

Timely Rainfall

Considerable falls of rain have been received with open arms across the Border Rivers. Rain recordings of 80-100mm were taken across the valley. Sunny conditions are now needed to build yield.

Day Degree accumulation from 15th of October to the 7th February 2008 .

Met Site	Season 07/08	Season 06/07	Season 05/06	Cold Days	Hot Days
Goondiwindi Airport	1457	1640	1682	1	8

Increased awareness and communication is the key to minimising potential drift issues.

The rain will promote new germination of weeds across fallow country. In the cotton area planted in the Macintyre valley some crops are showing strong symptoms of hormone 2,4-D Damage. After the past couple of weeks rain has fallen in the Border Rivers prompting the emergence of weeds in fallow country requiring control. When considering herbicides for weed control it is important to know your neighbours and what susceptible crops are located close by. Weather conditions, timing and spray application is critical when using herbicides to minimise drift.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need more information on 2,4-D Damage or if you have seen or been affected by herbicide drift.

Careful consideration must be given to herbicide use, neighbouring crops and weather conditions

Farm Management the Effects Fibre Quality

It is important to manage for quality throughout the season. Fibre development responds directly to the environment, management & stresses. Correct variety choice for the growing region combined with reduced stress management will optimise fibre quality. Stress at one point in a season may have indirect consequences on fibre quality. For example excess nitrogen rates or events which cause late regrowth, can reduce fibre quality by having fibre development occurring in cooler weather (& reducing micronaire).

Irrigation

Good plant moisture status is critical in the first 20 days after flowering to allow potential fibre elongation rates. With about five weeks of effective flowering & another three weeks to complete fibre elongation, a total of eight weeks without stress is required to have uninterrupted fibre length in all bolls. Healthy soil & irrigation scheduling to take account of soil water holding capacity & evaporative demand are key approaches to managing plant moisture status.

Crop Growth Habit

A uniform set of bolls is more likely to provide uniform fibre. Late flowering & especially regrowth will cause problems in fibre properties & indirectly with grade, so

agronomy should aim to produce a crop which optimises plant size & sets bolls when possible. The application of large quantities of mepiquat chloride (Pix) at the last effective square has become a common practice in many regions. The aim is to reduce top growth of the plant & minimize plant resources going into fruit that is unlikely to be mature at harvest time. Pix is unlikely to have a negative effect on fibre quality & may help reduce neps in late crops that are going to produce bolls outside the normal harvestable range.

Okra leaf varieties are known to cause an increase in trash content. Approximately half a grade decrease can result. A balance between okra varieties positive attributes & the potential for a small downgrade need to be taken into account.

Defoliation

The type of defoliation product is unlikely to impact on fibre quality. However, the timing of defoliation can have a big impact on the fibre quality of cotton. Early defoliation can cause a significant reduction in all desirable fibre properties (predominantly in the upper top quarter of bolls) & significantly increases the number of neps.

Transgenic/IPM Era

The widespread adoption of Bollgard II varieties coupled with more selective *Helicoverpa* targeted sprays & increased resistance to aphicides has the potential to increase late season aphid infestations. This plus the increase in whitefly could result in an increase in sticky cotton. Sticky cotton is a highly undesirable quality characteristic and could incur penalties as well as impact on spinner's confidence in the quality of Australian cotton. Thanks to Dr Michael Bange for help with this article

Extra Copies of the 07/08 Cotton Pest Management Guide are available from the Goondiwindi DPI&F

Border Rivers 06/07 Cotton Trial Booklet has been mailed out this week.

Date Claimer:

Macintyre Valley Cotton Field Day, 19th March 2008. Meet at Goondiwindi Show Grounds at 8:30am.

Date Claimer:

Scheduling Workshop

Thursday, 14th February 2008

7:00am (Qld) @ Golf Club

*Breakfast will be provided

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The Scheduling Workshop is one module of eight available through the Cotton and Grains Irrigation Training Series. Each workshop has been designed to provide stand alone in-field training which can be delivered in field, running for approximately 3 hours.

The Scheduling Workshop:

- Describe the process of Evapotranspiration
- Calculations of Crop Evapotranspiration (crop water use) to schedule irrigations
- Discuss plant response to stress at varying stages of crop development
- Analysis of trends in daily water use to schedule irrigations

For further information please contact Emma Brotherton 0408703783 or Janelle Montgomery 0428640990