Cotton Catchment Communities CRC
www.cotton.crc.org.au

NSW DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES
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COTTON *TALES*

Lower Namoi Valley

Tracey Farrell, District Agronomist, Narrabri – 6799 1548, 0427 260
Rod Jackson, Irrigation Officer, Lower Namoi – 6799 1537, 0429 901 908
Stacey Spanswick, Catchment Officer, Lower Namoi – 6799 2417, 0428 266 712

2006/07
2
22/11/06

Day Degrees Update

Day degree accumulation for crops planted on 1 October is virtually identical to this time last year. Despite there being five cold shock days last week, day degree accumulation is still tracking at ~10% above the long term average.

Day Degree Accumulation Lower Namoi Valley
1 October – 19 November 2006

Met. Station	DD 06/07	DD 05/06	DD LT Av.	Cold Shock 06/07	Cold Shock LT Av.	Hot Days 06/07	Hot Days LT Av.
Boggabri	476	478	425	21	19	4	2
Narrabri	501	498	454	16	17	4	2
Wee Waa	522	522	468	13	16	4	3
Burren Junction	534	530	476	14	15	4	4

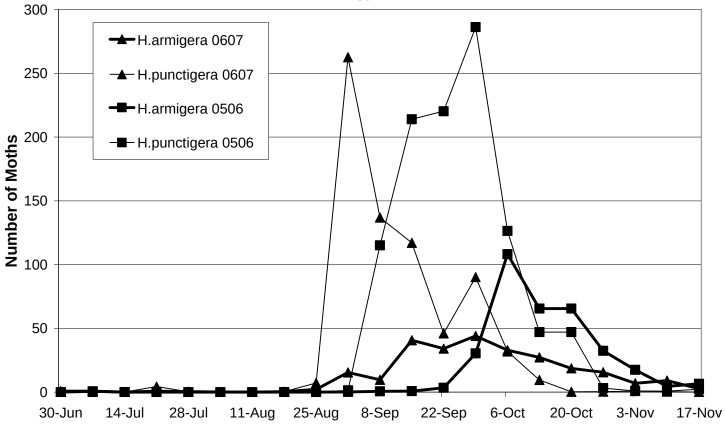
Squaring nodes should now be appearing on early planted crops as the theoretical time to first square is 505 DD. The beginning of squaring is an excellent time to start comparing the development of your crop with the theoretical rate for cotton development. The Crop Development Tool on the Cotton CRC website – www.cotton.crc.org.au – allows you to easily enter information about your crop, such as plant height, nodes/plant, squares/m and squaring nodes/plant, to generate comparisons between your crop's actual rate of development and its theoretical potential. On rare occasions, where there are optimum growing conditions, crop development may be ahead of the 'potential' indicated in the CDT. Mostly, this exercise will help to identify the degree of influence things such as cold shocks, hot days, black root rot or sucking pests are having on crop development. The slope of your line compared to the slope of the 'potential' line is the critical thing to monitor. A change in the slope will highlight that there is some form (or forms) of stress influencing the crop's development rate.

Pheromone Trap Update

As is normal, inland breeding prompted the *H. puntigera* pressure experienced in early September, but this year's spring migration was not of the same magnitude as that of last September, nor was there the species diversity.

High pulse grain prices saw vigilant monitoring and low economic thresholds being used in most of the spring host crops this year. Additionally, the continuing dry conditions have meant there's minimal weed and pasture hosts in the Namoi and surrounding regions. Consequently the breeding opportunities for the first local *H. puntigera* generation have been poor. Trap numbers have remained low through late October and into November. The expectation is that *H. puntigera* pressure will be low this summer, as compared to recent seasons.

Lower Namoi Pheromone Trap Catches
From Colin Tann, CSIRO Entomology, ACRI



While *H. armigera* numbers are currently low, they have been present in the trap catches in low–moderate numbers every week since late August. With the increased plantings of grain sorghum and silage corn (preferred *H. armigera* host crops) there is the potential for local production of *H. armigera* populations through summer, despite the high proportion of Bollgard II® cotton.

New Irrigation Officer for the Lower Namoi

The NSW DPI has recently appointed Rod Jackson into the position of Irrigation Officer for the Lower Namoi Valley. Rod comes to the Namoi from Griffith, where he worked with the rice and horticultural industries delivering irrigation training and whole farm planning workshops. Rod also has farm managerial experience in southern NSW.

This season Rod will be working on-farm with several Lower Namoi cotton growers to evaluate furrow irrigation practices and to trial Irrimate™ and WaterTrack™ technologies. Rod hopes to engage with growers in the near future to explore options for improving water use efficiency for cotton and grain crops in the Lower Namoi.