

The Hunter Herald- The June Edition



Welcome to the 1st edition of the Hunter Herald which I hope will be a good way for you all to keep up to date with what has been happening and what's coming up.

Controlling Volunteers

As many of you would know Australian Cotton Research Institute (ACRI) is our Premier Research facility where a big part of our Cotton Research is carried out. I recently took a trip out there and caught up with Graham Charles to find out the results from his herbicide trial looking at the control of volunteer cotton.

Graham did some trials in 2012/13 on cotton at 8, 16 and 24 nodes using chemicals like Glufosinate-ammonium e.g. Basta, Bromoxynil, Carfentrazone-Ethyl e.g. Hammer, Saflufenacil e.g. Sharpen, Amitrole + Paraquat e.g. Alliance and Paraquat + Diquat e.g. Sprayseed or SS . All sprays were applied during the day and really nothing gave very good control except SS as a double knock.

What a difference a year makes and trials this year (2013/14) sprayed at night have shown some excellent results on cotton up to 24 nodes. Below are some of the better results, other chemicals were used so let me know if you want a more complete list.

Graham commented that hitting the cotton with a strong mix of 2 chemicals upfront is better as there are more leaves to take up the chemical as opposed to the double knock situation where the leaves and plant is already sick. Some chemicals seem to work better with SS. 2,4-D + Picloram or trade name Tordon for instance had a zero kill by itself on 24 node cotton and with SS achieved 99% kill after 50 days. This compares with SS by itself only achieving 63% (not shown in the summary) on the same cotton over the same period. SS is activated by sunlight and so having all night to be taken up by the plant makes all the difference when the sun hits.

A summary of some of Graham Charles results are below.

Chemical applied		% of dead plants with application at 12 nodes				% of dead plants with application at 24 nodes	
Chemical active	Eg. Trade name	2-Jan	10-Jan	22-Jan	18-Mar	18-Mar	7-Apr
Paraquat + Diquat	2 X Sprayseed					86	98
Paraquat + Diquat	Sprayseed				SS Day 11	76	78
2,4-D	Baton + SS	100	100	98	100	64	80
2,4-D	Baton + SS					93	100
Bromoxynil	Bromicide + SS	100	100	99	93	53	53
Triclopyr	Garlon + SS	99	100	86	90	88	86
Saflufenacil	Sharpen + SS	100	98	99	100	49	68
Fluroxypyr	Starane + SS	100	100	92	99	94	95
2,4-D + Picloram	Tordon + SS	100	95	87	90	89	99
Flumioxazin	Valor + SS	98	100	96	97	48	77

CottonInfo is a joint-venture of CRDC, CSD and Cotton Australia



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Photo Courtesy of Graham Charles from NSW DPI. Cotton treated on 18th March with SS + Fluroxypyr at 24 nodes.



Time of Planting - Some Interesting Results

by Alice Devlin- Cottoninfo in the Gwydir

There has been much discussion as the later planted cotton has been picked across the Valley, that this cotton has yielded markedly better than the earlier planted crop. Mike Bange (CSIRO) has been conducting time of planting experiments each season to generate differences in growth and development associated with temperature. I visited Mike's field at Myall Vale recently and the visual difference between the two treatments, planted about 3 weeks apart, was remarkable.

The first planting was mid October and the later one was in early November. The top 4 or 5 five nodes of the October crop had no bolls on them, whilst the crop planted in November had a full boll load to the top. Mike puts it down to the fact that the fruit retention on the cotton planted in November was much higher than that planted in October. The October planting had a fruit load when the highest temperatures hit in early January, causing the stressed plant to shed this fruit and therefore was compensating later with new growth. However the November crop didn't have the same load and therefore could hold on to its fruit. Mike noted that in most of the seasons where he had planted this late there the maturity of the earlier sowings was always earlier.

In regards to the risks associated with planting later, Mike pointed out that Bollgard II varieties will generally hold on to their fruit better than non-Bollgard, so you can afford to plant a little later as the early crop growth develops rapidly in warmer conditions and there is no loss of the length of the flowering period.

"We have also seen that these moderately later plantings have lower micronaire and longer fibre as the bolls are developing in cooler conditions." In particular, Mike pointed out that this isn't the kind of theory that can be held across cooler cotton growing areas. It is food for thought for the Gwydir though, with average temperatures predicted to rise in the coming seasons.



Jane Caton (Agronomy Technical Officer CSIRO) stands between two different plantings the cotton on her left was sown three weeks later in early November.

What's news??

Plant X, the up to now unknown plant which Robert Mensah had clouded in secrecy is actually Butterfly Pea. Its predator fighting properties are being used to develop a biological control against Green Mirids, Green Vegie Bugs and Silver Leaf Whitefly as a spray and Wireworms/ Thrips as a seed treatment. They still have some regulatory hurdles but watch this space. It is now called Sero X.

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Monsanto have put an application in to the APVMA in relation to a permanent extension to the planting window for all areas of 2 weeks. There was also an indication that they may also offer end point royalties on dryland cotton when the same farm also has the upfront payment method.

"Around the Traps"

East of **Narrabri** at Harparary Pete Watson has had his highest ever water use year but also his best yields ever. A little trial he did also showed a 10% yield increase for a lower Nitrogen input all upfront with no side dress. He will do it again to validate these results.

Out at **Pilliga** yields were generally pretty good although a bit all over the place. Sam Powell, Harley Sheridan and Gary Eason all had some good results.

Around **Wee Waa** was up and down, certainly the late crops did very well with a crop of Dryland at Matt Norrie's yielding surprisingly well for a tough year.

Emerald has had 4 hard years followed by the best ever season, with good allocations anticipated for the coming year it is a welcome change.

Simon Struss reports that **Theodore** had a great season also with some yields over 12 bales/ha. His tip is that it's not about how much N one puts on its how efficiently it is used and build a good hill to plant into.

Hugh Urquart tells us that winter crop is going in around **Bellata** but not as much further west. The later cotton seemed to do the best last season and Dryland never really got the chance to shine. Looking for a better opportunity for Dryland cotton this year, fingers crossed.

Is there a bit more Verticillium around in the Namoi this last year?. I will get some pathologists to talk about this in July.

In **Walgett** crops were up and down, water was short but the heat also played a big part.

Further out at **Bourke** was a year to forget with little to no rain all season then good falls a t picking. There was bit of a flow which came down the river and some cotton should go in next season.

Welshy's Weather Update

The much anticipated El Niño event is not running according to script with favourable atmospheric indicators currently not aligning themselves with unfavourable ocean currents. Leading scientists are predicting below average winter rains with a reasonable chance of conditions improving in the spring. The big concern is the forecast increases in daytime temperatures increasing evaporation rates through July and August. Keep an eye on the latest summaries through the CottonInfo fortnightly climate summary.

Congratulations

Well done to Brendan Warnock and Martin Mead for being finalists in Grower of the Year.

Dates for the Diary

June 17th is the start of the CSD tour

July talking Verticillium with Pathologist Linda Smith

August 5th - 7th, Cotton Conference

September is Bankless- a trip to Hebel and Cubbie looking at Bankless setups

November is the Researcher Tour

Saying of the Month - Send in some more!!!!.

A lie gets half way around the world before the truth gets out of bed and gets its pants on. "Winston Churchill"

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