

## **1. Introduction**

Cotton has been one of the major irrigated crops in Queensland. Dryland cotton has increased steadily during the 1980's. Since 1990 there has been a large increase in both irrigated and dryland plantings especially the dryland cropping areas of the Darling Downs. Irrigated plantings are of the order of 15,000 ha on the Darling Downs and 18,000 ha at St George (including border rivers) with smaller plantings in the Lockyer Valley and the South Burnett. Dryland cropping is concentrated on the Darling Downs where cotton has been shown to be more reliable and more profitable than grain sorghum. Plantings are of the order of 12,000 - 15,000 hectares with substantial potential for a further increase.

With the expansion of cotton growing in the region, new growers have entered the industry. These new growers need to become familiar with up to date technology. The industry is well served by crop consultants but growers also must be familiar with new technology to be confident of the decision they make. In addition, research efforts are concentrated at Myall Vale Research Station although some research is conducted at Toowoomba and Biloela. To make the best use of this research information in the industry, a deliberate effort must be made to develop locally relevant technology and ensure all growers have access to it.