



**Information** when you need it



# the **cotton tale**

**May 2023**

## **Picking underway**

A few fields were picked last week and a lot more will start this week with the run of fine weather. So far individual field yield estimates have ranged from 6 b/ha to 13 b/ha. This month's newsletter will focus on managing the process of getting cotton into a round module and achieving the best quality result for your cotton.

## **Staging the delivery of modules**

With modules on different fields and a number of trucks delivering to the gin it is important to have clear communication with everyone so modules are delivered to the gin from the same field. This allows yield to be calculated for different fields and any quality deviations e.g. moisture levels, micronaire, colour, leaf to be tracked back to particular field operation timings ( e.g. planting, defoliation, picking dates).

Communication with the gin must be clear especially with any trials going to the gin. Any cotton that has the potential to be higher in moisture should also be clearly identified as well.

## **Keep your cotton free of contamination.**

**Source: ACSA April newsletter**

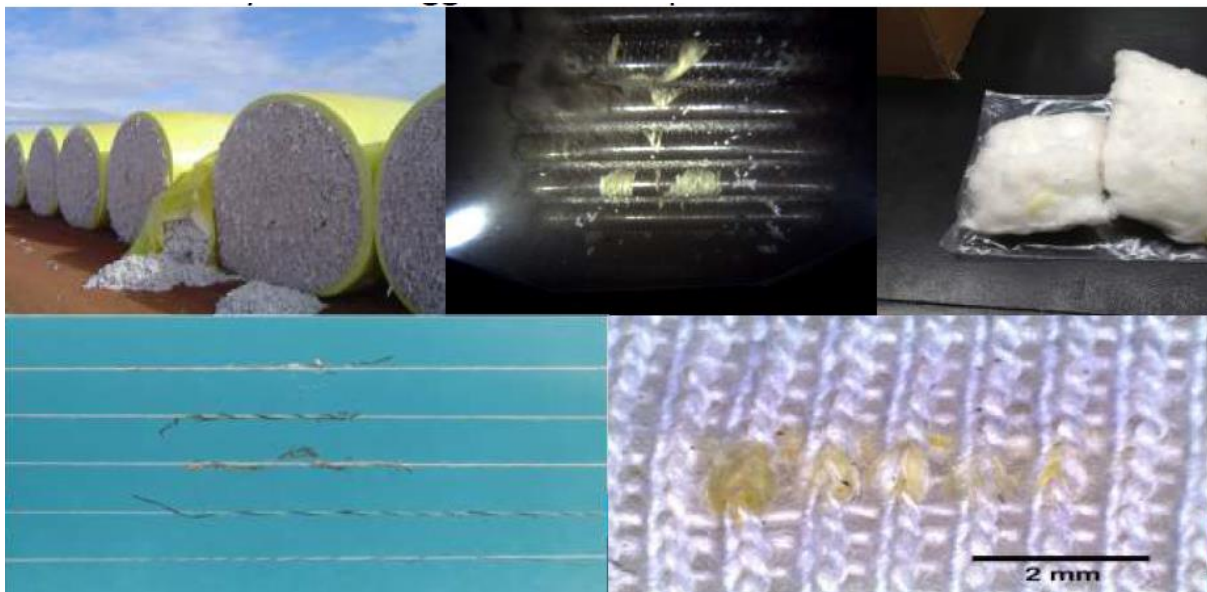
The Australian cotton industry works hard to ensure we deliver a product free of contamination. As marketers of Australian cotton, ACSA members push this message to the global textile chain and our fibre is in high demand due to our low contamination levels. That said, plastic module wrap has the ability to dismantle our crown and to destroy our reputation.



Contaminants that cannot be removed by the gin, or during the spinning cleaning process, will become entwined with the cotton fibre during spinning, resulting in a defect in the thread or as a colour anomaly in the resulting fabric. Spinning mills employ teams of staff, or very expensive robotic sensing equipment, to carefully thread their way through raw cotton laydowns to pick out foreign material. This is a significant cost and introduces a bottle-neck to their operation, significantly slowing down operating times and reducing plant efficiencies.

Spinners using Australian cotton can do away with most, if not all of this checking, resulting in greater demand for our bales and higher prices to the Australian grower.

It is essential that our industry does all it can to prevent plastic wrap making its way into cotton bales. This responsibility lies with picker operators and growers to ensure wrap is applied correctly. In the event problems occur in the wrap process, for example, double wrap and “pig tails”, the affected modules must be tagged and notification of the problem advised to the ginner. With this information ginner can identify the problem modules and take the necessary steps to ensure wrap is correctly removed prior to entering the gin.



Plastic contamination in cotton yarn. Source Rene van der Sluijs.

## Cotton Marketing, Pricing and Fibre quality Workshops

The following short videos were recently recorded in workshops in Northern NSW/Southern Queensland.

Angus Marshall – In field management of fibre quality <https://youtu.be/i4vHUMxAxIA>

Rene van der Sluijs – The important fibre quality parameters and how to control them

<https://youtu.be/JH1Q9Hsk95E>

Jon Hurford - Cotton Classing 101 <https://youtu.be/RtOxm44yZjk>

Pete Johnson – Cotton marketing 101 <https://youtu.be/WQjRso3lfY8>

## **New Factsheet on Lint Turn Out**

Seed cotton that is delivered to the gin contains three main components: fibre, seed, and trash. One of the major tasks of the gin is to separate the fibre from the seed and remove trash. From a grower's perspective the amount and percentages of each of the three components are very important as they will determine their economic return.

