



COTTON TALES

Central Queensland

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Permit to extend Bollgard II planting windows

The APVMA has granted a Permit to extend the Bollgard II planting windows due to the extreme situation that the industry finds itself in under the current drought conditions. This request has been approved with some conditions for fields planted in 'the extension' period.

All late planted Bollgard II must have only cotton as refuge ie 10% Unsprayed cotton or 100% Sprayed cotton.

Dawson/Callide growers will be able to use the refuge options from their granted variation (ie. normal refuge options including pigeon pea) up until the 5th November.

Region	Bollgard II planting window CLOSING DATE		No. of extra Bollgard II planting days in the Permit 'extension'*
	Current	Under Permit	
Central Highlands	31 st Oct 07 (no variation)	15 th Nov 07	15 days
Dawson/Callide	5 th Nov 07 (variation granted)	15 th Nov 07	10 days

For more information contact Annabel Wiseman 0429 979916

Seedling diseases

Planting is all but over in most regions and crops are emerging, as is the risk of seedling diseases.

Seedling diseases are caused by various soil borne fungi which include Pythium, Rhizoctonia and Fusarium. Cool and/or wet conditions promote disease development with seedlings most susceptible in early growth stages. Factors that slow down the rate of germination, emergence and development will ultimately increase the chance of seedling mortality. Some of these factors include poor seed beds, incorrect planting depth, herbicide damage, poor fertiliser placement and poor drainage.

A slow developing seedling is more susceptible to seedling diseases because plant roots produce sugary substances called exudates as they develop. Soil pathogens are stimulated by these exudates.

- In a slow developing crop, the exudates will be very concentrated around the root, increasing the chance for the pathogens to colonise the root system.
- In a fast developing crop, the roots move too quickly for pathogen colonisation.

Symptoms of seedling diseases include pre-emergent seed rots, lesions on roots and post-emergent damping-off which shows up as wilted or collapsed seedlings. Other symptoms may include seedlings with slow early season growth, small cotyledons and reddened hypocotyls. The black root rot fungus, which causes blackening of the roots, will not kill seedlings but weakens these and seedlings become more susceptible to other diseases.

Affected plants are usually found scattered throughout the field or in poorly drained areas. When seedling disease is evident in rows, management practices such as fertiliser placement, planting depth or herbicide damage may have contributed to disease levels.

Assessment of seedling diseases can be done by counting the number of established plants per metre at several locations across the field. The level of seedling mortality is determined by the difference between estimated stand at 6-8 weeks and the number of seed/metre sown. Losses of seedlings can also be due to seedling pests such as wireworms and seed viability.

Economic impacts of seedling diseases include replanting costs and the cost of standard seed treatments. Replanting also leads to delayed maturity and associated yield reductions as well as the cost of late season insect control in conventional cotton crops.

Although the weather plays a main role in determining a 'good' or 'bad' year for seedling diseases, a number of management practices can minimise disease development and ensure acceptable stands. Practices include;

- Select varieties with good seedling vigour
- Use effective fungal seed treatment.
- Delay planting until temperatures and moisture conditions are at an optimum.
- Plant into moist firm beds and avoid fertiliser and herbicide damage.

For more information about diseases of cotton and relevant management practices please refer to the Integrated Disease Management guidelines produced by the Cotton CRC and CRDC.

Disease Survey

Stephen Allen, CSIRO, will be conducting the annual disease survey and will be in CH 30th & 31st October and in Dawson 1st November. If you have a crop you would like inspected please contact Stephen (02) 67991530, or Susan Maas (07) 49837401.