



the **cotton wrap**

JANUARY 2018

SEASON SUMMARY

A small patch at Tamarang in the Liverpool Plains is the only place left exhibiting some decent conditions with David Ronalds Dryland cotton still looking pretty good. In other areas of the Liverpool Plains Andrew Ceeney reports that water is critically short and rain is needed for both irrigated and dryland crops. Rainfall was hit and miss with a report of 90mm south of Blackville a bright spot amongst 7-20mm generally about.

Cotton with water is still looking good with many at cutout or not far off and retentions still very high with yield potential good. Water use has been high with a great many operators going to be 1 or 2 irrigations short if rain continues to elude. Mirids are being treated in most areas with a second application of Fipronil used along with Transform® and Mainman® also.

Further a-field Andrew Watson picked up 50mm last week which went through to Narrabri with similar report there as well. East of Edgeroi on the near the hills I hear up to 100mm fell at “Courada Nth” with 60mm about that area. Further west it petered out pretty quickly except Drildool and Nowley which received 30-40mm. Walgett too missed out with around 16-25mm all that fell. Further east at Harparary falls of between 18 and up to 30mm fell overnight last Thursday.

Emerald is well into picking with reports suggesting possible yields of around 12-13 bales/Ha, pre ginning. An average turnout added to what has been a very few light insect year will make this one of the best for early sown crops

Thanks to the Upper Namoi CGA we were able to engage David Hall, an ACCU Accredited spreader

tester to travel to the Namoi and calibrate some grower owned machines. Our first day was held at “Doona” Spring Ridge thanks to James, Rob and Angus Clift who hosted the day and Leo and Andrew at NFS Ag for providing lunch at the Spring Ridge Hotel. The second day was hosted by Sam Conway at “Michengowrie” with lunch provided by Landmark Gunnedah so thanks to Mark, Amy and Hiedi. A special thanks also to Incitec Pivot for providing something to spread. Overall the machines were working quite well with only a few minor changes made. A full report will be available.



Spreaders at “Doona”, Spring Ridge.

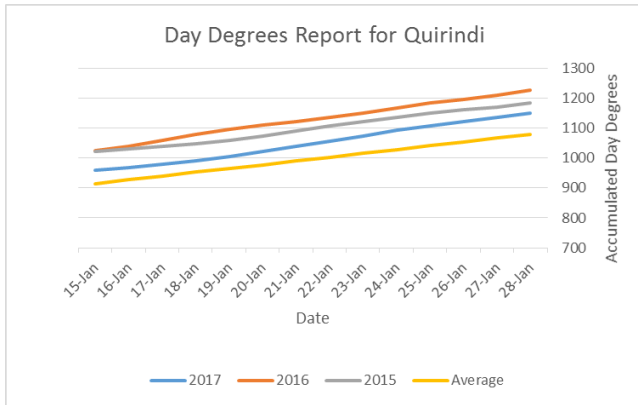


“Milchengowrie”, Boggabri.

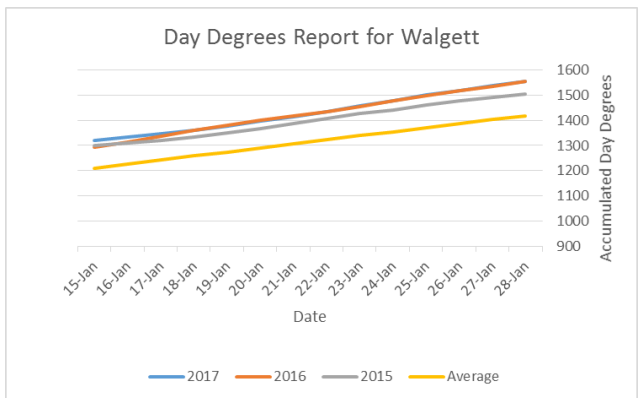
DAY DEGREES

Report for a planting date of 16th October 2017 until 28th Jan 2018.

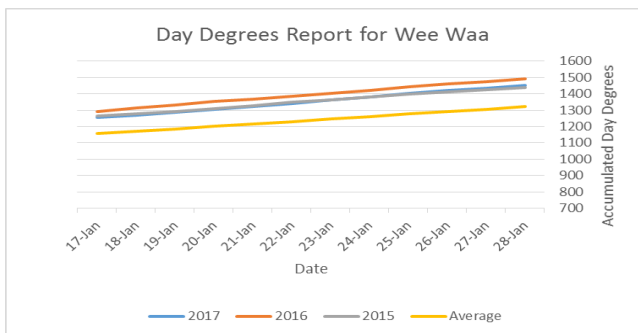
Qurindi	2017	2016
Hot Shocks	24	24
Cold Shocks	28	30



Walgett	2017	2016
Hot Shocks	47	56
Cold Shocks	11	20



Wee Waa	2017	2016
Hot Shocks	41	40
Cold Shocks	9	20



RESEARCHERS CORNER

The Namoi along with all other valleys has a trial on early season Mirid damage and effect on maturity and yield. This one is at Tambar Springs and is being hosted by Penny Haire and the team. Mirids must hate it down there because they had two weeks holiday in the tents and damage needed to be inflicted manually.



