Welcome to the 2018/2019 cotton season. We are not in the best shape in terms of available water however at this stage we estimate around 16 500 ha will be planted in the 2018/2019 season.

The 2017/2018 season was a long hot slog however it was worth the trouble as prices and yields were at record highs. To find out how high come along to the MCGA grower of the year awards being held at the Old Dubbo Goal on the 2nd of November.

**THINGS TO DO BEFORE THE SEASON ✓**

1. **Check the planter...** Earlier this month we did a planter health workshop here is some of the highlights from that day. [planter health checklist 2018](#)

2. **Check the soil temps...**
The CSD soil temp network is up and running so log onto [CSD Soil temp network](#) and make sure you know if your planting on a “rising plane of temperature”. Check out the [FastStart](#) website for all you need to know about getting the cotton out of the ground first time, every time. [http://faststartcotton.com.au/about/](http://faststartcotton.com.au/about/)

   When it’s vital we don’t waste resources we need to take on board the information in the [table 1](#) to make sure we get it up in 5 not 29 days.

   **Table 1. The effect of temperature on cotton seedling survival and growth rate (source: Constable and Shaw 1988)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum soil temp at 10cm @ 8am (AEST)</th>
<th>Seeds emerging and survival</th>
<th>Days to complete emergence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10°C</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14°C</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18°C</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   **Fig 1. 7 day soil temp summary (source csd.net.au)**

3. **Get access to all the weather stations in your area ...**

   We are lucky to have free access to many weather stations in this valley. Once you register or log on you can put the link to the homepage on your phone, computer or tablet and be able to access anytime you like.

   *Here is the link to a few that I use on regular basis*
WEATHER STATIONS
CSD cotton fields weather stations
MCGA weather stations at “Mt Foster” and “Farrendale” MCGA weather stations
We also have 7 weather stations that have the inversion monitoring capabilities see the link to the information on how to register and get the app for access to the sites. The great thing about this is the ability to go in and download past history...

Macquarie Valley spray drift reduction tools package 2018.pdf
Oz forecast Oz forecast
WEATHER STIES
http://www.australianweathernews.com
CottonInfo has done some workshops on climate that has some good links the models and what you need to know here is a summary page from those meetings. climate workshop cheat sheet
You can also sign up to the moisture manager that comes out each fortnight. moisture manager subscription

PICKING AND GINNING REPORT
I have been going back over the last few years and wondering where the Macquarie sits in terms of average yield per season against all the other regions. We are definitely one of the top performers year in and year out.

Table 2. Average yield overall and per valley (source Australian Cotton Grower Cotton year books)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Irrigated Industry Average yield b/ha</th>
<th>Irrigated Macquarie valley yield b/ha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017/2018</td>
<td>13.9??</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/2017</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>11.4**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/2016</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>12.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013/2014</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>11.2*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Macquarie had highest yield industry wide** Macquaire equal first with McIntyre Valley ??? estimated only

Where will be after the record breaking 2018 season?, well early reports say the valley average will hover around 13.8b/ha.

Ginning has all but finished up across the valley and reports from the gins are very positive Auscotts grower service manager Mike shields has reported that “currently we are estimating average yield to be approximately 13.8 to 14.1 bales per hectare.” (notice he is using some good approximating and estimating language here ) he states that “ quality has been excellent overall”. He has commented that” colour would be 93% 21 or better, Micronaire excellent with lower Macquarie averaging in the higher bracket 4.6 to 4.9, and the upper Macquarie around Narromine etc average in the range 3.8 to 4.5”. Jacinta Condon Marketing Services Officer Qld Cotton had a very positive report “What a high we have just come off “. “High Price, high quality and high yields” she “approximates” the average to be around the 13.8b/ha mark. Quality was excellent this year no complaints in the export market. Perfect colour and long staple. Best the Macquarie has ever grown looking back on historical data.

Kylie Edwards Area Manager for the Macquarie, Lachlan and Murrumbidgee valleys for Namoi Cotton Co-Operative Ltd. She commented that " yields have been phenomenal". She “approximates” that the valley average for her clients is close 14b/ha which has been the highest of all the cotton valleys in Australia this year. “Colour and leaf
were predominantly 11-2’s, 21-2s and even a few magical 11-1’s”. There was a very small amount of high mic in some areas, but this seemed to be the worst of what was a very good season. Turnouts were unbelievable, with a couple of growers getting over 46%, with the rest coming up behind, mostly with 43% and 44% for their 746 and 748 varieties. Kylie commented that “all in all, growers in the Macquarie have produced some beautiful cotton and they should all be pretty impressed with their final results” . I think we can all agree that she is right.

WHERE CAN I FIND IT ? .....  
I have included this section as it is spurned by the questions that I get from growers during the month and if one person has this question maybe others do to so here it is.

