

6/92 - 6/93

COTTON RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Project Title: Cotton Extension/Development Program - South Queensland

Project No: N57 DAQ64C

Research Organisation: Department of Primary Industries, Queensland

Principal Researcher: JP Marshall

Principal Supervisor: GT McIntyre

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.

2. Objectives

To enhance technology transfer between researchers, consultants and farmers and to develop appropriate commercial technology for farmer adoption. Initially, emphasis was placed on conservation cropping and integrated pest management.

Project funding was sought to enable the appointee to the newly established Cotton Extension Agronomist position to become familiar with the research in the cotton industry, and with consultants, farmers and other industry personnel. In the year of project the objectives were:

1. Meet all the researchers involved in the cotton industry at Myall Vale, Toowoomba and Biloela.
2. Make contact with all of the cotton agronomists/consultants in south Queensland.
3. Meet representative farmers from each district in the region.
4. Establish commercial demonstrations of appropriate cotton growing technology.

3. Results and Discussion

The objectives set for the one year project funded in 1992/92 have been achieved.

Mr John Marshall was appointed to the position of Extension Agronomist, Cotton at Dalby and commenced in May 1992.

His achievements have been:

- Established very effective collaborative links with both research and extension personnel in the cotton industry in both states. This has included various visits to Myall Vale Research station in particular.
- Successfully established the cotton agronomist/consultant discussion group on the Darling Downs and developed good liaison with consultants at Biloela, Emerald, St George, Goondiwindi and Kingaroy.
- Developed a well known and respected profile for his role through the Queensland industry and established good cooperative relationships with a substantial number of growers.
- Established a number of commercial demonstration sites related to insect management and general agronomy as well as collaborating with research personnel in the conduct of field trial work.
- Attended and participated in a number of industry conferences and seminars, notably the Cotton Conference at Broadbeach.
- Collaborated with Geoff McIntyre, Joe Rickman and Mike Lucy in the production of the Dryland Cotton Production Queensland book for 1992.
- Collated and prepared the South Queensland Cotton Growers 1992/93 Cotton Trial Booklet in collaboration with the grower committee.

Capital expenditure of project funds to facilitate this project has included the purchase of a Toshiba T1850 laptop computer and an insect sampling suction machine.

5. Conclusions, Recommendations and Application to Industry

CRDC funding has facilitated the establishment of this new extension agronomy position on very firm footing. John is well placed to continue with an extensive extension agronomy program in collaboration with research and extension personnel, consultants, agribusiness, processors and grower. He will be able to work closely with the Cotton CRC in meeting the objectives of sub programs 4.1 and 4.2 in particular as well as contributing to regional development needs of the other CRC programs.

John has and will continue to support the five DPI Extension Agronomists with responsibilities to the cotton industry of 20% of their time each.

7. Appendix 1

BUDGET		
Item	1993/94	
	Requested	Expenditure
A STAFF COSTS	0	0
B OPERATING		
Computer	3250.00	3490.00
Operating, materials	1500.00	1851.45
Vehicle	4500.00	3422.92
C TOTAL	2800.00	3285.63
TOTAL	\$12050.00	\$12050.00

FUNDING CONTRIBUTIONS

CRDC	\$12050	
DPI	\$81975	(J Marshall)
	<u>\$ 6750</u>	(G McIntyre)
	\$88725	