



the **cq cotton call**

October 2023

Welcome to the October Edition

What's been happening?

Approximately 28,000 ha of irrigated cotton has been planted in CQ this season, with 20,000 ha from the Emerald region and 8,000 from Dawson/Callide. Central Queensland cotton growers experienced one of their best seasons in 2022/23, resulting in exceptional yields across many farms, with growers producing some of their best average yields. As we are at the end of October already, which is crazy, most irrigated cotton is planted and well underway. First watering is going on for most, as we see very dry conditions continuing into November. Like most I'm sure you are all hoping to see some storm activity in the very near future as we get further into the season.

It's great to hear both Queensland Cotton gins reached record bales in both Emerald and Moura for the 22/23 season, as Moura has finished up. 80% of the cotton was base grade or above which is such a great result for the region especially with over 80% of that long season cotton. Coming off the back of a great 22/23 year the Central Highlands will be celebrating their success at their awards night in November. Below are some important dates for events across CQ that are coming up:

Dates for the diary

17th November: Central Highlands Cotton Growers and Irrigators Association Awards Night, Emerald

6th December: The Beatsheet, Workshops on insect identification and management, Emerald [Insect workshops for 2023](#) | [The Beatsheet](#)

16th December: Central Highlands Cotton Growers and Irrigators Association Christmas Party, Emerald

CQ Cotton Research

To those who didn't come along to any of the CGA updates in Emerald or Theodore I thought I would let you know what is going on with the trials and research this year in CQ.



CSD Variety Trials:

We have two irrigated Xtendflex variety trials across the region which covers all 5 of the new varieties in these trials. Pending on the rainfall in the coming months we have 2 locations for dryland Xtendflex trials but will wait and see if they get planted. We will be collecting data throughout the season again on these new varieties to help with understanding them and to be able to present the findings at field walks later in the season. There is about 3,000 ha of Xtendflex varieties planted across CQ this season under Bayer permit which makes up about 15 – 16 growers. This will allow growers and consultants in the region to get a good hold on these new varieties and get an understanding of how they grow in different conditions. You can hear more about these new Xtend cotton varieties on the [Cotton Yarns Podcast](#), with James Quinn. There is another interesting podcast recently released: [Breeding Australian Cotton Varieties](#) with Warwick Stiller. It describes the cotton breeding process.... amazing!



XtendFlex Cotton

Jul 28, 2023

[Read more](#)

CSD RWI – Long Season Cotton

Continuing this season for its second season is the 'Long Season Cotton Research' project. There are 10 fields across CQ that will be monitored this season collecting stages of plant growth throughout the first phase and second phase of growing. Added to the collection of data this season will be more leaf and petiole tests taken across both the Callide Dawson and Emerald regions. These will be ideally taken at first square, first flower, cut out and in the second phase, these will be pending with how the season plays out. These collections will help identify when and how much nitrogen the plant is up taking at different stages and therefore help with management decisions for fertilizer applications in the second phase of growing. Pre and post soil tests have and will be done in these fields again this year as well to help identify the nutrition uptake of the long season cotton plant.



QDAF Disease Research

Linda Smith and the Queensland pathology team have 4 spore traps in the Dawson again this season. They will be there throughout the season with the 'sticky' slide inside them being changed fortnightly and sent to the lab for analysis. These are to help them identify and understand what is causing reoccurring wilt in these fields.



CRDC Water Productivity Benchmarking

Sarah Dadd the Research and Development Officer for Water Productivity from the NSW DPI will be visiting CQ in the first week of December. She will be looking to get growers on board this season to contribute to the water productivity benchmarking project by providing on farm water information for the 23/24 season. This project enables the Australian Cotton Industry to track its water use efficiency over time. At a farm level you will receive a report showing how you are performing in terms of water use efficiency compared to industry. All data remains anonymous. Now is a great time to jump on board, hear from Sarah what needs to be collected throughout the season to be able to contribute to this great project that is continuing to expand.



There are many other projects and research happening across the region and as these develop and progress I will inform you all about them.

Nutrition Workshop Summary

Thank you to all who attended and supported the Soil Health and Nutrition Workshops that were held across CQ last month. If you missed them, please see below a summary of the workshops and contact details for the speakers if you would like any of your questions answered please don't hesitate to contact them.

We would love your feedback.....

For those that did attend can you please help CottonInfo and myself continue to bring you the best research and information for your region by taking a couple of minutes to fill in this short survey. Please find link to the evaluation survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/L3QMSYX>

Cotton Nutrition was covered by Chris Dowling (Back Paddock Company) and Jon Baird (NSW DPI). Improving N management is critical to the industry achieving its goal of reducing its carbon footprint and greenhouse gas emissions. Aligning N fertiliser application with cotton use will reduce losses, especially during the first and second irrigation events. The use of enhanced fertiliser also allows flexibility in the application timing of fertiliser into the system. The enhanced fertiliser delays the release of the nutrients either by use of microbial inhibitor or by a coating on the fertiliser granule. This allows fertiliser to be applied well before the plants require without the risk of losses. Click the link to see the CottonInfo [inhibitor factsheet](#).

