

MIA farm walk next Tuesday.

MIA Cotton Farm Walk
to be held on

Tuesday the 9th of January at 8am.

at Dean Salvestro's block,
Cnr of Barbara and Twaddle Rds
Benerembah

All local growers (inc. any potential
growers) and consultants
are encouraged to attend.

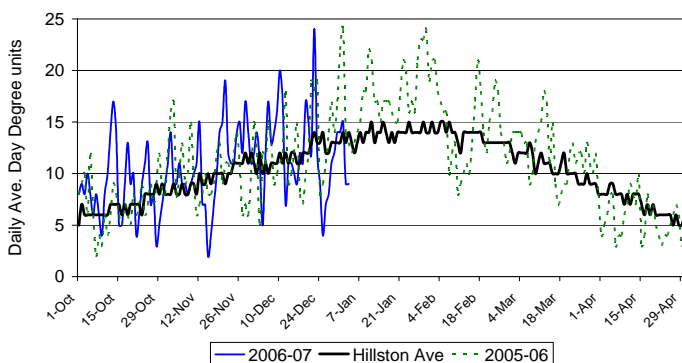
Day Degree Accumulation 1st Oct – 3rd Jan

The weather conditions have cooled slightly over the last couple of weeks, but the season continues to be ahead of schedule. There have been a few showers but no rain of substance. It was announced this week that Dubbo, Condobolin and Forbes are recorded their lowest annual rainfall on record for 2006. Many nearby areas were recording long term lows. Most of the southern crops are well into flowering and medium bolls are growing well.

Met site	06/07	05/06	Aver	CS (*) 06/07	HD(*) 06/07
Benerembah	971	882	826	35 (41)	17 (10)
Carrathool	937	867	829	39 (41)	17 (11)
Whitton	982	887	821	34 (41)	18 (10)
Hay	944	896	864	40 (37)	16 (12)
Hillston	1004	971	911	37 (31)	20 (14)

* Figures in brackets indicate average cold shock and hot days to 03/01/07.

Hillston Average Daily Day Degrees



Wanted Alive: Large Helicoverpa larvae from Bollgard II plants

(From "The Australian Cottongrower" December 2006 – January 2007 article.)

ACRI is seeking live larvae from Bollgard II of both *H. armigera* and *H. punctigera* that are 6mm in length or longer. Details of sampling, collection and contribution methods are available in the article on page 10 or by contacting Trudy Staines on 0427 480 967 or myself.

"Monitoring *Helicoverpa* field populations enables the early warning of the onset of resistance and presents an opportunity to refine our resistance management plan to maintain the effectiveness of Bt cotton."

I have asked for some containers and bags to be sent to Griffith so that they are available for use.

Please keep an eye out for the larvae and send them in if you find any.

Cotton Jargon

Nodes above white flower (NAWF) - the cotton plant flowers from the bottom first. Therefore the top nodes remain bare until they're ready, while hopefully the bottom of the bush is thick with flowers. This is the plants way of establishing foundations and reaching for the sky. Like any good multi-story construction, we need to ensure the workers over-head are prepared for the next step. Thus, we need to make sure the plant is growing faster than its flowering. By counting the nodes above the flower we can check that the plant has work to go on with. Once growth has finished there are flowers from the bottom up to the top of the plant.

We need to keep the number of branches (nodes) at about five above the last flower, otherwise the plant will flower all the way to the top and will have finished its job before we're ready. The aim here is to maintain plant growth, so that we can manage the timing of the pick and optimize crop production.

Nodes above cracked boll (NACB) - This lets us know when it's time to **defoliate**. When it's below a count of 'four', it's time.

(Definitions were sourced from the ABC Rural website's 2002 "grow you own" interactive cotton crop with Stu Higgins – Qld)

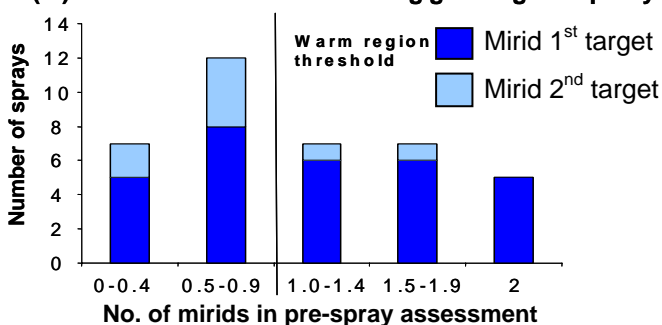
Mirid Management Benchmarking

Thresholds help growers to manage pests profitably by ensuring that there is a yield benefit from using insecticide. Mirids are one of the less well understood pests of cotton and their threshold is quite complex. Currently it is based on a combination of mirid numbers, fruit retention and boll damage.

A pilot mirid management survey was conducted during the 05/06 season in the Lower Namoi, Gwydir, and McIntyre valleys.

Overwhelmingly the most important factor triggering a mirid spray was the total number of mirids they had observed. It is likely that this finding reflects the difficulty in gauging mirid damage in a growing crop without cutting open large numbers of fruit, and indicates an area where mirid management tools could be improved.

(a) Number of mirids triggering a spray



Despite the clear importance of mirid numbers in the decision making process, many sprays were applied before mirid numbers reached the recommended threshold. This suggests that pest managers were not being guided by the recommended threshold in their decision making. Interestingly, the preservation of beneficials was a key consideration for pest managers in selecting the insecticide. While efficacy was the most important factor, respondents appeared to value the 'mopping up' services of beneficials and were keen to avoid 'flaring' other pest species. This season, the survey has been expanded to cover

the whole cotton industry and is looking more closely at:

- when pest managers detect mirids but don't spray
- the influence of other pests on the decision to spray and spray choice
- differences between valleys.

The survey will provide pest managers with information on:

- what sprays people are using and at what strengths.
- the effectiveness of different spray regimes
- whether different mirid management styles result in a yield cost or bonus
- which concerns, or combinations of concerns, are linked to more effective mirid management.
- what strategies performed best in their region.

Please make the time to complete the sixth instalment of the brief spreadsheet and **return it even if you have not sprayed for mirids.**

For more information please contact Mary Whitehouse, ph 6799 1538

Cotton gin yields explained

This follows on from a in field discussion this week and the figures are based on an "average" module delivered to the Hillston Gin

Cotton seed = 60% of the ginned cotton wt
Fibre (lint) = 38% of the ginned cotton wt
Trash & mote = 2% of the ginned cotton wt

So in a 12 ton module there would be 7.2 t of seed, 4.56 t of lint and 0.24 t trash

Upcoming Local Events

**Date Claimer - Lachlan and Murrumbidgee
Cotton Field Day 14th or 21st of March 2007
(TBC on January 10)**

The first meeting of the 2006 - 2007 Field Day / Crop Competition committee will be held on **January 10 at 4pm in the Hillston Ex-services Club.** Anyone that is interested in helping is encouraged to contact either Jo Begbie (CGA) 0428 311 079 or Pat McGuinness.(CCA) 0429 875 815