Mirid damage control trial at near Tambar Springs

WHAT'S ON

9th Feb- Nitrogen and Irrigation Tour, "Waverley" Wee Waa. Ring Geoff 0458 142 777

INSECTS

With everyone trying to go 'soft' this season I asked Simone Hiemoana from CSIRO, exactly what that means-

"Soft is not only choosing an insecticide with low impact on beneficials but also the ability to wait or hold off to allow beneficials to build. Sometimes that is slow and so it might mean that over a week my adult mirids stay at the same level and the nymphs reduce by one per metre, which is good progress as it brings counts back to below threshold. This season's high fruit loads mean that I can afford to allow some fruit loss and allow a build-up of beneficials, which in all cases I have a good handle on because of beat sheeting twice a week. If I have to spray, then I use a suitable selective insecticide over a broad spectrum and avoid prophylactic sprays with pre-arranged passes of Pix® or Glyphosate when insects are not present, and that is soft".

Also on the subject of Mites Simone tells me there are a lot of Strawberry Mites around which can be mistaken for Two Spotted Mite but they are far less damaging to cotton (some stippling on the underside of leaves is a good indicator) and have a higher threshold. Researchers are not sure how much higher the threshold is and thrips seem to be

keeping them under control at the moment but keep an eye on them and be aware that their populations may increase if the predators are taken out of the system. Simone has included a couple of pictures so you can tell the difference. I hope you have good eyes! The different damage inflicted on leaves may be a better identifier.

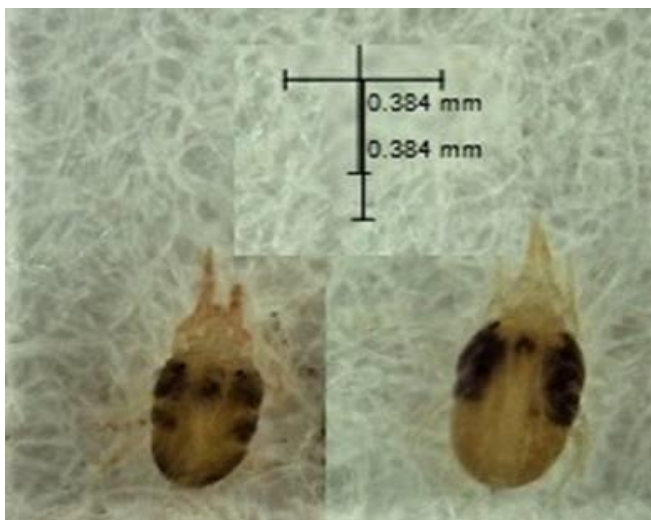


Photo courtesy of Dee Hamilton

Strawberry spider mite adult female on the left, slightly smaller than the Two-spotted mite adult female on the right. When the dark blotches merge and become less distinct, identification can be confusing. Check for the damage, if unsure which species you have. Simone had also been partitioning some experimental plots and noticed that the plant is losing small squares on the lower part of the plant now, most likely due to heat stress.

DISEASE

There has been a change in how suspect disease samples are handled now and they are no longer sent to Karen.

SEND **EXPRESS** TO:

ATTN: Duy Le/ Aphrika Gregson
PLANT MATERIAL

Aus Cotton Research Institute
21888 Kamilaroi Highway
Narrabri NSW 2390

**IF FUSARIUM WILT SUSPECTED
DO NOT SEND SAMPLE TO ACRI.**

CONTACT:

Dr Duy Le (0439 941 542) or
Dr Linda Smith (0457 547 617)

The early season survey results are in. 19 fields were surveyed across 13 farms in the Upper and Lower Namoi along with Walgett.

BRR was detected on every field with incidence av. **37%** (range 2.5-86.2%).

Rhizoctonia was also ubiquitous with incidence av. **39.4%** (range 0.8-80.2%)

Pythium was detected on over a third of farms at low levels **<1%** av. incidence.

The ratings above are based on field symptoms, with confirmation of the pathogens in the lab. In most cases, corresponding pathogens were recovered from sick seedlings; BRR pathogens were recovered from seedlings with symptoms of BRR. Alternaria was recovered from Alternaria leaf spots. In some cases, field symptoms were not always sufficient enough for correct ID. Therefore further laboratory work for Fusarium/Rhizoctonia affected seedlings is underway

WELSHY'S WEATHER

At the end of January the effects of ENSO and Indian Ocean Dipole are minimal and so for the remainder of the growing season moisture supply depends more on tropical influences in the Coral Sea and unstable air creating opportunities for storm rain. The Tasman Sea blocking is one little publicised influence affecting cotton areas and one which has been present over the last 2 months. When blocking occurs in the upper atmosphere a series of high pressure systems move through temporarily and self-replace keeping the air stable. The first 10-days in February following the passing MJO sees the blocking influence abate, hopefully allowing more moist unstable air enter the inland. A good time of year to watch the weather models twice daily as storms can occur with varying intensity and little notice. Temperatures are predicted to ease to more normal levels in February.

Until Next time

Geoff Hunter

Regional Extension Officer - Namoi | CottonInfo
M 0458 142 777 | **E** geoff.hunter@cottoninfo.net.au
| **W** www.cottoninfo.com.au

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