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**Hello** and **Welcome** to a brand new season for the Central Queensland Cotton Tales newsletter. Best of luck to all those growers who are able to put some cotton in the ground this season. To all those people without water this season I suggest you take Christmas holidays this year; and make sure you eat, drink and be merry as much as you can.

During the season, if anybody has any topics that they would like to see addressed in Cotton Tales, please feel free to drop me a line or an e-mail.

### Changes to Bollgard Resistance Management

There has been some changes to the trap crop arrangements for Bollgard II this season. These changes only affect those growers who will grow pigeon pea for their refuge crop.

#### Main points:

1. Growers will still need to plant 5% of their Bollgard area to pigeon pea as their refuge crop within 2wks of planting their cotton crop.
2. Instead of planting a further 1% of their Bollgard area to pigeon peas for their trap crop in November, they can now simply use 20% of their existing refuge crop as their trap crop. This is known as the **Incorporated Trap Crop** option.
3. This area of pigeon pea that is the **Incorporated Trap Crop** area must be irrigated 2-3 weeks prior to defoliation to ensure it is attractive to moths for 2-3 weeks after harvest.

For further information contact Jim Wark on 0427 050 832.

### Planting Date Changes

For those who have not heard already the Bollgard II planting window has reverted back to its original dates that were put down in the RMP when Bollgard was first commercialised. A postal vote was carried out with all current financial members of the CHCG&IA eligible to vote.

A total of 33 votes were cast with 18 votes for option 1 and 15 votes for option 2. Option 1 was therefore carried through as the planting window for 2006/07 season. The planting window starts on the **Friday the 15<sup>th</sup> of September** and finishes on **Tuesday the 31<sup>st</sup> of October**.

### Farming Systems Trials

The farming systems trials for irrigated cotton moves into its second season with preplant watering already finished for the September planting.

This year we will run the planting date trial again with just the one variety (Sicot 71BR) being planted across the 4 planting dates. Incorporated into this trial will be a whole of season Water use efficiency assessment on crops in both the earliest and the latest planting dates.

In addition to the planting date trial, there is going to be a row spacing trial conducted on the same site. This trial will compare the performance of cotton grown on 75cm rows versus 100cm rows.

In relation to last year's work the yields have been finalised but we are still waiting for quality data from Narrabri to be completed. Yields for last season were as follows.

Variety/Treatment	Sep (b/ha)	Oct (b/ha)#	Nov (b/ha)#	Dec (b/ha)
Sicot 43BR	9.98	9.82	5.45	5.72
Sicot 43BR Pixed	10.04	N/R	N/R	5.49
Sicot 71BR	8.96	9.72	5.13	5.89
Sicot 71BR Pixed	8.80	N/R	N/R	5.91

# Not Required: Separate sub-plots were used for Pix management. Pix applications were assessed on a commercial basis by a consultant and, if the cropped was judged to not require pix, then it was not applied. In these months (#) no pix was required so all the subplots were treated the same.

Analysis of this data is still being done to ascertain where we have significant differences. As a general over view the earlier planting dates had a definite yield advantage. The difference between the early and late plantings was not expected to be so great and some of this difference could be attributed to the savagely hot conditions we had in December and January (05/06 season was the second hottest on record for the Central Highlands in 50years)

*The later crops struggled to develop an adequate root system before first flower and hot conditions at the beginning of February certainly had an impact on fruit retention. It's also interesting to note that the pixed treatments made very little difference to overall yield in this trial.*

Hopefully, the results of this next season will allow us to build some strong relationships between temperature and the different stages of crop development.

### Area Wide Whitefly Project

Growers in the Central highlands will receive a request for some paddock information in the mail over the next couple of days. This data will be used in conjunction with last seasons Whitefly scouting records and Insecticide application data to help characterise the development of the Whitefly populations across the irrigation area. Hopefully this study will give us some extra management options for controlling Whitefly.

This information will be collected and collated by Amanda Noone in the next couple of weeks. **I would urge all growers involved to please be as cooperative as possible with this data collection.**

### Date claimers:

**6<sup>th</sup> September** – Roundup Ready Flex accreditation course. 8:30am @ CGS (approx. 2 hrs)

**13<sup>th</sup> September** – CHCG&IA meeting. AGM followed by short general meeting. 7:30pm @ Emerald Ag College.