[Turn Out | CottonInfo](#)

## **The critical period for weed control in cotton (CPWC).**

Graham Charles, NSW DPI Weed scientist, has conducted extensive mimic weed trials from 2003 to 2015 using millet as a substitute for grass weeds and sunflower as a substitute for large broadleaf weeds. He concluded that where grass weeds are present at densities of 10m<sup>2</sup> or more, a high level of weed control must be maintained throughout the first half of the cropping season in high-yielding cotton to ensure crop losses do not exceed the cost of weed control. Where large broadleaf weeds are present, a high level of weed control must be maintained throughout much of the cropping season.

This research has shown that high-yielding cotton crops are very sensitive to competition from grasses and large broadleaf weeds, but the CPWC had not been defined for smaller broadleaf weeds in Australian cotton. Field studies were conducted over five seasons using mungbean as a mimic weed. Mungbean was planted at densities of 1, 3, 6, 15, 30, and 60 plants/m<sup>2</sup> with or after cotton emergence and added and removed at approximately 0, 150, 300, 450, 600, 750, and 900 base 12 degree days of crop growth (GDD).

Mungbean competed strongly with cotton, with season-long interference; 60 mungbean plants/ m<sup>2</sup> resulted in an 84% reduction in cotton yield.

The researchers concluded that a high level of weed control must be maintained throughout the cropping season in high-yielding cotton where small broadleaf weeds are present at densities of 1 or more plants/m<sup>2</sup>.

Weeds present at lower densities will still need to be controlled before they set seed, to protect lint quality, to avoid difficulties at harvest, and to manage herbicide resistance by greatly reducing the number of seeds in the weed seedbank over time.

Cotton growers will need to adopt a more integrated approach to weed control, replacing glyphosate with alternative control tools, especially where glyphosate-tolerant and -resistant weeds are present. These tools might include applications of residual herbicides such as diuron, terbutylazine, metolachlor, pendimethalin, prometryn, and trifluralin, as well as POST applications of clethodim and haloxyfop.

Dicamba and glufosinate could also be used POST on cotton varieties that include the resistance genes for these chemistries (XtendFlex), and flumioxazin and paraquat may be used as in-crop shielded applications.

In addition, cotton growers should be using spot spraying, interrow cultivation, and hand hoeing to ensure weed escapes are removed before they set seed.



**Caption:** Growers need to include residual herbicides in fields with high weed numbers and not rely on glyphosate alone. As a rule of thumb, if weed numbers are increasing over seasons or mid-season exceed 10 weeds m<sup>2</sup> (as in this field), growers need to be including additional residual herbicides in their system.

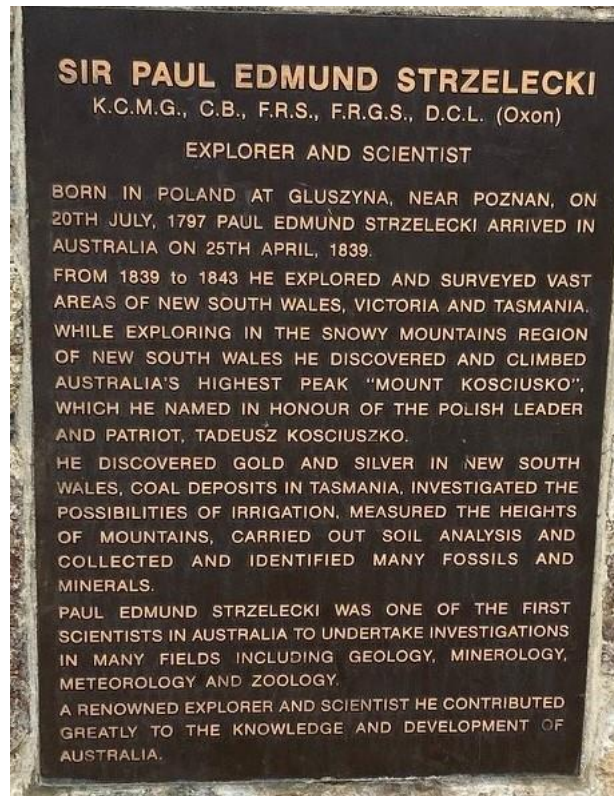
### **SVCGA Awards dinner 2023**

18<sup>th</sup> August Bagtown Inn Griffith is the date that has been set for the SVCGA awards dinner. More details to come. We are still after nominations for Grower of the year and also nominations for the Greg Toole Service to industry award. Nominees for Service to Industry must have:

- Provided exceptional service and shown significant commitment to the Southern NSW Cotton Industry.
- Achieved a positive impact on the Industry.
- Contributed a legacy for the industry's 'greater good'.

The service to industry award nominations can be made directly to me. We need these nominations now please!

**April quiz answer – Who is the famous Polish explorer and scientist?**



**Regards Kieran**

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