

# Mark Nemec

2010  
Cotton  
Consultant  
of the Year



syngenta  
Cotton Farming

# Mark Nemec's Career – *A Family Tradition*





**M**ark Nemeč probably couldn't have pursued another career – even if he had wanted to go in a different direction. This Texan was destined to become a cotton consultant at an early age, and everyone in his family knew it.

As the son of a cotton consultant (Stanley Nemeč), there was simply no other choice. What other path could a seven-year-old child have gone down after walking through cotton fields with his father?

This wasn't a playground for a seven-year-old youngster. As Mark likes to tell the story, he was actually checking for boll weevils and performing any task his father requested. By the time he was 13, he was legitimately helping his father scout fields.

Such were the beginnings of a career that officially began in earnest in 1994 in central Texas near Waco and continues today with the help of family, friends and producers.

For that reason, it is with great pride that *Cotton Farming* magazine and Syngenta congratulate Mark as the 2010 Cotton Consultant of the Year.

### *Perfect Timing For A Career*

He started out in his career in 1994 under unusual circumstances. One of his father's best friends, John Vahalik, was a consultant and died unexpectedly that year. Mark's father (Stanley) tried to help farmers in that area but eventually decided it was too time consuming while trying to help his own farmer customers.

That's when young Mark stepped in and filled the void. When the season was finished, he asked the farmers if they wanted him to return for the next crop year. They said yes, and with the help of his father, a consultant's career was launched, and he's never looked back.

Ever since that memorable 1994 season, his customer base has increased. He started out with nine farmers, and today he consults for 17 farmers in several counties in central Texas.

Mark is also a diversified consultant who offers timely advice on cotton, corn, wheat, grain sorghum, soybeans and even watermelons.

"I am deeply honored to have been considered for this award," he says. "Growing up in Texas and having a father who was a consultant and a past winner of this award makes this a very special honor."

Mark grew up around consultants and is friends with many past winners of the CCOY award – mainly because his father Stanley was the honoree in 1987.

His formula for success is simple. When he makes a recommendation, he asks himself the same question: Will it make money for the farmer?

That may sound like a logical approach, but Nemeč says other factors also must be taken into consideration.

"In our area, we have to be conservative because of input costs, weather and the challenges of dryland acreage," he says. "The farmers of central Texas are dedicated in what they do, and somehow we can grow cotton and make money even in a dry year."

### *His Father's Influence*

Mark's father passed away four years ago, and he "left some pretty big shoes for me to fill."

But with the help of his wife Carol and daughter Cassidy, he continues to persevere in the only job he has ever wanted in his life.

"I have a good support team," he says. "I couldn't do this job without the support of my wife and daughter. Sometimes it's tough after putting in 14-hour days, but Carol keeps me going."

"My daughter also knows that the only way she can see



**Mark's family plays an important role in his career. He credits daughter Cassidy (left) and wife Carol with being responsible for much of the success he has achieved as a consultant.**

her daddy is to ride with me in the truck. That's where you'll find her in the summertime. I wouldn't trade anything for the time we get to spend with each other riding around checking on fields."

In Mark Nemeč's world of being a cotton consultant, the hours are long, the conditions are challenging, but the rewards are numerous when he can help his farmers produce a better crop.

# Q&A

## What would he tell an aspiring cotton consultant about pursuing this kind of career?

"You really have to be dedicated to handle this kind of job. It's definitely not a 9-to-5 kind of career. During the season, it's 24 hours a day and seven days a week. You wake up at 2 or 3 in the morning and wonder if you did the right thing on a recommendation. There's also a reason why The Weather Channel runs 24 hours a day at our house."

## What do college students say after they've worked for a consultant during the summer?

"The kids learn really quick how demanding the job is. Like I said, it takes a special person to do this. You just can't come out of college and say, 'I want to be a consultant.' You have to know what it's about before you can even think about getting into it."

