



the **cotton wrap**

December 2021

Cotton Update

Following a cold and wet start to the season it is great to see the sun finally shining! At the start of December, it was almost impossible to picture the crop with flowers before Christmas, but I was pleased to see the crop squaring well with some white and pink flowers out in the fields over the last few days.

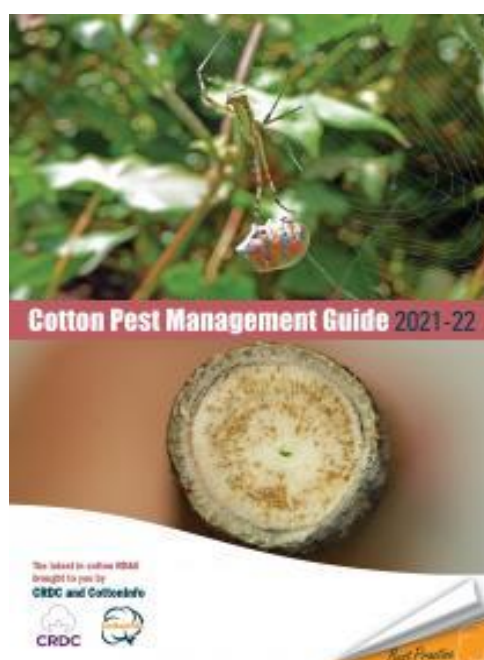
Across the area approximately 15% of the cotton crop has been replanted (various issues such a cold soil temps, wet weather and flooding to name a few). Many growers have experienced water logging issues and there have been discussions around using foliar fertilisers to help bring the crop out of this water-logged state. One interesting discussion I had was around the timing of foliar application and the importance of waiting until the crop has recovered slightly from damage. For instance, if the crop appears yellow, holding off application until it has begun growing through the damage so that the crop takes up the product and uses the full advantage of the fertiliser.

Cotton seen this week was between 12 and 15 nodes, with flowers starting on the 8th node and approximately 7 nodes above white flower (NAWF). Many growers have spread fertiliser and inter-row cultivated before irrigating. The temperature warmed up quickly and many fields have dried out quickly, meaning growers are running water.



Publications

Every year CRDC and CottonInfo produce the Australian Cotton Production Manual and Cotton Pest Management Guide. These books are an absolute go to for all things growing cotton! Download them [here](#) or if you would like a hard copy please give me a call and I will arrange to send one to you.



Disease Update

Early season disease incidence was high this season due to the cold, wet conditions we experienced. Fortunately, the severity of the disease in most affected plants was low enough that the plants were able to grow through any damage. However, I strongly recommend keeping a close eye on your crops this season for late season disease. Speaking with Duy Le (Pathologist for NSW DPI) this week, he has informed me that there have already been some samples sent in and identified as Verticillium Wilt. See image below. Duy recommends sending in ANY samples you may suspect as Verticillium Wilt for correct identification as it can be difficult to distinguish.

As an industry we know Verticillium Wilt is an issue and are concerned that given the conditions experienced recently, it is likely to be a major issue heading into next year. Soil inoculum levels are likely to be high and there is high chance of back-to-back cotton fields planted next season which could result in severe disease impacting the crop. Please keep an eye out for some information coming in the next few months about management of Verticillium Wilt on your farm.

In the meantime, please send in samples for identification. Ensure to dig out the whole plant (pulling can break off secondary roots which are important for identification of pathogens), place in a paper bag and send samples to:



Figure 1. Verticillium Wilt affecting young cotton. Note discolouration of leaves.

PLEASE SEND ALL SUSPECT FUSARIUM SAMPLES TO QLD DAF.

NSW: Send samples to:

Attn: Duy Le NSW DPI

Australian Cotton Research Institute

21888 Kamilaroi Highway

Narrabri NSW 2390

**For enquiries, phone Duy Le: 0439 941 542 or
(02) 6799 2427**

QLD: Send samples to:

Attn: Linda Smith Ecosciences Precinct

QLD DAF GPO Box 267

Brisbane QLD 4001

**For enquiries, phone Linda Smith: 0457 547
617 or (07) 3708 8456**

Bug Checker Workshop

On the 14th of December, CottonInfo and CSIRO hosted a workshop aimed at new and returning bug checkers for the season ahead. We held the workshop at the ACRI in Narrabri and had 30 participants from across the Namoi and Gwydir regions attend.

Sandra Williams from CSIRO took us out into the field and gave a discussion on the importance of bug checking a cotton crop regularly as well as the different methods to do so. Sandra gave demonstrations before encouraging the attendees to have a go themselves. Visual assessments as well as beatsheets and sweep nets were used to practice bug checking the crop.

Tanya Smith from CSIRO hosted a session on pest and beneficial insect identification, outlining the different life cycle stages and similarities of many of the insects found in cotton. Tanya and her team had also captured many insects from a nearby lucerne crop to place on a beatsheet for the participants to identify and see how quickly some of these critters move about!

The morning was informative and the responses from participants were all really positive. I was glad to see so many getting involved and asking questions to help their learning as well as meeting new people in the industry. I'd like to thank Sandra, Tanya and the team at ACRI, Janelle Montgomery (CottonInfo Gwydir) and to the participants who came along! See below some photos taken from the morning as well as some comments made by the participants.

"Really well set out and organized. Engaging and informative info. Got to do some really good networking with fellow bug checkers!"

"The teachers were brilliant in both sessions"



Figures 2 & 3. Identifying insects on beatsheets.

CSD Update

CSD and Lower Namoi Cotton Growers Association annual field day will be held on the 24th February 2022 at CSD Farms Wee Waa. Showcasing the new B3XF cotton varieties; digital tools from CSD and CSIRO researchers supported by the local CSD Extension and CottonInfo team. Event flyer will be available in the New Year.

Dates for your Diary

- AgSkilled and Tocal College are again hosting their Cotton Pest Management Course. For 2022 the course will be run in Narrabri and Leeton see dates below and register your interest [here](#).
 - Narrabri: 12-13th January 2022 (registrations close 7th January)
 - Leeton: 18-19th January 2022 (registrations close 12th January)
- CSD/CottonInfo Field Day at Bourke late January – details to come

- DIGIFARM Expo Narrabri 16-17th February hosted by The University of Sydney Plant Breeding Institute. For more information, please contact narrabri.enquiries@sydney.edu.au
- CSD Field Day Lower Namoi: 24th February 2022
- GRDC Grains Research Update
 - Dubbo: 24-25th February 2022
 - Goondiwindi: 1-2nd March 2022

That's all for now. As always, please reach out with any issues/concerns. Wishing you all a safe and Merry Christmas and best wishes for the New Year.

Best,

Emma

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Figure 4. Cotton at Narrabri



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