

## COUNTRY STATEMENT: GREECE

Cotton used to be and still is considered as a national product of Greece. In this aspect great attention has been given, starting from the first step of production till the final product. This major agricultural crop with long tradition in Greece, accounts for almost 10% of total agricultural land and more than 45,000 cotton farmers in the country. Cotton is grown mostly between 35<sup>0</sup>N and 38<sup>0</sup>N latitude. The main cotton production regions in Greece are located in Central and Northern Greece and more specifically in Thessaly, Central Macedonia, Thraki and Sterea Ellada.

The plains where cotton is cultivated have mostly alluvian soil, which is suitable for cotton. Several non biotech varieties of *Gossypium hirsutum* are successfully grown in Greece.

Almost all cotton areas are irrigated and only a very small percentage of less than 5% is grown under dry land conditions. All stages of cultivation process are fully mechanized.

### Campaign 2020/2021

- Cultivated area reached nearly 276,456 ha during campaign 2020/2021, which was 5% decreased compared to last year and the production of seed cotton was about 914,751 metric tn from which some 315,875 metric tn of lint cotton were produced. During this growing season cotton sector faced many problems. The covid-19 epidemic created many problems like reduced exports (over 40.000tn compared to the previous year), reduced seedcotton yields (20% lower compared to the previous year) and lower prices due to the reduced global consumption. Also, bad weather conditions (Medicane IANOS) during harvesting season (September 2020) led to degradation of cotton quality in some regions like Thessaly, which represents a big part of cotton cultivated area. As a result the average price of seedcotton was about 415€ per tn and in some cases, like Thessaly, even lower.
- This fact reflects to the total cotton production of 2020/2021 which was 15% lower than the previous campaign. In 2020/2021 campaign the production of lint cotton was lower to 2019/2020 because the total cultivated area was decreased, the yields per

hectare were lower than the previous year and the weather conditions during the harvest season caused many problems, as mentioned before.

- The quality of cotton during campaign 2020/2021 was good enough, except from those areas where Medicane IANOS caused problems.
- As regards farmers' income the average price of seed cotton was 415€ per tn.

### **Campaign 2021/2022**

- As regards campaign 2021/2022 the cultivated area is nearly 262,292 hectares (area controls are not completed yet) which is about 5% lower to last season. Following a conservative view and based on average yields it is estimated that new crop's production (seedcotton) will be about 850,000 metric tons. Harvesting has started and ginning mills have begun the production of lint cotton.
- During this growing season cotton sector faced similar problems to last year due to the covid-19 epidemic.
- As regards farmers' income reaches 750 € per tn which is double compared to last year.