

### 2011/12 Extension Package

The Australian Cotton Industry Development & Delivery Team have recently put together a number of publications for the coming season:

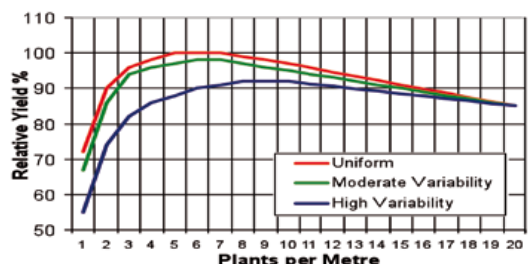
- 2011 Australian Cotton Production Manual – let Susan know if you would like a copy.
- Pest & Beneficials In Australian Cotton Landscapes (ID guide) – order a hard copy on Cotton CRC website or contact AgnVet or CGS.
- 2011/12 Cotton Pest Management Guide (to be delivered with Sept CRDC Spotlight)

These publications along with fact sheets & mobile phone friendly weed and insect ID guides are all available from [www.cottoncrc.org.au](http://www.cottoncrc.org.au)

### Planting Considerations

With the first of the Bollgard II windows about to start, it is important to consider the essentials when it comes to planting. Optimising yield requires an evenly spaced plant population. The figure below shows impact of plant stand uniformity on potential yield.

Relative yield potential at a range of Plant Stand Uniformities. (G Constable. 1997) 2012 Cotton Production



### Soil Temperatures

Given that temperatures have cooled slightly over the last week, it might pay to check soil temperatures before commencing planting. Ideal soil temperatures for cotton establishment are 16°C - 28°C. It is recommended that cotton sowing does not occur until minimum soil temperatures at 10cm exceed 14°C at 9am for 3 consecutive days. *Note: 14°C at 10cm depth will equate to approximately 16-17°C at seed sowing depth.*

### Disease management

Sowing below ideal soil temperatures and cool weather conditions can increase the incidence of seedling diseases such as rhizoctonia, pythium; and fusarium. by slowing germination and emergence. Plant into well prepared, firm, high beds to optimise stand establishment and seedling vigour.

### Management of weeds and volunteers

Ideally plant into fields free of weeds and volunteers. Before planting, check field herbicide use records. Table 23-25 in 2012 Cotton Pest Management Guide (available on Cotton CRC website) covers herbicides with plant backs to cotton. Also consider how you might rotate herbicide mode of action groups to reduce your risk of herbicide resistance.

### Plant into Moisture or Water up?

Plant into moisture

- Moist soil heats up more rapidly and retain heat better than dry soil.
- Effective in soils with even soil type and moisture holding capacity. Can be difficult in variable soils.
- Potential for weed/volunteer germination and control prior to cotton emergence. As they have emerged with no seed treatment or at planting insecticide, volunteers that emerge at planting can host pests such as aphids and mealybugs.

Water up

- More effective in fields with variable soil type and water holding capacity.
- Soil temperatures should be very warm when planting, as irrigating can cause the soil temp to drop a couple of degrees.
- Reduced risk of compaction at planting and allows a high bed height to be maintained.

### Tips if considering cotton?

There is a lot of interest from new and returning growers in CQ. Here is a couple of tips if you are considering cotton:

- Get an agronomist. While Bollgard II has reduced the amount of sprays required, there is still a range of insect pests that can require management. Good crop agronomy is crucial to optimising your chances of success.
- Don't plant until you know you can pick it. With continued expansion of the cotton industry, picking contractors may be at a premium, especially if you are isolated, or if your picking coincides with southern areas.
- Soils with a PAWC (plant available waterholding capacity) of at least 150 mm containing 120 mm of water at planting would be a suitable choice for planting dryland cotton. This equates to at least 70 cm of wet soil on deep open downs or Brigalow clay soil.
- Single or double skip configuration is recommended for dryland cotton in CQ.
- If planting Bollgard II, ensure you understand & abide by the requirements of the Bollard II Resistance Management Plan.
- Plan & budget for crop destruction. Ensure all ratoon cotton is removed. This is a pest & disease risk.

### Bollgard II Planting Windows

- Emerald: Sept 15 to Oct 26 2011
- Dawson/Callide: 28th Sept to 8th Nov 2011
- Belyando/Clermont, Mackenzie, Alton Downs: 4th Nov to 15th Dec 2011

For more info on Bollgard II RMP requirements please contact Monsanto, Michael Fing 0417305717.