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Australian Government
**Cotton Research and
Development Corporation**

TRAVEL, CONFERENCE or SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGE REPORT 2016

Part 1 - Summary Details

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

CRDC Project Number: UQ1601

Project Title: The World Cotton Conference 6 – Goiania Brazil 2016

Project Commencement Date: 1/05/2016 **Project Completion Date:** 11/05/2016

CRDC Research Program: 4 People

Part 2 – Contact Details

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Date Submitted: 21 June 2016

Part 3 – Travel, Conference or Scientific Exchange Report

(Maximum two pages)

1. A brief description of the purpose of the travel.

Travel was undertaken for two purposes. The purpose of the first leg of the trip was to attend the World Cotton Research Conference 6 in Goiânia Brazil and present my research, conducted as part of my PhD, on the Green Vegetable Bug (*Nezara viridula*). The presentation was an opportunity to gain experience for myself in presenting at international conferences, as well as gain exposure for my research in a forum of global experts. Through this interaction I also intended to make connections with other cotton researchers who may have experience with *N. viridula* and as well as other insect pests of cotton.

During the second leg of the trip I visited a Brazilian academic, Professor Antonio Panizzi of the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA). Professor Panizzi has worked and published extensively on pentatomid pests in Brazil for decades, and this interaction presented a unique opportunity to gain insights into pentatomids and other sucking pests from a leading expert in this field.

2. What were the:

- a) major findings and outcomes**
- b) other highlights**

a) The primary outcomes of attending the World Cotton Research Conference were, i) gaining a better understanding of the role of *N. viridula* as a pest of cotton globally, ii) experience presenting at an international conference and interacting with other researchers, iii) exposure for my research, and iv) an awareness of insect pests that are a threat to cotton globally.

During the conference I spoke with a number of researchers who are involved with cotton insect pests. Through these interactions I developed an understanding of insect pest threats cotton faces globally, such as pink bollworm in India and boll weevil in Brazil. I also discussed the prevalence of *N. viridula* in cotton with a number of researchers from other

countries. It seems that if *N. viridula* is a problem in cotton elsewhere, it is only occasionally so, or that the presence of other more significant insect pests (e.g. pink bollworm and boll weevil) means that little attention is paid to it (at least presently).

My presentation conveyed the importance of understanding the genetic background of populations of *N. viridula*. This was achieved by discussing how my research on the Australian populations of *N. viridula* has contributed to our understanding of this species, and what this means for our understanding of global populations of the insects.

The conference highlighted for me more than ever one of the difficulties of studying generalist insects with a global distribution like *N. viridula*; they span different industries, many countries, and the variability in pest pressure means they are not always considered as serious a problem as they really are. The research presented by Dr. Tom Walsh of CSIRO in particular gave me an understanding of the extent to which collaboration is required for acquiring samples for studying insects with a global distribution. It is these lessons in particular I hope to apply to future projects. The experience I gained from this conference, and some of the connections I made, will help immensely in this regard.

My visit with Professor Antonio Panizzi of EMBRAPA was also extremely valuable. Professor Panizzi has worked on pentatomid pests for decades in Brazil and is an authority on this group of insects. Through my visit to his lab I gained an understanding of his approach to studying these insects as pests. Pentatomids are incredibly diverse in Brazil and a number of them are pests. Seeing different species of these insects in the field and in a different environment has helped to contextualize my own understanding of these pests. I expect the knowledge I have gained to provide a better foundation for the questions in my own research. Professor Panizzi has expressed interest in my research and I will have ongoing communication with him. I expect that this visit will also lead to collaborations in the future.

b) WCRC-6 was also the first international conference I have attended, and the experience was invaluable to me as a student. I had the opportunity not only to interact with international cotton researchers, but also with other Australian cotton researchers who are not involved in pest research. As a result, I feel that I have a better understanding not only of the Australian cotton industry, but the position this industry holds in cotton globally and the role that researchers play in that industry. As someone working on insect pests, it was also valuable to be exposed to research on pests that other countries are dealing with and that could potentially become a problem in Australia.

3. Detail the persons and institutions visited, giving full title, position details, location, duration of visit and purpose of visit to these people/places. (NB:- Please provide full names of institutions, not just acronyms.)

Location and Institution: World Cotton Research Conference 6 (WCRC-6), Goiânia - Goiás, Brazil; **Duration:** 5 days. **Purpose:** Attend and present at WCRC-6.

Location and Institution: Professor Antonio Panizzi, Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA), Passo Fundo – Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil; **Duration:** 1 day; **Purpose:** Exchange of knowledge.

**4. a) Are there any potential areas worth following up as a result of the travel?
b) Any relevance or possible impact on the Australian Cotton Industry?**

a) Professor Panizzi's research group conducts excellent experimental research on pentatomid pests of various crops in southern Brazil. Following my visit I aim to have an ongoing relationship with Professor Panizzi and his students in an exchange of our expertise and also insect material.

5. How do you intend to share the knowledge you have gained with other people in the cotton industry?

6. Please list expenditure incurred. *(Double click inside the table to enter the data)*

Date	Description	Amount excl GST	GST	Total
			TOTAL	

Please email your report by 21 June 2016 to: research@crdc.com.au