



the **cotton wrap**

AUGUST 2017

SEASON SUMMARY

It just will not rain and Walgett is bearing the full brunt of the dry weather, especially the south and west. Bernie Bierhoff is watering some chickpeas west of Rowena but on the dryland side wheat crops are struggling. On the Liverpool Plains Angus Duddy tells me to just send rain and there is a similar sentiment all across this valley. Crops still look good but the continuous frosts and dry weather are starting to bite. Speaking of cold Angus sent me this picture of irrigation last Sunday where the mercury fell to -4.9°C at "Rossmar Park".



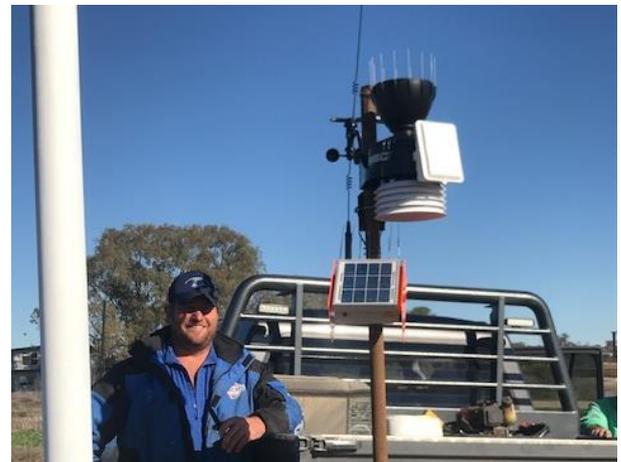
A frosty start at "Rossmar Park" last Sunday.

A couple of aviator friends had a fly about last week and they reported back that Pallamallawa and North Star look the pick of the crops and even up around Garah but west of Moree, Bellata and Narrabri crops are not so good.

East of Narrabri is still probably the pick of the crops in the Namoi but Durum wheat is getting an irrigation this week if water is available.

GRASSROOT GRANT

Simon Logan and I did get Matt Woodham out of his fuel trucks last week to install one of 3 weather stations on his property "Kalamos" as part of a Walgett CGA initiated Grassroots Grant Project funded by CRDC. Two more were installed at "Dundee" and "Bynia" which will help to build more knowledge about the weather out there.



Matt Woodham and a new weather station on "Kalamos", just east of Walgett.

DISEASE

A quick follow up on the rotational trial which is looking at Verticillium inoculum levels. The picture below shows one of the rotations which is a biofumigant and it is being green

manured last week with cotton to be planted this season.



Slashing and ploughing a biofumigant for Verticillium control near Narrabri.

HARVEST RESEARCH

Rene Vander Sluis (CSIRO) is the Cottoninfo Tech Specialist in fibre quality and he has been working on a number of in-depth studies, funded by the CRDC, and conducted in Australia between 2013 and 2017. This research has been on irrigated spindle harvested cotton to determine the effect of, harvesting method, both conventional versus round, to compare seed cotton moisture content, picker drum arrangement, and compressor plate pressure, spindle tip clearance as well as scrapping plates on fibre quality and processing performance within a high production environment.

Some interesting findings showed that the addition of scrapping plates (which can be retrofitted to the row side of the front and rear compressor plates, for a more aggressive contact with the cotton bolls) on the back compressor pressure plate resulted in a statistically significant positive increase in the

DRYLAND COTTON

The Dryland Cotton Research Association presented some interesting data last week from the cover cropping trial at Moree. The graph below was only one of a few and it shows the yield of wheat in the year following a cover crop which was also taken to yield.

yellowness (+b) and reflectance (Rd) values, which with a decrease in the trash count and size, resulted in an improved colour grade. The scrapping plates also resulted in a statistically significant positive increase in fibre length and micronaire and a decrease in elongation.

Similar harvesting trials are now planned for dryland cotton production, concentrating on strippers.

