



COTTON TALES

Darling Downs

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REMINDER

Benchmarking Workshop – Wednesday morning 22 August

Time: 9.00-12.00

Location: Dalby DPI&F Meeting Room

This workshop is free. Details about the workshop were listed in the previous Cotton tale.

If you have not previously confirmed your attendance please contact Jenelle Hare, 46690825 or 0427 372 331

Soil Nutrition workshop

A soil nutrition workshop will be held in the Dalby area on **11 September 2007**. The day is organised by members of the Cotton Catchment Communities CRC, Soils and Disease team and Chris Dowling will be present to provide expert advice. The workshop mainly targets consultants and managers but interested growers are also welcome.

More details about the workshop and how to register will be supplied in your next cotton tales.

Nitrogen use efficiency

Nitrogen (N) is the most limiting nutrient in cotton production and up to 200 kg N/ha may be required to achieve maximum yield. However at higher N fertiliser rates, the crop and soil retain a smaller proportion of N while a greater proportion is lost from the system through denitrification and leaching.

In recent times scientists have expressed grave concerns about the green house potential of nitrous oxide. Nitrous oxide is a product of denitrification which occurs under certain soil moisture conditions where oxygen is depleted.

Each molecule of nitrous oxide reportedly has about 310 times the atmospheric warming potential of a molecule of carbon dioxide.

Given that most of our cotton growing soils are medium to heavy clays, prone to waterlogging following flood irrigation or heavy rain, much of the applied nitrogen can be lost through denitrification or leaching.

Many growers are currently applying nitrogen fertilisers in preparation for the cotton season but is this the best way of applying nitrogen? What are the potential losses from these practices? Is it better to apply N at planting or should we use split applications instead of applying all the fertiliser at once?

These are some of the questions being asked about nitrogen and with rising costs and environmental implications; growers want to know how they can best manage this resource.

This year the Darling Downs extension team will focus on nitrogen use efficiency through trials and benchmarking and will be providing growers with more detailed information about best practice in efficient nitrogen use on cotton farms.

In order to come up with good local data on current nitrogen management we need grower cooperation. We want to establish at least one nitrogen trial on a cotton farm which will involve different rates of nitrogen as well as a zero plot (this only needs to be a small area and not replicated).

We also want to establish what growers are currently doing in terms of nitrogen management. Any information gathered will be confidential but will assist us in determining common practice and where this can be improved.

If you are interested in participating in trials and/or benchmarking, please let the team know.

Darling Downs Trial Booklet

It has been seven years since the last trial booklet was produced for the Darling Downs. We aim to resurrect this publication and hope to release another booklet by October this year. This trial book will contain relevant trial results from the last few years including grower trials.

I would like to invite anyone who has conducted trials in the last few seasons to submit their findings to me for inclusion in this year's booklet. This is a great opportunity to showcase your trials and provide other growers with the local data that can assist growers in improving productivity on farm.