



# the cotton wrap

December 2023

## What's been happening?

This season seemed to throw everything at us, from a dry winter and unusually cold temperatures throughout October, to thrip damage, hail, and everything in between! Conversations with many growers and consultants were much the same with most acknowledging the tough start and slow growth of their crops.

*"Toughest start in over 20 years"*

*"Rotten luck with the conditions"*

*"Cold October, wet November"*

However, the sun is shining, the rain has fallen, and the cotton is settling into growing as it should. Many early planted crops are well into squaring with some even flowering before the Christmas break. Retention counts are excellent and despite some overcast weather, I haven't come across much shedding yet. There are quite a few XtendFlex® Cotton crops around the Namoi this season, and I am eager to see how they progress over the next few months.

The CSD Trials Program in the Namoi this year is extensive and includes all of the new XtendFlex® cotton varieties. The Namoi team are planning some field walks and hope to showcase to growers and consultants how these varieties grow in all areas of the valley. Keep an eye out for some field walk dates, we hope you can make it!



## Rainfall totals November & December (as at 21/12/2023)

Sourced from <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/data/>

- Bourke – 94.6mm
- Walgett – 148.8mm
- Wee Waa – 132.2mm
- Narrabri – 145mm
- Gunnedah – 147.4mm
- Quirindi – 129.1mm



## VERT ALERT!

A few Verticillium Wilt affected plants found in the Namoi this week. Vert symptoms showing on the 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> true leaf with fresh growth looking OK. The warm weather that hit throughout early December has helped promote fresh growth that is seemingly unaffected. Hoping Vert will keep at bay for the next few months. As always if you have any questions/concerns or would like to submit any samples for correct disease identification please get in touch with myself or Duy Le.



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Photo taken: 01/12/2023.  
(Pathology confirmed)

## Insects

Thrip pressure this year was very high, especially on the early planted crops. Leaf damage was severe and many plants were 'tipped out' and insecticide applications, although not common practice were used for controlling thrips. Mites have been seen on 11-node cotton in low numbers, but present nonetheless.

Beneficial insects such as Ladybug and Red and Blue beetle are very abundant at the moment. Thrip are also hanging around on some crops which will become a benefit for keeping 2-spotted mite numbers at bay.

## Plant backs

A friendly reminder about plant backs when applying herbicides. This photo was taken of cotton affected by a Group 14 herbicide (formally Group G). The symptoms were purpling and necrosis with curled cotyledons with stunted growth. The new growth was OK on majority of plants, however it set the plant back at least 3 weeks.



Photo taken: 17/11/2023

## There is still time to get your entries into the 2023/2024 FastStart Cotton Establishment Awards!

Open to growers across Australia's cotton valleys, there are 11 prizes for regional winners in the form of \$1000 gift cards to Total Tools. Focused on the pivotal first 70 days of cotton crop establishment, FastStart™ partners CSD and Syngenta will review the entries throughout the course of the season.

On top of the \$1000 regional prize, the two overall winners will also receive a Kincrome tool kit for their ute or workshop valued at nearly \$5000 each.

It is super simple to enter – just complete the form by clicking the link. Don't forget to include a picture of you in your crop! Entries are judged on a combination of the establishment percentage and Planter Uniformity Index (PUI) of each eligible crop. T's & C's [here](#).



Entries close 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024



## CottonInfo Improvement Survey

The CottonInfo Improvement Survey is part of a continuous improvement process being undertaken by CottonInfo at the request of partners CSD, CRDC & Cotton Australia.

The key purpose is to ensure CottonInfo meets the needs of growers and the wider industry moving forward. CottonInfo includes the myBMP program, research and development, and extension – and **we'd love your input!**

Please remember to hit submit at the end of the survey. The survey is completely anonymous. Thanks in advance! [Click HERE to complete the survey](#).



**CottonInfo** Information *when you need it*



is a joint initiative of



*Best Practice*





## CRDC News

### Cotton industry leader to lead CottonInfo into 2024 & beyond

After an extensive recruitment process, Dr Janelle Montgomery has been named as the new Program Lead for the Australian cotton industry's extension program, CottonInfo.

An industry leader in her own right, Janelle is a familiar and trusted face, having been part of the CottonInfo team since its establishment in 2012; first as a Technical Lead for water and efficiency, then taking on the Regional Extension Officer (REO) role in the Gwydir Valley in 2017.

Read more about Janelle's new role [here](#).



