

DETECTION OF STICKY COTTON

If you suspect the presence of stickiness there is a simple method, using Universal Indicator, to determine the presence and degree of stickiness. This simple, easy and quick method is currently used by the classing and ginning industries in Australia. There are other methods available to verify the presence of stickiness. These are not commonly used by classers and gins as results are not immediate, and may require samples to be sent internationally, which is costly and time consuming.

The Universal Indicator Solution, which has a pH range from 3 (strong acid) to 11 (strong alkali) can be sourced and purchased from any chemical company that supply to laboratories and schools. The solution reacts to either natural plant sugars or secretions deposited on the fibres by insects, changing the surface colour of cotton thus indicating the presence and extent of sugar.

PROCEDURE

- When performing the test indoors place a plastic sheet on the floor or table surface and ensure adequate ventilation.
- As this solution is classified as hazardous the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including gloves, mask, safety glasses etc. must be used.
- Pour solution into a spray bottle and hold approximately 35 cm from the cotton samples and spray a fine mist onto them.

REACTION

- The solution will create a colour change on the cotton samples.
- Allow 30 seconds for the colour change to occur before assessing within 5 minutes.
- If the surface colour changes to blue/green, there is no presence of stickiness.
- If the surface colour changes to yellow, there are low levels of stickiness present.
- If the surface colour changes to orange, there are medium levels of stickiness present.
- If the surface colour changes to red, there are high levels of stickiness present.



CottonInfo thanks the external reviewers from ACSA for their valuable input and feedback in strengthening this factsheet.

For further information:

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