



Australian Government

Cotton Research and
Development Corporation

FINAL REPORT 2013/2014

Part 1 - Summary Details

Please use your TAB key to complete Parts 1 & 2.

CRDC Project Number:1408

CGA Walgett

Project Title: Understanding the Weather

Project Commencement Date: 30/11/13

Project Completion Date: 31/10/14

Part 2 – Contact Details

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Part 3 – Final Report

(The points below are to be used as a guideline when completing your final report.)

Background

The Walgett CGA wanted to increase their knowledge about weather patterns and forecasts. By increasing the number of weather stations in their area then learning how to use them and the numerous forecasts available they will be better able to predict rainfall events but also wind changes which will reduce issues surrounding spray drift. Ultimately though this is a way to better mitigate risks inherent in farming.

Objectives

To increase knowledge of weather patterns- A meeting was held at the completion of installation and 12 growers and advisors attended. Jon Welsh went through the models and based on qualitative feedback, knowledge has been increased.

Fill in the weather gaps- 4 Next Gen weather stations have now been installed which fills a large gap in the information available to growers in the Walgett area.

Increase the use of wind speed and direction in decision making - Many growers were not aware of the detailed wind direction and strength models available on the BOM website and so Jon was able to increase awareness to better use these tools to minimise drift.

Methods

Installation was done by Simon and Geoff Hunter and we found that the growers started getting quite involved by supplying materials for the installation. The need for ongoing maintenance has meant they have to have some understanding of how they work.

The final meeting we had with Jon was held in the afternoon at a farm centrally located. The roll up was excellent and it was a highly beneficial social event. Discussions were held about future projects and needs in the region which is a very exciting and unpredicted outcome of the project.

Outcomes

4 new weather stations emit data every 15mins filling the data gaps in the Walgett area. The CGA has expressed an interest in following the 3 atmospheric and 3 moisture indicators which Jon described in his presentation. They are now firmly aware of the fortnightly newsletter put out by the Cottoninfo team.

Feedback from the evening was excellent with sayings such as

"It is good to see the Walgett CGA doing things again"

"It's great to see some younger growers here tonight"

"The location of these weather stations will mean we will a get much better idea of when rain is coming as they are located where our weather comes from"

"What can we do next?"



Conclusion

With Jon's help we are starting the discussion about mitigating risks associated with weather. We have also started the discussion about what other areas of knowledge we need to tap into.

Extension Opportunities

Geoff Hunter has already put in a story in his Newsletter which circulates to growers in 4 CGA regions.

The presentation Jon developed was easy to follow and a great way to understand the topic so Geoff Hunter will use any opportunity to roll it out again.

We will also look to run some webinars throughout the year with a focus on the key models which affect our weather at Walgett.