

# The Cotton Wrap- The September Edition



Welcome to the 2nd edition of the Cotton Wrap!!

## Dryland Cotton

This month 25 growers and Consultants had a great tour of different farming systems and equipment around Queensland's Darling Downs. Nick Campion at Croppa Ck is looking at ways to get P and K in deeper and is also using a strip tiller. John Cameron has some beautiful country up there at Bongeen, now worth \$3500 per acre at a recent auction. Cowboy has a great setup with his root cutter set up behind the mulcher and Jamie Grant plants all of his cotton with an airseeder. This proved to be an effective way to share ideas and generate lots of thought on knowledge gaps, particularly around:

- Planters- single disc vs double, disc vs tyne, trash and depth control.
- Fertiliser placement and movement of P
- Ratoon and Volunteer control
- Water Injection
- Improved Roundup Ready only cotton varieties



There are some good projects starting this year around rotations, compaction and fertiliser type and placement. As results are forthcoming, I will pass them on. Anyone doing their own trials let me know so we can start to collate the knowledge to share.

## Grains Update

IA Watson had a good field Day with the release of 2 new varieties; Mitch, which is similar to Gregory but with better Crown Rot resistance and Sunmate, which is similar to Suntop. Don't expect a genetic solution for Crown Rot any time soon so management will continue to be the best method. Rotate with pulses, plant between the rows, avoid Durum, remove stubble and cultivate if you want to minimise yield loss due to Crown Rot.



I have now got an email list of around 50 Dryland growers from Gilgandra through to Clermont; with an aim to build these numbers to over 100 by Christmas. It was suggested we should make a dryland tour an annual event.

CottonInfo is a joint-venture of CRDC, CSD and Cotton Australia



For further information contact  
Geoff Hunter on 0458 142 777



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## Nitrogen Forum

I attended a workshop on nitrogen convened by CRDC with the aim of bringing together all of the research and knowledge on nitrogen. They also wanted to identify where the future funding should go to. Some interesting facts included:

- Approximately 70% of the N requirement is derived from the soil or atmosphere, not from applied N.
- 38- 50% of N is lost either through deep drainage, down the furrow or as gas emissions.
- The bare summer fallow is the greatest period of loss.
- There is a lot we don't know about live roots and the effect on mineralisation and losses over a bare fallow.
- Know your own soil as this has a huge impact on losses.
- It is now time to trial the science on farm.
- Growers are actually doing a pretty good job in respect to rates and efficiency.

## Tools

The web based NutriLOGIC program has undergone improvements, based on requests from growers and consultants and can now more accurately calculate nitrogen fertiliser rates by taking into consideration the following:

- Fertiliser recovery
- Cropping history (eg cereal or legume rotation)
- When the sample was taken (eg July/August)
- Soil type and level of compaction
- Region

See more at [www.cottassist.com.au](http://www.cottassist.com.au).

*Everybody is a genius.*

*But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree it would spend its whole life believing it was stupid.*

*Albert Einstein*



It is a bit hard to see in this photo, but if you look closely you can see the yellow line where a kangaroo has travelled during a very heavy frost at Bellata this year. The temperature got down to -6, spending more than 6 hours (2am-8am) below freezing. This has caused up to 100% loss in some Canola and Faba bean paddocks with expected losses in wheat as well.....ugly!



*A fertiliser bar for liquid injection interchangeable with the spray boom*

## Nitrogen Trials

This last year I ran some Nitrogen trials across 3 regions looking at different rates and taking leaf, petiole, biomass, seed testing along with yield. The graphs overpage show the results.

