



October 2018

Welcome to cotton season 2018/19.

My name is Andrew McKay and I have recently commenced in the role of Regional Extension Officer for CottonInfo covering the MacIntyre valley, St George and Dirranbandi cotton production areas. My role is to provide the latest research outcomes and findings direct to cotton growers, consultants and the wider cotton industry in the Border Rivers region, from my base in St George.

CottonInfo is a joint initiative of Cotton Seed Distributors (CSD), the Cotton Research and Development Corporation (CRDC) and Cotton Australia. It is a unique industry partnership that aims to communicate the outcomes of research, encourage grower adoption and improve industry practices.

I have joined the 20-strong CottonInfo team, which includes fellow on-the-ground regional extension officers across the cotton growing valleys, researchers who are technical leads in their specific fields and *myBMP* best management practice support staff.

I originated from the Macquarie Valley town of Warren where my family commenced growing cotton in 1983. More recently I have worked in the Vanderfield group and Suncorp bank and have lived in St George with my family since late 2009.

I look forward to meeting and working with growers and those from affiliated industries.



*New CottonInfo REO for MacIntyre, St George and Dirranbandi
Andrew McKay with CottonInfo REO for Gwydir Janelle
Montgomery*

Planting Considerations

While most will have made these decisions already, just a reminder of the wealth of material available to assist with your decision making process at this stage of the season.

FastStart Cotton program Website

Links: <http://faststartcotton.com.au>

<http://www.csd.net.au>

Information available at these sites covers topics such as:

1. Varieties available, suitability to areas and watering regimes
2. Seed treatment options
3. Resources – contains links to R&D papers and a “Tools and Calculators” page that can assist with determining planting rate, when to plant (**the Green light for Planting**), replant calculator, varietal performance and comparison information. Also don't miss the “10 tips to get your cotton off to a fast start” section.

A download of the FastStart Cotton Establishment guide 2018 can be obtained from the following link <http://faststartcotton.com.au/downloads/>.

FastStart Cotton Establishment Award: on offer is a chance to win a trip for two to Broome and Kununurra. See site <http://faststartcotton.com.au/faststart-awards/> for details.

Water Considerations

With most facing limited water supply for their crop, maximising yield per ML is critical and solid planting versus skip row configuration deserves consideration. Ensure you review some of the information available for options to consider and aids to making a decision on planting configuration.

<http://csd.net.au/fofs/351-semi-irrigated-cotton-is-it-an-option-for-you>

<https://www.cottoninfo.com.au/blog/faqs-limited-water-scenarios-and-decisions>

myBMP

For growers considering how to adopt and implement “best management practise”, this is an online, self-assessable program in a modular format that can be worked through module by module. Growers can compare practices and measure improvement in a process designed to achieve a more efficient, profitable, safer and environmentally responsible cotton production process. Another benefit is the **Monsanto myBMP Bale grant** where eligible growers can receive a financial incentive for cotton produced on myBMP-certified farms. See below link for more details.

<https://cottonaustralia.com.au/cotton-growers/mybmp>

For those who have already undertaken myBMP certification, the **Better Cotton Initiative** provides access to premium markets and an opportunity to leverage a premium price for cotton produced under more sustainable growing methods such as those promoted through the myBMP program. See below link for details.

<https://cottonaustralia.com.au/cotton-to-market/better-cotton-initiative>

CRDC tour to St George

The board of the Cotton Research and Development Corporation (CRDC) will be visiting St George on November 7th and 8th 2018. The visit will incorporate a board meeting and farm visits examining bankless irrigation, April/May planted cotton and LoRaWAN (Low power, long range, wide area network) opportunities. Additional presentations will be made on “Innovations in Sensor technology”, “Plant Hormone Research” and “Analytics of Big Data for Better Farming Systems”. More information will be distributed in coming weeks.

2018 Variety Trials

Results of the variety trials conducted across the MacIntyre, St George and Dirranbandi regions are available on the Cotton Seed Distributors website <http://www.csd.net.au/trials/variety> .

Across most sites, irrigated and dryland, 748B3F was a consistent high performer. For those interested in non-Bollgard varieties, 711RRF achieved 12.55 b/ha - see the Talwood sites for details.

Soil Your Undies!!

An initiative to promote awareness and interest in the health of our soils, the “Soil Your Undies” program is simple yet effective experiment growers can conduct to provide an indication of the health of their soils. Details are available at <https://www.cottoninfo.com.au/soilyourundies> .

What's On

2018

October 24: North West Local Land Services – Spray drift and weed management workshop, Tulloona Fire Shed 3 -6pm. Contact Pippa Jones 0427 454 795 for more details.

November 7 & 8: CRDC in St George. November 7 - Grower presentations on bankless irrigation, April/May planted cotton, LoRaWAN opportunities at Rob Jakin's and Glenn Rogan's properties – growers are welcome. Also guest presenters on Innovation in sensor technology, Plant Hormone

research and Analytics of Big data for Better Farming. More details will be communicated closer to date.

November 14: MacIntyre CGA meeting 9am

2019

February (date TBA): Bankless Irrigation workshop, Goondiwindi.

Andrew McKay

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