

## CCA 1102

### Cotton Bunchy Top Risk Assessment and Survey

#### Summary

In the autumn of 2011, CRDC identified that the forecast of a second consecutive La Nina year represented a potential disease risk to the cotton industry that was linked to the over-winter management of weeds, ratoon and volunteer cotton on farms. The disease was Cotton Bunchy Top (CBT), a viral disease that is spread by cotton aphid. Cotton aphid is a pest that can over-winter on weeds and ratoon/volunteer cotton increasing the risk of transmission of CBT in the following cotton crop.

Given the forecast for a wetter than average season in 2011/12, CRDC commissioned the Crop Consultants Association (CCA) to run an awareness campaign of its members and then ask them to survey the farms of their clients to rank CBT risk with follow-up actions and advice for those farms where the risk was assessed as moderate to high.

The project enlisted the assistance of the cotton industry's Development and delivery team to develop the awareness resources (information sheet and video on aphids, farm hygiene and CBT) as well as the survey tool. A total of 48 CCA members participated in the survey leading to a comprehensive assessment of risk on many cotton farms with those at most risk receiving follow up visits and development of action plans to control over-wintering weeds and/or ratoon or volunteer cotton.

The project was a success on a number of fronts:

1. It developed improved resources on aphids, the importance of overwintering weed farm hygiene and the reduction of risk for the transmission of CBT the following season.
2. It established an integrated working relationship between the CCA and the cotton Development and Delivery
3. It delivered an effective short-term campaign which improved the knowledge of CCA members and led to an improved response to this threat thus reducing risk of CBT becoming a major threat in the 2011-12 season.