Final Report

CRDC:	CRC23C	**Total Funding** $4,240
Director:	Neil Forrester	
Title:	Forecast of spring helicoverpa migration from central Australia	

Project Start: 1 Jun 2000
Project Cease: 30 Jun 2000

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Plain English Summary

In the 1999-2000 cotton season, insect pressure was unusually ligt. In particular, numbers of *Helicoverpa Punctigera* present early in the season were extremely low. This enabled many growers to avoid the use of hard insecticides early in the season, and populations of beneficial insects remained high until well into the growing season. Consequently, overall use of pesticides in 1999-2000 was down on average, and espacially when compared to the 1998-1999 season.

In May 2000, the Cotton R&D Corporation commissioned research from CSIRO Entomology and the University of New England to determine whether these low levels of *H.punctigera* were likely to continue into the 2000-2001 season.

Forecast and reccomendations

The results point to an above average year for early season *H.punctigera*. It is reccomended that the cotton industry should;

1. Monitor pheromone trap catches in cotton growing areas closely during August and September. This will give a further guideto how serious early season infestations on cotton will be.

2. Be prepared to control *H.punctigera* on both grain legumes and cotton, using soft options such as Bt, NPV or trap cropping to preserve beneficials, in the early to mid spring period. This is especially important if conditions remain dry and there are few uncultivated hosts, as it would help to reduce the first local generation.

3. Be aware that endosulfan usage might be higher this year than last year, and take some steps to ensure that the risks associated with this are minimised.

CRDC Library Reference Number |

Total Financial Commitment | $4,240