## Do you have a favorite moment or memory of being a consultant?

"Well, you have to be ready to roll the minute the sun comes up. But, having said that, there is nothing prettier than seeing the sun come up over a cotton field. I try to plan my day where I'm in a back field either early in the morning or at sunset. I'm really at peace during those moments."

## What's the best part about working with your farmer customers?

"I really try to educate my growers as to what is going on in their fields. We don't have a lot of farm labor, and the farmers have to do it all. Sometimes I just bring the field to them. I'll pull up some plants and go sit with a farmer while we're riding through the fields. I try to tell them what the plant and crop are doing."

## What do Mark's customers and friends think about him?

"I've known Mark since he was about 5 or 6 years old when his dad was our consultant. He's an amazing guy and has done a super job for our farm. His sister worked with us, and every one in that family has contributed to the success of the Wilder farm. Why is he such a good consultant? I think it was the way he was raised by his parents. He has always loved being in the field and outdoors. It was a combination of things that has made him very successful. Mark always wants to make sure he's doing the right thing for his farmers."

— Joe Wilder, Producer, Snook, Texas

"Mark has guided us from Day One on land selection, herbicides, varieties, irrigation, insect control and use of harvest aids. I have never been associated with a person like him who always has the farmers' best interests at heart."

— Johnnie Osborne, Farm Manager,  
Higginbottom Farms, Navasota, Texas

"I have witnessed Mr. Nemeč's involvement and interaction with his farmers and believe he is an excellent consultant who tends to go above and beyond the role of consultant. I respect the way he conducts himself and his dedication to each of his farmers and their crops."

— Bryan Harston, Crop Insurance Adjuster,  
ProAg Crop Insurance

"I interact with several of Mark's grower-clients on occasion and can tell you that they really value his knowledge and how he stays in tune with the latest happenings in agricultural technology and markets. His consultant skills are well rounded, and he is very proficient with the various disciplines that growers seek these days."

— Dale Mott, Texas AgriLife,  
Extension Program Specialist,  
Texas A&M University

"Mark has done a great job checking our cotton fields since 1994, and we've seen him grow into the consultant he is today. He definitely learned a lot from his father and is completely dedicated to his farmers. We were really thrilled when we heard that he had won this award."

— Terry Westerfeld, Producer, Moody, Texas



**Pictured above, Mark Nemeč (right) checks out the condition of a cotton field with Johnnie Osborne, farm manager of Higginbottom Farms.**

## Cotton Consultant of the Year Award Recipients, 1981-2010

1981 Bob Stanford, Flagstaff, Ariz.	1992 John Christian, Raymondville, Texas	2002 Danny Pierce, Princeton, N.C.
1982 Jep Gates, Memphis, Tenn.	1993 Billy McLawhorn, Cove City, N.C.	2004 Tucker Miller, Drew, Miss.
1983 Dennis Bouchard, Minter City, Miss.	1994 Dwain Reed, Courtland, Ala.	2005 John Hunter, Lubbock, Texas
1984 John Nickelsen, Shafter, Calif.	1995 Barry Aycoc, Parma, Mo.	2006 Jack Royal, Leary, Ga.
1985 Dwight Lincoln, Portland, Ark.	1996 Ray Young, Wisner, La.	2007 Danny Moore, Marion, Ark.
1986 Grady Cobum, Cheneyville, La.	1997 Lonnie Bull, Cameron, S.C.	2008 Ray Young, Wisner, La. (Lifetime Achievement Award)
1987 Stanley Nemeč, Snook, Texas	1998 Chuck Farr, Crawfordsville, Ark.	2009 Joe Townsend, Coahoma, Miss.
1988 Robert Moore, Hartsville, S.C.	1999 Bob Griffin, Jonesboro, Ark.	2010 Mark Nemeč, Waco, Texas
1989 Curtis Wilhelm, Harlingen, Texas	2000 Roger Carter, Clayton, La.	
1990 Mills Rogers, Cleveland, Miss.	2001 Harold Lambert, Innis, La.	
1991 Clyde Sartor, Vicksburg, Miss.	2002 Lee Hutchins, Sinton, Texas	

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