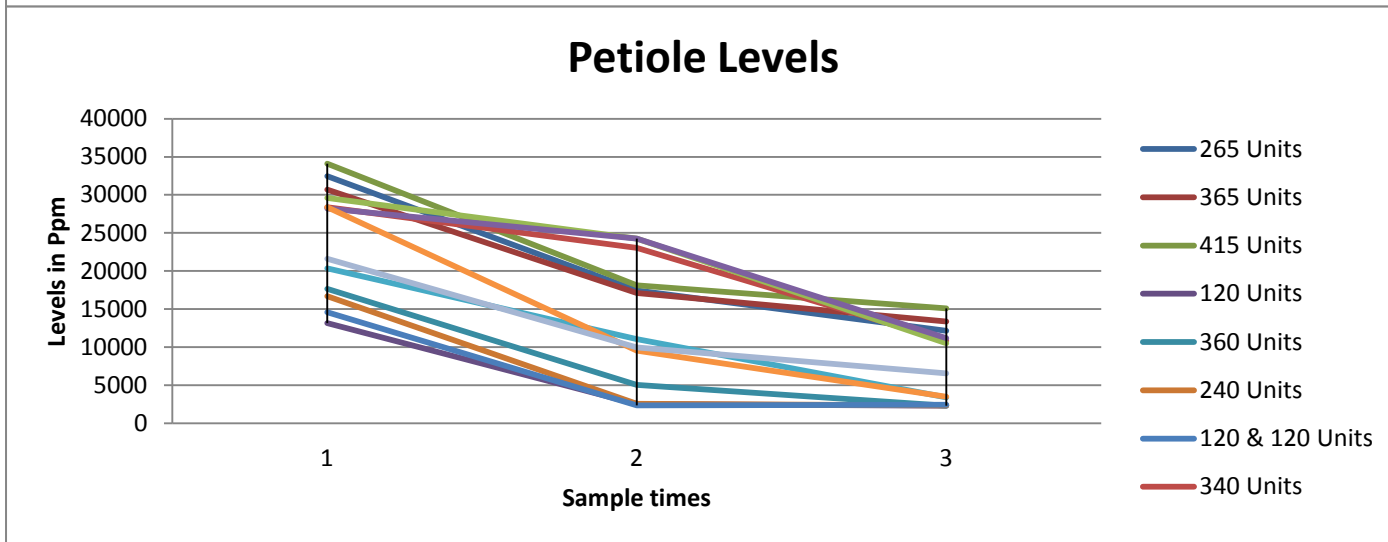
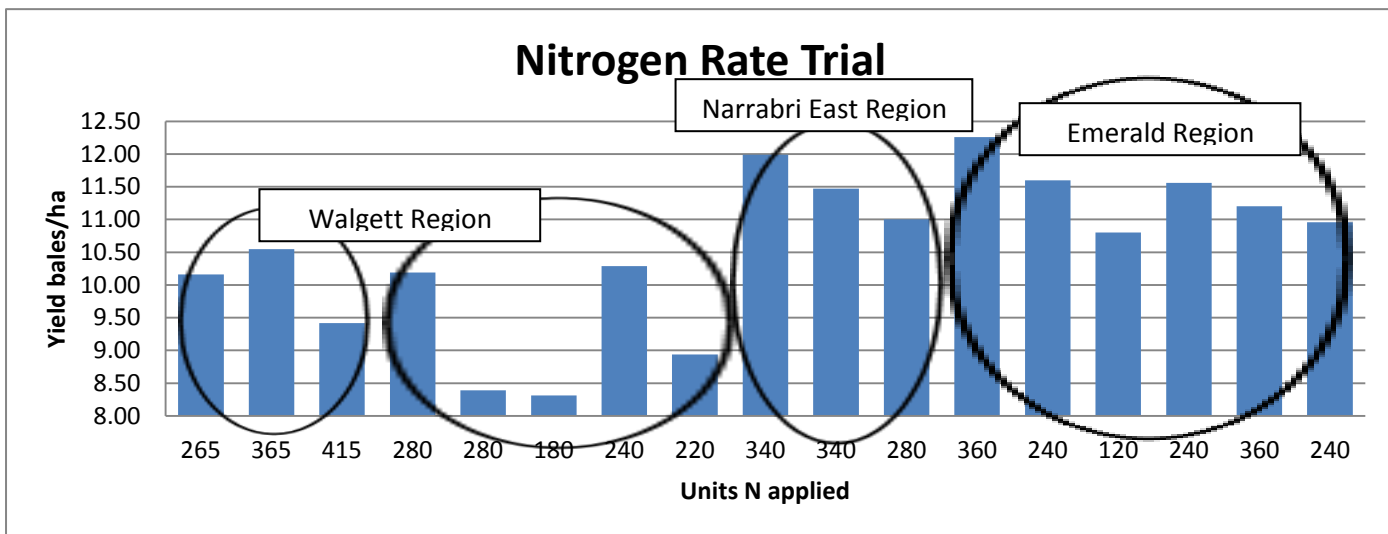
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*Best Practice*

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These rates were also in different application times; some all upfront, as opposed to split application, anhydrous, urea and water run. The trial I will be running this year will again look at 3 different amounts of in-crop application to assess the Nitrogen Use Efficiency (NUE) as well as the economic return. It is possible in the future we will include a comparison with a nil strip, as Rocky noted that his nil strip yielded 8 bales per hectare indicating a pretty fertile soil already and we need to further investigate our own soils for inherent fertility and mineralisation rates.

## Welshy's Weather

Broader climatic indicators (SOI -10, Niño 3.4 +0.5) trending in the wrong direction for rainfall, however, local seas surface temperatures in the Tasman and Coral Sea are warming, which may provide convective moisture for troughs and upper air disturbances as we approach summer.

Models are aligning for a dry and warmer than average October and there are hopeful signs based on the recent AEGIC forecast we may get a decent break in November.

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