

**Research Needs As Identified By Namoi Valley
Consultants.**

Geoff. Brown. Wee Waa.

Development of Marketing Strategy.

The need to develop marketing strategies for the Australian cotton crop appears to be imperative. If we are to continue to develop new cotton varieties it is essential to be able to place these into the market profitably. We believe the current marketing experience with Siokra is a critical illustration of how important a very good marketing strategy is if we are to develop markets that will continue to ensure long term demand for our cotton. The all important quality criteria must be strictly adhered to.

Our suggestion is that the cotton industry requires a formal marketing organisation to perform several important tasks:

Ensure a thorough evaluation of all quality aspects of the varieties that are being developed.

Explore all possible marketing opportunities to enable our industry to broaden the market segments into which it sells.

Develop strategies to enable all marketing mechanisms to be made available to growers, and ensure these facilities are understood by growers to enable each them to have as much control as they would like to exercise over the marketing of their crop.

The development of special niches in the market for our new varieties that may have a more limited production than varieties grown overseas, this may require pooling of varieties within Australia and cotton being sold from various processors through a common marketing outlet to ensure product volume. The marketing of small lots of lesser volume varieties will possibly not suit buyers.

Monitor technological changes in processing and ensure our breeders are well aware of developing requirements and ensure developments overseas with new varieties are fully understood and not leaving our industry at a disadvantage.

Soils and Nutrition.

Continuation of soil structure studies with particular reference to effects on soil structures of minimum tillage, and other new technology.

Compilation of standards for soil comparisons; through the complete soil profile, topsoil-subsoil. This would enable soil mapping on individual farms if required by growers, perhaps leading to a better understanding and care for our hard working irrigation soils, and also enable soil management and preparation to be more cost effective.

Mapping of soils by geographic areas to assist growers to more accurately, and effectively make nutrition and soil management decisions.

Continuation of studies into fertilizer application strategies, evaluation of rates, types of application methods.

Summation and dissemination of currently available fertilizer, nutrition, and soil information.

Irrigation Strategies.

Evaluation of irrigation strategies varying effects on our current and likely future varieties.

Research effective alternative watering strategies for use with limited supplies of water.

Hail Research.

Evaluation of hail damage effects on the different cotton varieties.

Development of stage of growth effect models to assist growers make replant /crop continuation decisions and to assist with relieving perceived anomalies in the Hail Insurance Scheme.

Cont. page 3.

Hail Research /Cont.

Development of hail occurrence model over geographical areas monitoring intensity, frequency, time of occurrence, mayby enabling longer term premium variations.

Weed Control Research.

Herbicide strategies for the control of weeds such as Sesbania; Burr Spp; Physalis; Take-All Spp,-[Polymeria Longifolia, Haloragis Spp, Senecio Daltonii, Crotalaria Spp. Vigna Lanceolata].

Varietal Development Research.

Monitoring the response of different cotton varieties to varying management regimes with special attention being directed to fertilizer, irrigation, pest control, defoliation, inputs and their affects on yield, quality, and marketability.

Using quality and marketing criteria to make decisions about new variety development.

Developing disease resistance in new varieties.

Extension of Resistance Monitoring.

Extend monitoring into Upper Namoi to assist with the implementation of the strategy, with mixed cropping being prevalent, there is concern about non compliance and over use of Endosulfan, and the Synthetic Pyrethroids.

Research into more economic utilization of short residual insecticides in stage 3. There is real concern that there are few alternatives available.

Extend further effort into resistance monitoring of mites and aphid.

Are Research needs being addressed by Researchers?

Consultants find it difficult to know what research projects are being undertaken. Some Researchers extension efforts mean that there is general awareness of their work, whilst lack of extension makes it more difficult to know what work other Researchers are doing.

Is Research Information being passed on to Growers by Consultants?

As the research work being carried out is not easy to identify in all cases, Consultants are sure there is quite an amount of information not being passed on to Growers.

Are Researchers being told by Consultants of shortfalls in information exchange and Research needs?

Consultants consider they have only fair communications back to Researchers. There are no formal lines of communications or forums for exchanges of ideas.

Reducing "The Research Gap" and "Gaps" in Research.

Consultants believe that they have a role to play in the input of Research priorities. The provision of a forum to provide ideas to the A.C.G.R.A. Committee about Research needs and priorities is required. This forum would involve Growers, Consultants, Agronomists, and Researchers, in an annual meeting, and would allow the evaluation of Research options and set Research priorities.

The structure /membership of the A.C.G.R.A. Committee should enable the participation of people with fresh ideas and this structure ought also to provide for a rotation of membership of Grower Representative positions

The Cotton Industry already owns a modern Electronic communications medium, the Siratac organisation, and the utilization of this facility to provide access to further crop information is thought to be desirable.

- Information relating to: Current marketing information. eg. Prices available through various Marketers.
- Industry Advertising, for Growers, or Commerce.
- Research Information of practical use.

These are just a few examples of potential uses.