Studies are occurring this season into the nutrient requirements of 'long season cotton'. The studies will look at uptake and efficiency of nutrient during both growth phases, with variable application timings to test best uptake and use. The long season cotton is novel in growing rates and length and therefore these studies will help develop specific guidelines for growers with these crops.

There is general agreement that soil health is important, but what it actually is remains less clear. If we approach it in a similar way to our own health, then it is more about doing the right thing by our soils than worrying about measuring specific things at scales that don't represent our approaches to field management. This is why the Sustainable Soils Framework currently suggests a range of practices that we know support our soils - by providing a stable home and feeding the soil biology.

At present the National Soils Strategy is working on developing indicators that will allow us to get a feel for our soils health, in much the same way as a pulse or blood pressure informs us of our health. Until then if you feel the need to quantify your soils health the best method is the Visual Soil Assessment for annual crops. It's relatively simple to undertake, provides score and, as long as we repeat it from time to time, can provide some indication as to how our soils structure is fairing.

No matter what you are doing, getting a *feel* for your soils is important, and don't forget, everyone working in cotton has access to SOILpak, which remains a phenomenal resource.



Emerald Workshop

1. Jon Baird
Jon.baird@dpi.nsw.gov.au
0429 136 581

2. Chris Dowling
CDowling@backpaddock.com.au
0407692251

3. Oliver Knox
oknox@une.edu.au
0490 045 326



Theodore Workshop



Plan for changing weather conditions this season - more time spraying and less time waiting.

The Weather and Networked Data (WAND) tool was co-funded by CRDC and GRDC with a commercial partner, Goanna Ag. It is a tool developed for growers and spray applicators to alert them to the presence of hazardous inversion conditions. The uptake of WAND was very positive with registrations to the free service rising by over 250% in four months.

Annette McCaffery, SOS NSW Coordinator, said that one concern from the campaign was that spray applicators will use WAND as a green light to spray without looking at the local weather conditions as well.

"Nobody wants to do the wrong thing, so growers, contractors and advisors are strongly encouraged to check local weather forecasts when planning spray operations and check local weather conditions prior to and during

spray operations.” “There is no doubt that the simple action of checking local conditions gets the best results, saves you money and reduces the stress that you may inadvertently drifted yourself or a neighbour.”

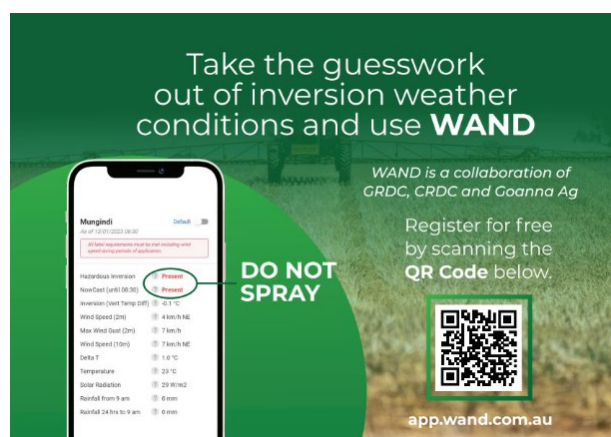
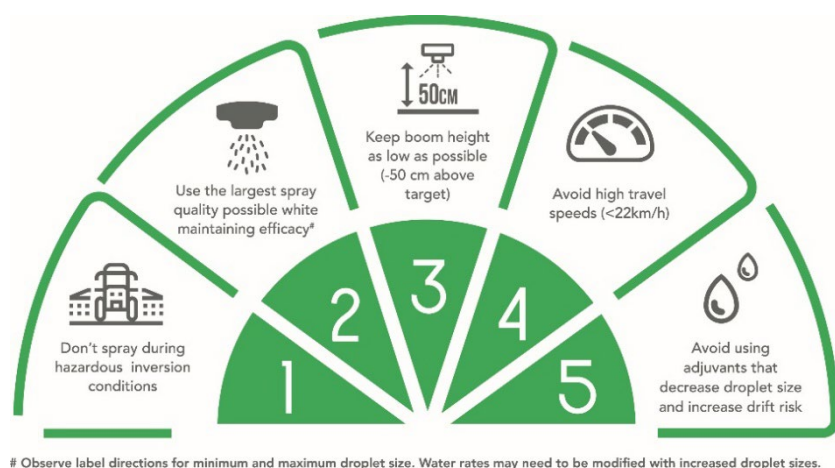
“This season SOS NSW will concentrate on assisting spray applicators to know what tools are already available and more importantly understand how to use the information to make good on-farm decisions around spraying and reduce the risk of spray drift,” Annette said.

