



# COTTON TALES

Central Queensland

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No.9

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## Day Degree accumulation to the 01<sup>st</sup> Nov 07

District	Season 07/08	Season 06/07	Season 05/06	Cold Days	Hot Days
Emerald (from 15 <sup>th</sup> Sept 07)	594	556	613	3	10
Theodore (from 25 <sup>th</sup> Sept 07)	479	429	489	2	9

## Crop Stages versus Day Degree Accumulation.

Emerg.	5 <sup>th</sup> leaf	1 <sup>st</sup> Sq	1 <sup>st</sup> Flow	Peak Flow	Cracked Boll	60% open
80	330	505	777	1302	1527	2050

## Pest Pressures

**Helicoverpa Pest Pressure:** Following high pressure on chickpea in the highlands, and with much of the chickpea crops planted quite late, we can expect very high pressure on cotton well into December from over wintering emergence and populations ticking along on late winter crops.

**Sucking Pest Pressure:** After a large winter cropping, cotton may be one of the few green crops over summer for insect pests to concentrate on. Low levels of mirids, and thrips have been reported, with thrip numbers increasing as they move from wheat into cotton.

**Management of mirids** involves the use of *less selective insecticides*, which interact with beneficial's and secondary pests. As research from Moazzem Kahn has demonstrated, addition of salt (@10g per litre of water) to products such as dimethoate and fipronil at half the label rate gives good control with less impact on beneficials. Control should be based on crop growth and retention as well as mirid numbers. Regular sampling of both plant growth and damage and pest numbers is essential – avoiding insurance sprays when retention is high will reduce costs and help conserve beneficial's.

**Cotton Crop Scouting** - Check seedling crops; especially for mites and aphids to identify any potential problems early.

**Aphids:** Remember, only score aphids that are settled and breeding not adult winged aphids. They may simply be non-cotton species that are test feeding and will not establish on cotton.

**Thrips:** Dryland or limited irrigation growers will need to balance any early season thrip damage against their predatory activity on mites.

Choose the treatment carefully, some will control thrips but not mites, some will interact with later options for aphid control.

Later planted crops will tend to outgrow thrips damage very quickly, while earlier planted crops may suffer more due to higher thrips pressure and cooler growing conditions.

*(Thanks to Dr Richard Sequira QDPI & Dr Lewis Wilson CSIRO for assistance with this article)*

## FarmBis Improve Queensland Subsidies-

Increased FarmBis subsidies have recently been announced in Queensland. The subsidies for travel and accommodation now match subsidies available in NSW under the National FarmBis program. If you attend a course of 2 days or more duration you are eligible to claim up to 65% of your accommodation and meals up to a maximum subsidy of \$130 per day. Eligible participants attending training more than 150km from your home can receive a 65% subsidy if they are driving their car or flying to the training. If you travel by bus or train you are eligible for a 100% subsidy. The training course cost in both states remains the same at a 65% reimbursement to eligible participants.

For more information call FarmBis Net workers on (07) 3239 0724 or visit [www.farmbis.qld.gov.au](http://www.farmbis.qld.gov.au)

## CQ Cotton Farming Systems Trial

The CottonCRC/CRDC funded irrigated cotton farming systems trial moves into its third season with September already well out of the ground, and October due to be planted any day. This year we will run the planting date trial again with just the one variety (Sicot 71BR) being planted across the 4 planting dates (mid September, mid October, early November and late November. The October & November plantings have been split between 1m & 2m beds.

In addition, we are also running a pilot project investigating best management for a November planting, including 2 different Pix regimes and 3 different population densities.

We have been very fortunate to have Michael Bronson, a local experienced irrigator, take on the role as trial manager for the season. He is already doing an excellent job ensuring the trial remains well managed. We also have a few growers providing support at our weekly trial review meetings.