### National Soils Survey

*Farmer & Ag-Industry survey of knowledge and extension gaps and opportunities to better manage Australian soils.*

Have your say: A national survey to understand soil issues, knowledge gaps and opportunities – so far there have not been a large number of cotton growers respond. Please help us represent what you see as missing in soil research, development, and extension in your region by filling out this national survey.

This survey is part of a Regional Soil Coordinator project that aims to understand the current gaps in soil: knowledge management, adoption, and extension practices.

The aggregated (anonymous) results from this survey will be published in a report for the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF). Should you agree to participate, the survey should take approximately 20 minutes to complete and consists of 24 multi-choice questions, with optimal space to add more details if desired.

Click [here](#) to complete the survey.

For more information please phone  
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## SAVE THE DATE

28<sup>th</sup> February – Growing Better Namoi Valley Field Day, CSD Farms Wee Waa.



### SataCrop

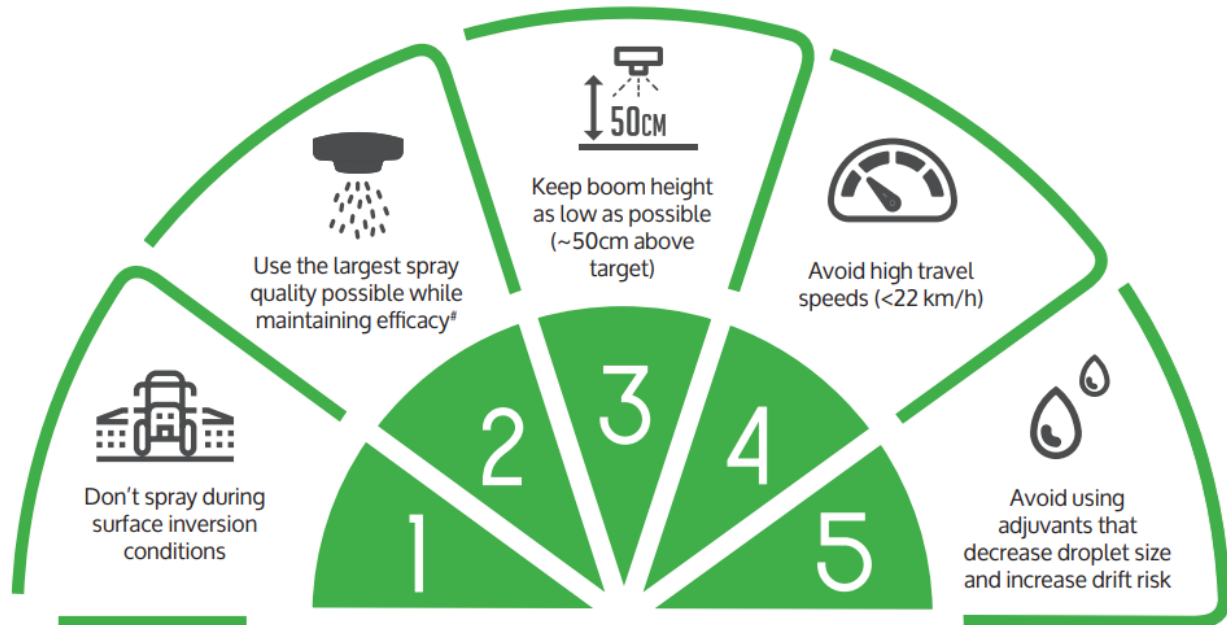
Please remember to get your crops marked onto SataCrop to make others aware of where sensitive crops are located. This goes for more than just cotton! Highlighting sorghum areas, citrus orchards and more is a great step towards mitigating your risk of exposure to harmful pesticides. Head to the [SataCrop website](#) and start adding in your fields!

### WAND System

WAND (Weather and Networked Data) is a new technology that provides real time weather data about the presence or absence of hazardous temperature inversions. This will take the guess work out of when you can and can't spray and potentially open more spraying hours with greater certainty. 100 inversion towers (10m high, Profiling Automatic Weather Stations (PAWS)) are currently being installed across the eastern Australian grain and cotton regions. The data is provided by the WAND app to your phone, iPad or desktop. If a hazardous inversion is present you cannot spray. However, if a hazardous inversion is absent, you can consider spraying so long as all other label recommendations are being met, ie. wind speed, nozzles, application speed, boom height etc.

A short video about the WAND system can be viewed [here](#).

## Five commandments according to SOS



<sup>#</sup> Observe label directions for minimum and maximum droplet size. Water rates may need to be modified with increased droplet sizes

Wishing you and your family a safe and Merry Christmas.

All the best.

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