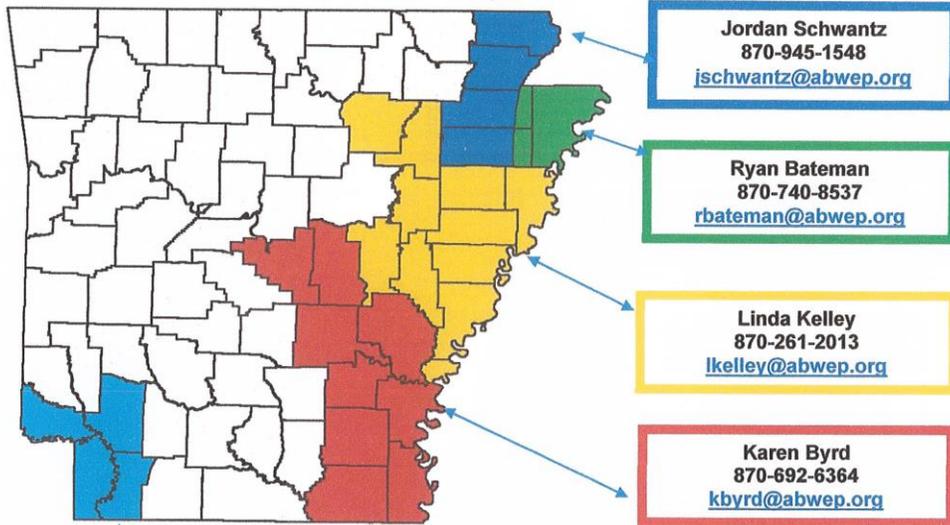
ABWEF began eradication operations in Arkansas in 1997 in southwest Arkansas counties, and made annual expansions that ultimately included all cotton producing areas. After the boll weevil was completely eradicated from Arkansas in 2006, the ABWEF began to downsize. ABWEF continues a maintenance program that monitors the state for boll weevil presence, which is entirely a prevention effort. No boll weevils have been found in Arkansas since 2006.

ABWEF borrowed from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) in order to finance the front end costs incurred to carry out the boll weevil eradication program. The FSA debt and operational costs have been paid for by Arkansas cotton growers through annual assessments on each acre of cotton grown in Arkansas. In September 2015 the Arkansas Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation made its final payment on all debt incurred by Arkansas boll weevil eradication efforts. The remaining balance owed to the USDA/FSA was made three years ahead of the scheduled maturity date.

In January 2016 the ABWEF Board set assessments for the 2016 cotton growing season at \$4.00 per acre of cotton. This is a reduction of past assessments by 50% for the majority of the state. The Board was able to lower the 2016 assessment level due to fact that the Boll Weevil Eradication Program was able to pay off their debt.

All cotton acreage will need to be reported and verified to the Boll Weevil Eradication Program. This should be done by June 15, 2016. **To contact the Boll Weevil Eradication Program please call Regina Coleman, Program Director, at: 870-692-6368.**

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