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## **2018 N.C. boll weevil assessment remains at 75 cents per acre**

RALEIGH -- The board of the Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation of North Carolina has set the 2018 boll weevil assessment at 75 cents per acre of cotton. The amount remains the same as in 2017.

The fee supports the foundation's efforts to monitor cotton acreage in North Carolina for any re-introduction of the boll weevil and to respond promptly with eradication treatments if necessary.

"This trapping and monitoring program is a great investment for farmers who already have a lot of variables to manage in raising a crop," said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. "Eliminating the boll weevil from our state years ago has allowed us to have a viable cotton crop. We certainly don't want to see the return of this devastating pest, and this program helps us keep an eye on cotton fields in case of any spot re-introductions."

Foundation contractors will install the green-colored traps and monitor from late summer until after harvest and frost. Because the focus of North Carolina's program has shifted from eradication to monitoring, the number of traps in fields has decreased. As such, each trap is critical, and farmers are encouraged to contact the foundation if traps are damaged or knocked down.

More than 7,200 traps were placed and maintained in North Carolina last year, with each trap monitoring an average of 49 acres. To allow for trapping and monitoring, cotton growers are required to certify cotton acreage with their local U.S. Farm Service Agency office by July 15.

Farmers in 53 counties grew 363,199 certified acres of cotton last year. This acreage represented a nearly 33 percent increase over 2016 totals. The top three cotton-growing counties were Halifax, Northampton and Martin.

To learn more about the boll weevil monitoring program, go online to <http://www.ncagr.gov/plantindustry/plant/entomology/BW.htm>.