Be a part of the majority who do not cause spray drift incidents:

- plan spray operations to consider local weather conditions so higher risk chemicals are sprayed during the least risky time
- register for [WAND](#)
- stop spraying if weather or hazardous inversion conditions change
- follow the SOS 5 commandments of spray best practice
- follow [@CentralWestFarmingSystems](#) social media channels for regular updates
- review the [SOS NSW website](#) for some great resources on spray drift

For more information on the SOS NSW campaign email admin@sos-nsw.com.

The 5 commandments of best practice spray operations.



Spray it right or lose the right

QR code for the WAND registration page.

WAND is a free service available this season for spray applicators to avoid hazardous inversion conditions.

Growers, advisors, and contractors are encouraged to register for the free hazardous inversion warning system WAND for this season.

Using the WAND Inversion Tower Network

GRDC recently hosted a webinar on using the WAND Inversion Tower Network. Covering topics on how to access, interpret and use data provided from the WAND network of inversion towers. Click [GRDC Grains](#)



[Research Update, online – Using the WAND Inversion Tower Network – How to access and interpret data - GRDC](#) to access the webinar recording.



Don't forget to listen to the latest CottonInfo Podcast [Crop to Top](#), where CottonInfo's Megan Woodward caught up with Hamish Clark, an early adopter of the WAND system, on his property near Boggabilla to get his take on being involved with the network and associated app, and found out some of the benefits he's experienced so far.



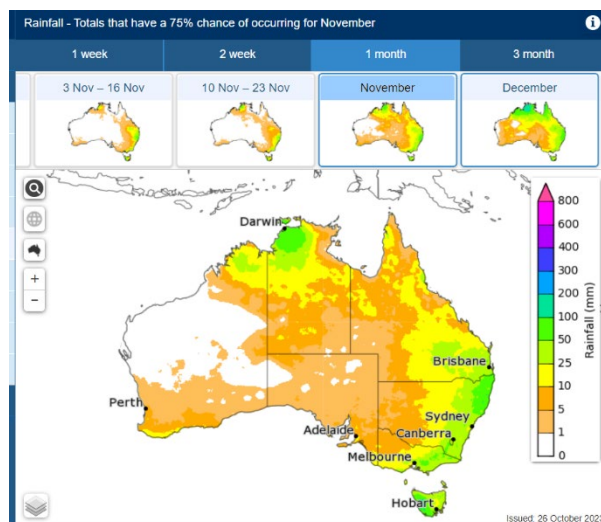
CottonInfo Moisture Manager

To assist key farming operations, the Moisture Manager will be issuing two fortnightly updates during summer and winter crop planting seasons. Routine monthly editions continue Mondays around the 20th, with the second spring planting edition to be released on October 30th. The latest edition: [CottonInfo Moisture Manager - neutral seasonal outlook a boost for cotton plant 23-24 \(mailchi.mp\)](#)

Seasonal Model Survey (Nov-Dec-Jan)

A shift in sentiment away from drier-than-normal probabilities occurred over the last month. Models now consistently favouring neutral conditions for NSW growing areas, with slightly less confidence for CQ during the same period. Temperature predictions show a similar trend for warmer-than-normal conditions.

| Source | Temp Forecast | Precipitation outlook | | | | |
|----------|---------------|-----------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | | Emerald | Sth Q'd | N-NSW | C-NSW | S-NSW |
| ACCESS-S | Hot | Drier | Neutral | Neutral | Neutral | Neutral |
| UK Met | Warmer | Neutral | Neutral | Neutral | Neutral | Neutral |
| IRI NMME | Warmer | Neutral | Neutral | Neutral | Neutral | Neutral |
| ECMWF | Warmer | Drier | Neutral | Neutral | Neutral | Neutral |
| CMCC | Warmer | Neutral | Neutral | Wetter | Wetter | Neutral |
| JMA | Warmer | Drier | Drier | Neutral | Neutral | Drier |



The 2023/2024 FastStart Cotton Establishment Awards are now OPEN!

Now open to growers across Australia's cotton valleys, there's 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. [FastStart Cotton Establishment Awards Terms and Conditions - The FastStart Cotton Program](#)



CSD, CRDC and Cotton Australia news links

[CSD News](#)

[CRDC News](#)

[Cotton Australia News](#)

On the Look out



Cotton Australia Regional Manager – Dawson Valley

Part-time or Contract Position – 1 day per fortnight (equivalent, flexible hours)

Cotton Australia is looking for a motivated, flexible person with a passion for the cotton industry to represent their organisation in the Dawson and Callide Valley. Your prime responsibility will be to work with growers, through the Dawson Valley Cotton Growers Association, to ensure they are fully serviced by Cotton Australia.

A strong focus on driving the adoption of the cotton industries myBMP program, focusing on both registration and completion through to accreditation. The performance in this area will be a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for this role. For more information, please contact Cotton Australia's myBMP manager Rob Crothers – 0408646111 or jobs@cotton.org.au

To apply, please send your current Resume and a letter of no more than three pages outlining why you are the ideal candidate for the position to jobs@cotton.org.au

Kind Regards

Kim Stevens

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