SPRAY APPLICATION BOOKS
With all the buzz in the valley at the moment that the “SOS committee” has created on reducing off target spray drift (if you have been hiding under a rock and don’t know what they are about here go to the website  https://www.sosmacquarievalley.com.au/ I have been getting some enquiries about where to get a hard copy (duplicate) spray record book for the spray rig. I put the feelers out the CottonInfo team and here is what they came up with.  
smart train spray order book  
Spraywise log book
If you’re a bit more technology savvy you might like to go for app version that will store and keep all records such as spray log app

COTTON MAPS
While we are on this topic with less cotton being planted this season its even more important that we update the cottonmap for the coming season. Please continue to communicate with your neighbours and spray contractors to ensure they’re aware that spraying Group I herbicides when conditions are not ideal is a damage threat to cotton crops across a wide area. Another point of note is bees. Please take care when recommending and applying insecticides that are toxic to bees. Putting your farm on BeeConnected http://beeconnected.org.au is a great way to alert apiarists where cotton is being grown. There has been some proposed changes to label requirements of certain 24D products that could in place by October this year they include changes to the label such as mandatory no-spray buffer zones for the protection of non-target vegetation and aquatic areas, and to provide additional instruction to ensure that application does not occur during temperature inversions. These changes only relate to record keeping and application technique including spray quality, timing, and the observance of buffer zones, and do not change or restrict other aspects of the currently approved use patterns and should not affect product availability. For more information label changes 2018

COTTON TRASH FOR FEED SUPLEMENTS

FEEDING OF COTTON TRASH
As cotton growers begin to receive requests from graziers for cotton gin trash as stock feed, it’s time for a reminder about why we need to protect our industry from the risk of potential chemical contamination. Since 2006 the Cattle Council of Australia, Australian Lot Feeders Association, Cotton Australia and Cotton Ginners Association have in place a memorandum of understanding specifying that cotton trash will not be supplied to any person for the purposes of using it as stock feed, as a mulch material, or as an ingredient in manufactured
stock food. In addition, the cotton industry has also agreed that livestock will not be given access to cotton fields whether for grazing cotton crop residue or green feed around infield irrigation infrastructure. Along with these restrictions, the grazing or baling for the purposes of feeding to livestock of failed cotton crops is also not permitted. An assessment of the chemical residue risk of cotton trash conducted in 2014 uncovered a number of organochlorine samples such as DDT and dieldrin. These chemicals have been banned for decades and could potentially lead to automatic export market bans if detected at port in overseas countries.

PLEASE DO NOT FEED COTTON TRASH TO YOUR STOCK (Source /Buying-stock-feeds-minimising-chemical-residue-risks.pdf centralwest.communications=lls.nsw.gov.au@mail101.atl231.mcsv.net

WORKING TOGETHER GETS THE JOB DONE ......

Fig 2. Your united front in the Macquarie Valley when it comes to anything cotton from L to R Craig McDonald CSD, Amanda Thomas CottonInfo and Julie Wise Cotton Australia. The industry joined forces at the well attended SOS Macquarie Spray Drift awareness workshop and field days. We may not have had the best stand on the ground, and the conditions certainly were not conducive to a good spray, however they were conducive to a good pre season catch up with your industry reps. If your wondering what each of us does then here is a quick summary, Craig is the CSD Extension Agronomist, he is your man for any CSD related issues such as crop establishment and varieties etc his number is 0484513566.

Amanda works for the CottonInfo team which is also an extension arm for CSD as well as being the link between growers and researchers (in the nutshell version), I can help answer any questions pertaining to management of the cotton crop. Julie is your Cotton Australia Regional Manager, she is your go to person for MyBMP, Spray Drift Issues, she also works closely with the MCGA to communicate any industry messages back and fourth and helps to co ordinate the grower panel reps in our valley. We all band together to work with the MCGA to bring you things like the grower of the year awards and annual field days and workshops.

WHATS HAPPENING AROUND THE TRAPS ?

Macquarie Valley Cotton Growers Association (MCGA) held their AGM on the 28th of August at the Narromine Aero Club, we combined this with the AGM of the MRFF and both meeting were well attended. We had Adam Kay from Cotton Australia provide some updates and answer a few questions from the floor. The outgoing Chairman Ryan Pratten recapped on what has been a pretty big year for the MCGA he thanked out our outgoing committee members and we welcomed in the new ones the changes were as follows.
Craig McDonald was elected as an appointed Industry representative as was the new elected Cotton Australia Director Susan McCutcheon. With Susan and Craig as well as Julie Wise in the appointed positions on committee to make sure the MCGA has the latest industry updates, and that we as industry members can feedback what the MCGA is doing to the various industry bodies.

Scott Vincent finished his three year term and we welcomed Billy Browning from Narromine onto the committee. A previous MCGA member Sinclair Steele was nominated and elected as the new Chairman and Amanda Thomas was nominated and elected in as Vice Chairman (note Amanda has moved from appointed position to elected position). On behalf of the MCGA we would like to thank Ryan Pratten and Scott Vincent for the work they have done over the past three years, its not until we look back and see what we have achieved that we realise how important the CGA’s are to the both the valley and industry. They are not paid positions and often the grunt work is done at 11pm or 5 am to make sure we get things done with the limited time we have available, so thanks for all your efforts to everyone on the committee past and present.

Chairman
Vice Chairman
Secretary
Treasurer
Committee
Alternates
Appointed Positions

Sinclair Steele
Amanda Thomas
Sophie Obrien
Kerry Duncan

Jacinta Condon
Tim Gainsford
Billy Browning

Ryan Pratten
Scott Vincent

Julie Wise
Craig McDonald

Sue McCutcheon

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Friday 2nd of November MCGA grower of the year awards being held at the Old Dubbo Goal

Fig 3. David McGavin testing some of the planters boxes at the planter health check at "Millawa"

Hope you enjoyed another gripping edition of the Macquarie Bale up and hope to see you all at the awards night with your dancing shoes on......

Amanda Thomas
Regional Extension Officer - Macquarie |
CottonInfo
M 0417 226 411 |
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