



CGA FINAL REPORT

Part 1 - Summary Details

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

CRDC Project Number: CGA1807

Project Title: Grower Development and Extension Programs

Project Commencement Date: 1/11/2017 **Project Completion Date:** 28/02/2018

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

1. Outline the background to the project.

The background of the project was to fund education and outreach for grower in the south to access. The two issues chosen to tackle were

1. Spray drift – this is a very topical issue throughout the cotton growing regions and therefore thought it would be beneficial to continue the education process throughout the southern valleys
2. Irrigation – Water is our most precious resource, and labour one of the most expensive inputs into production systems. We therefore thought it would be beneficial for growers to look at a range of irrigation management plans and farm setups in an aim to showcase efficiency gains that could be made within their own businesses.

Objectives

2. List the project objectives (from the application) and the extent to which these have been achieved.

The first objective was to run a series spray drift workshops in the region. We were successful in coordinating 4 workshops. These were run in Deniliquin, Griffith, Barellan and Lake Cargelligo and were all well attended. The Deni workshop was by far the stand out workshop with 90 attendees and good support from local businesses. Barellan was attended by 33 growers, a lot of the them actually being dryland which was a fantastic outcome. Griffith attracted 35 participants and Lake Cargelligo 25 once again a good mix of participants from different industries.

The CGA also joined forces with IREC to run a bus trip up to Queensland. The flyer included shows where was visited etc. Considering the time of year and length of trip this was well responded too with 23 people going. The trip included visits too:

Central West Farming System demo farm, Condobolin

- Gwydir Valley Irrigators Association field day Keytah, Moree
- Ed Willis, *Bullamon Plains*, Thallon
- Craig Saunders, *Plantation*, St George
- Rob Jakins, *Illawarra*, St George
- *Cubbie Station*, Dirranbandi
- Vast Solar *Jemalong Station* solar farm, Forbes

Methods

3. Detail the methodology and justify the methodology used. Include any discoveries in methods that may benefit other related projects.

NA

Outcomes

4. Describe how the project's outputs will contribute to the planned outcomes identified in the project application. Describe the planned outcomes achieved to date.

The outputs from the spray drift workshops was an increase in awareness of sensitive crops across the southern growing regions, we have been successful in starting the conversation across industries as well as providing producers within the region the contacts to go to when they need further information or advice.

The tour north was an opportunity for people both from the cotton industry, as well as other irrigated enterprises to go and look at other farming operations. This allows them to take ideas that may be applicable to their situations home to help improve their production systems and ensure that they will be profitable into the future.

5. Please report on any:-

a) Feedback forms used and what the results were

Please see the attached survey results from the bus tour.

From the spray drift workshops there was verbal feedback collected from participants which all indicated a positive response with everyone taking something home. Mary completed an attendance list to follow up with people on. There was also a AgSkilled form at each of the meetings with numerous people signing up for further information on that training.

b) The highlights for participants or key learnings achieved

Workshops – highlights where the increased awareness and the openness of the forums. After the decision to cut back to 4 workshops, and the success of the Deni workshop, we were actually approached to run 3 further workshops while Mary was down but due to the fact that this was requested on the second day of workshops we were unable to organise on such short notice but will endeavour to support these areas going forward.

Trip – see the feedback forms.

c) The number of people participating and any comments on level of participation

Participation levels are as indicated above.

Conclusion

6. Provide an assessment of the likely impact of the results and conclusions of the research project for the cotton industry. What are the take home messages?

Spray drift workshops:

There has been an increased awareness of the sensitivity of crops in different districts, as well as a line of communication opened between growers. Growers are more aware of the risks that are present when applying chemical and hopefully this will have a flow on effect in terms of lower levels of drift in the region.

Trip:

Growers were able to see other operation setups including power infrastructure (solar panels), water setups (flood, overhead) and just general management options. These growers will be able to take home some ideas and changes that can be made in their business. See the survey sheet attached.

Extension Opportunities

7. Detail a plan for the activities or other steps that may be taken:

(a) To tell other CGAs/growers/regions about your project.

An effort on social media (particularly twitter) was made to advertise all events as well as updates from them. This was widely publicised at the time. IREC is running a story on the bus trip in their next newsletter.

(b) To keep in touch with participants.

Attendance lists for both events were taken. Mary has followed up with the attendants at the spray drift workshops, Iva has followed up with the bus trip participants.

(c) For future projects.

There is scope to potentially run more drift workshops in other areas due to the interest that was generated as well as hopefully getting some people involved in the AgSkilled training courses.