



Australian Government  
Cotton Research and  
Development Corporation



Cotton Catchment Communities CRC

## FINAL REPORT 2006

*If you are participating in the presentations this year, please provide a written report and a copy of your final report presentation by 31 October.*

### *Part 1 - Summary Details*

*Please use your TAB key to complete Parts 1 & 2.*

**CRDC Project Number:**  
**OR Cotton CRC Project Number: 5.01.14**

**Project Title:** Cotton Industry Development Extension Officer - St.George & Dirranbandi

**Project Commencement Date:** 01/07/05      **Project Completion Date:** 30/06/06

**CRDC Program:** 1 People and Knowledge  
**OR CRC Program:** The Adoption

### *Part 2 – Contact Details*

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**Signature of Research Provider Representative:** \_\_\_\_\_

## ***Part 3 – Final Report Guide (due 31 October 2006)***

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(The points below are to be used as a guideline when completing your final report.)

### ***Background***

1. Outline the background to the project.

This project was established as a modified version of the original project proposal in order to provide interim arrangements for an extension program at St. George and Dirranbandi for the 2005/06 season. It was based on the casual, part time employment of an experienced consultant to maintain core activities of the extension program in the district in collaboration with the NRM Extension Officer, Veronica Chapman, other extension team members, growers and consultants.

There is approximately 65,000 hectares of land in the region developed for cotton production and about 45 individual cotton growers. This season there is 17,000 ha planted to irrigated cotton. The focus was on major industry problems, including water, insect pest management, insect resistance management, and regional priorities negotiated with the local grower associations. Information was disseminated to growers in the region via small group meetings, field days and publications.

A strong partnership has been established with the regional Cotton Grower Associations at St George and Dirranbandi, the Cotton Consultants Association and Cotton Australia's grower services manager.

The Industry Development Extension Officer is a member of the Cotton CRC industry extension team and maintains close ties with CRC, CRDC and departmental extension and research officers in Queensland and New South Wales.

Priority activities were to:

- Publication of Cotton Tales newsletter;
- Facilitation of grower meetings
- Coordination of researcher activities and local visits;
- Monitoring of Pima cotton trial;
- Disease and weed monitoring;
- Coordination of heliothis egg collection
- Collaboration with RWUE and NRM Extension projects;
- Collaboration with Cotton Australia GSM with respect to technical support for BMP

### ***Objectives***

2. List the project objectives and the extent to which these have been achieved.

The project aims were to:

- Extend and promote the adaptation and adoption of new technologies into sound management practices in the St. George and Dirranbandi areas.
- Facilitate better communication between growers, advisers and researchers from government and agribusiness.
- Provide a coordinating and supportive role for existing and new AWM groups and to promote IPM and BMP practices and improve grower learning through these groups.

- Maintain partnerships with the St George and Dirranbandi cotton grower associations and the local cotton consultants association to evaluate regional needs and priorities through a regional research and technical group.
- Maintain partnerships with the rural water use efficiency initiative project to develop optimum water use strategies for the region and the AGSIP Environmental project to deliver environmental outcomes for the region.

### **Methods**

3. Detail the methodology and justify the methodology used. Include any discoveries in methods that may benefit other related research.

The project officer in the region coordinated the transfer of knowledge to people and community by inviting researchers and people with expertise to meetings, liaised with cotton consultants, produced Cotton Tales newsletters to keep cotton growers and industry updated on agronomic details on production and coordinated the Balonne Big Day Out field day.

A WUE update day for consultants and growers at St George on Feb 1 involved about 25 people and involved presentations by other researchers and/or consultants during a visit to the demonstration site.

The project officer liaised with cotton consultants and CGA's to identify research ideas and priorities for the area.

The project officer was also involved in:

- Providing technical support to the implementation of BMP
- Facilitating and providing technical input into AWM group meetings in conjunction with grower representatives.
- Facilitated discussions between growers and consultants for improved communication on issues relating to cotton production.
- Collaboration with the Rural Water Use Efficiency officer to develop optimum water use strategies for the region and the AGSIP environmental officer to develop natural resource outcomes for the region.

Heliothos egg collections for resistance testing was conducted by a consultant, Jamie Street, as a component of this project. Resistance data was published in Cotton Tales newsletters.

Disease surveys were conducted by the Plant Pathology research team.

### **Results**

4. Detail and discuss the results for each objective including the statistical analysis of results.

### **Outcomes**

5. Describe how the project's outputs will contribute to the planned outcomes identified in the project application. Describe the planned outcomes achieved to date.

The planned outcomes for the part time project were achieved in the above activities.

6. Please describe any:-
  - a) technical advances achieved (eg commercially significant developments, patents applied for or granted licenses, etc.);
  - b) other information developed from research (eg discoveries in methodology, equipment design, etc.); and

- c) required changes to the Intellectual Property register.

### ***Conclusion***

7. Provide an assessment of the likely impact of the results and conclusions of the research project for the cotton industry. What are the take home messages?

A strong partnership was maintained with the regional grower associations at St. George and Dirranbandi, the CCA and Cotton Australia. Linkages were established with the Maranoa Balonne Catchment management association to share technical information resources and to provide input into regional catchment management plans.

The AgSIP AG15 NRM extension project extension officer, Veronica Chapman, contributed substantial support to the implementation of this project especially prior to Sarah's commencement by maintaining Cotton Tales newsletters and regional communication and coordination of activities.

### ***Extension Opportunities***

8. Detail a plan for the activities or other steps that may be taken:
- (a) to further develop or to exploit the project technology.
  - (b) for the future presentation and dissemination of the project outcomes.
  - (c) for future research.

The future role of this IDO extension project was negotiated and determined with the implementation of the 2005 Extension and education Review recommendations.

This project has demonstrated the efficacy of a partnership with a private consultant for the delivery of an extension program on a part time basis. Sarah Hood conducted a private consultancy business - itself a Cotton CRC affiliate, with substantial mutual benefit overall.

8. A. List the publications arising from the research project and/or a publication plan.  
(NB: Where possible, please provide a copy of any publication/s)
- Cotton Tales newsletters - 7
  - Regional bi-monthly reports to Australian Cotton Grower Magazine

B. Have you developed any online resources and what is the website address?

N/A

#### ***Part 4 – Final Report Executive Summary***

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Provide a one page Summary of your research that is not commercial in confidence, and that can be published on the World Wide Web. Explain the main outcomes of the research and provide contact details for more information. It is important that the Executive Summary highlights concisely the key outputs from the project and, when they are adopted, what this will mean to the cotton industry.

This project provided for the engagement of a Consultant, Sarah Hood, to undertake an interim role of the Cotton Industry Development Extension Officers in the St. George-Dirranbandi irrigation area. Sarah maintained the essential extension activities including the publication of Cotton Tales newsletters, facilitation of the Ballonne Big Day Out field day, regional liaison with researchers, collaboration with the NRM extension and RWUE 2 projects.

A strong partnership was maintained with the regional cotton grower associations at St George and Dirranbandi, the CCA and Cotton Australia. Linkages were maintained with the Maranoa Balonne Catchment management association to share technical information resources and to provide input into regional catchment management plans.

Heliothos egg collections for resistance testing was conducted by a consultant, Jamie Street, as a component of this project. Resistance data was published in Cotton Tales newsletters.

Disease surveys were conducted by the Plant Pathology research team.

This project has demonstrated the successful implementation of a partnership with a private consultant for the delivery of an extension program on a part time basis. Sarah Hood conducted a private consultancy business - itself a Cotton CRC affiliate, with substantial mutual benefit overall.