



# the **cotton tale**

**Southern NSW No 4. 11<sup>th</sup> December 2017**

## **Welcome**

I hope this month we see a more stable weather pattern as we approach the end of the year. The cotton tale is coming out a bit earlier this month as we approach Xmas.

## **Weather conditions and crop progress**

The latest CottonInfo Moisture Manager indicates that we have officially reached La Nina thresholds, but it will be not a strong event. Storms at the start of December have caused significant issues in areas with waterlogging. There have also been reports of significant hail damage in some fields.

Each fortnight, CottonInfo issues a Moisture Manager e-newsletter - bringing you the latest weather forecasts and predictions from the leading weather models. You can sign up for the newsletter [here](#).

Reports back from advisors indicate best fields are at 13 nodes with squares from node 8. Most crops are on average at 10 to 11 nodes.

Crop scouts indicate that mirid numbers are currently low but there are some high patches of Apple Dimpling Bug. Beneficial numbers are good and are increasing.

The rain event has seen more infections of Alternaria moving up the leaves in the crop. Warmer and dry weather in the next few weeks should ease disease pressure.

## **Keep the spray on the weeds**

The widespread rain will see a lot of summer weed spraying over the next two weeks. Everyone is reminded of best management spray practice so not to impact on sensitive crops. This applies equally to cotton growers and we need to be careful and lead by example.

A new resource is available here (put together by Amanda Thomas, CottonInfo REO for the Macquarie) that brings together a lot of the excellent resources available on spraying to minimise non-target impacts.

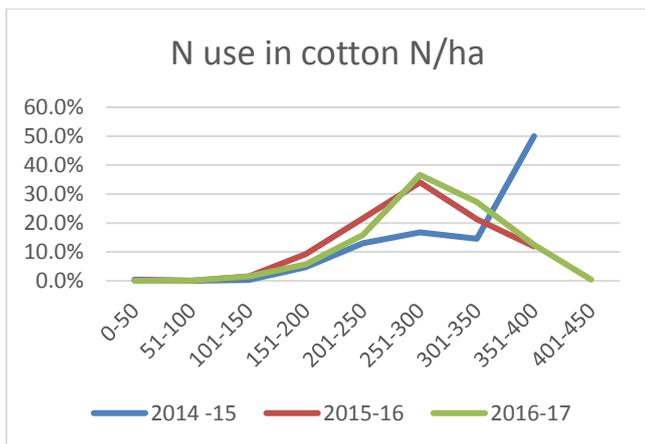
We live and farm in one of the most diverse farming communities in Australia and all crops (fruit, nuts, pastures, winter and summer crops both irrigated and dryland) and livestock (fish and bees for example) can be impacted by spray drift. We all have a duty of care not to impact on others in our community.

## **Get nutrition levels right**

Crops are currently being assessed for Nitrogen levels through petiole sampling. This testing needs to be done several times as the crop progresses to show trends in N levels.

We do need to be careful with N levels after the waterlogging of some fields. No one wants to be short on nutrition levels but as a general trend over time I see the consequences of too much Nitrogen in the crop. It does increase the severity of several diseases and is a major contributing factor to poor defoliation and regrowth in crops.





The above graph is a summary of responses from Crop Consultant Australia members indicating their N levels in cotton crops over the last three years. The general trend is for less total N applied to crops with a lot less crops over 300 N since the 2014-15 crop.

### **Come clean, Go clean**

Below is a simple but effective set up at the front gate for those entering crop areas on this farm. We are still a relatively clean area for many of the major cotton diseases and the more vigilant we are the longer we can delay impacts on productivity.



### **More on Black root rot**

The pathology teams recently gave thoughts on how to manage the problem in the years ahead. One of the solutions given was a three year break from host crops in problem fields. Growers do not see this as a viable solution due to economic losses. Some growers are planning planting operations to be delayed in those fields and some will trial the summer flooding option.

The final report from previous research by David Nehl et al reinforces that options are limited once spore levels get to high levels. The CRDC report DAN153C 'Managing Black root rot' can be found in the cotton industry library of research papers Inside Cotton: [www.insidecotton.com](http://www.insidecotton.com).

### **Beds v hills in bankless terraced bays**

I saw an interesting farmer comparison trial just before the rain last week. It is comparing beds and hills running north/south in a bankless system. It looks like the beds are performing better this season and are about 2 nodes more advanced. It appears the hills are getting more waterlogged this season. First photo is beds, second photo hills.

It will be good to track this comparison through the season. Any comments on this observation welcome.





### **Herbicide resistance testing**

I recently spent some time on farm with CottonInfo weed technical lead Eric Koetz (NSW DPI Wagga). There is a good opportunity now to collect mature ryegrass seed. See below. I have some envelopes as well.

In 2016, Monsanto launched a free herbicide resistance testing program for Australian cotton farmers. This program forms part of Monsanto's Integrated Weed Management (IWM) strategy and has been developed using insights from a comprehensive study of over 200 farmers and consultants. This survey identified that while the majority of farmers (74%) are dealing with herbicide resistant weeds, very few are actually collecting weed samples for resistance testing. Despite this, 40% of farmers said that they would like access to a testing program and that it would assist in their weed management strategy development.

Under Monsanto's herbicide resistance testing program, farmers can test five of the major weeds present in cotton systems for resistance to three critical herbicides, Roundup Ready® Herbicide with PLANTSHIELD® by Monsanto, Verdict® and Select®.

Monsanto have pre-printed testing envelopes that can be used for weed seed collection. Sampling envelopes are available by contacting Monsanto ([katherine.sarah.lang@monsanto.com](mailto:katherine.sarah.lang@monsanto.com)). Farmers can also contact their Monsanto Regional Business Manager for further details on the program.

### **Events and dates coming up**

- Thursday 14 December, SVCGA Xmas party, Griffith Leagues Club 5 pm
- Friday 15 December, Nominations for SVCGA 2016-17 cotton awards close. Reply to Kieran.
- Tuesday 6 February, Optimising Irrigation & Nitrogen Researchers Tour, Point Farms, 8am -11.30 am. See flyer attached.
- Tuesday 27 March 2018, SVCGA Monsanto Grower of the Year Field day, 9am till Lunch, Cavaso Farming, Ringwood, Kidman Way.

### **Where is this?**



*Last month's answer- Hillston Swinging bridge*

Wishing everyone a safe and happy festive season. Until next time.

### **Kieran**

*NOTICE - This e-mail and any files transmitted with it are confidential and are only for the use of the person to whom they are addressed. If you are not the intended recipient, you have received this e-mail in error, and any use, dissemination, forwarding, printing, copying or dealing with this e-mail, in any way whatsoever, is strictly prohibited. If you have received this e-mail in error, please reply immediately by way of advice to us. It is the duty of the addressee/recipient to virus-scan and otherwise test the information provided, before loading it onto any computer system. CottonInfo does not warrant that the information is free from viruses or from any other defect or error. CottonInfo does not represent, warrant and/or guarantee that the integrity of this communication has been maintained nor that the communication is free of errors, virus, interception or interference.*