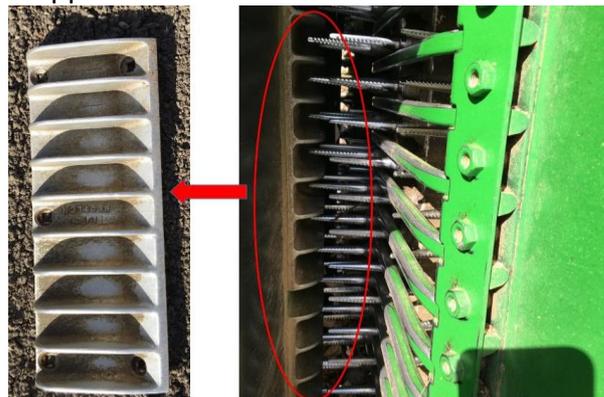


Image of JD scrapping plate and mounted on 7760 Picker

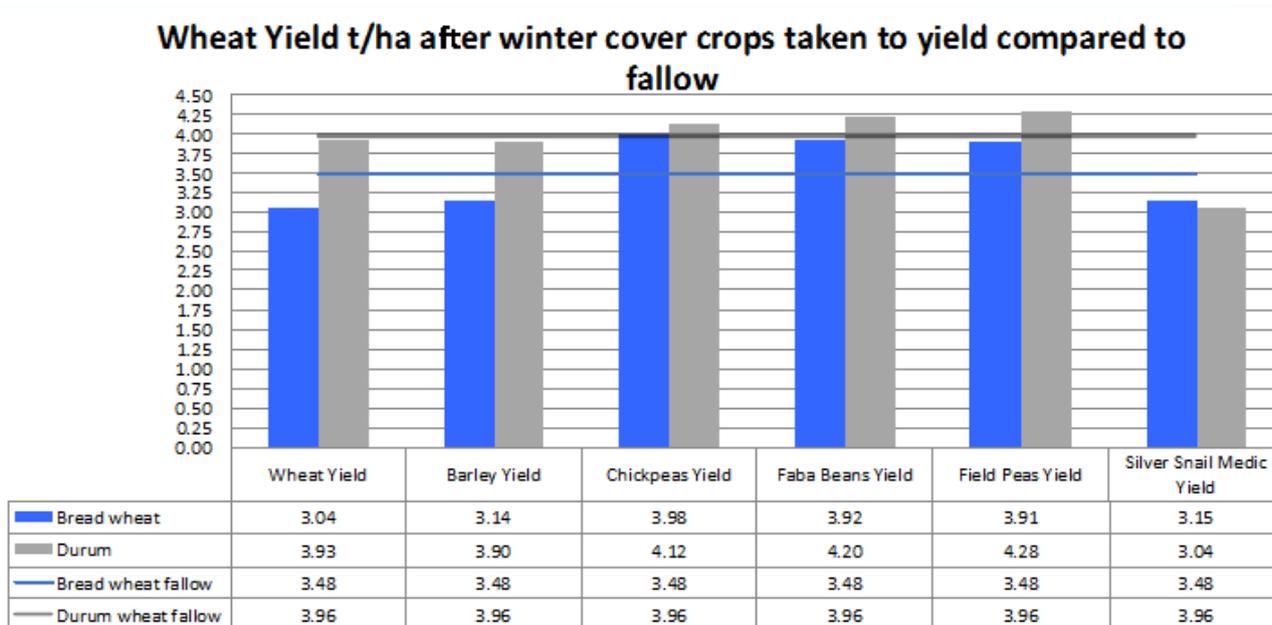
WHAT'S ON

28th/29th Aug- IPM Short Course, ACRI.
29th Aug- Dryland Cotton Information Day at Spring Ridge Country Club, 9-12. RSVP Annabelle Guest 0428 924568 - drycotresassoc@gmail.com
5-7th Sept- Association of Aust Cotton Scientists Conference, Canberra.
12th Sept- Climate Workshop, Royal Hotel Goondiwindi, 8.15am. Ph Jon Welsh on 0458 215 335.
12th Sept- Climate Workshop, Bellata Golf Club, 2.45pm Ph Jon Welsh on 0458 215 335.
13th Sept- Climate Workshop, Rowena Hall, 8.15am. Phone Jon Welsh on 0458 215 335

The take home messages-

- Taking cover crops to yield is better than brown manuring.
- Summer cover crops are more difficult to establish.

- Wheat following a legume yielded higher mostly due to higher N in soil.
- Cover crops build and store moisture equal to or better than a bare fallow.



The full data set and other projects will be presented next Tuesday 29th August at the Spring Ridge Country Club if you would like to come along.

It works better than you would think loading round cotton modules and a lot more useful for the rest of the year.



Courtesy of Ross Munro at BMC Moree

WELSHY'S WEATHER

There seems to be some sort of shift in the air pressure patterns for the first half of September.

In ENSO neutral years we rely on random 'weather' events occurring, rather than a general pattern of wet or dry.

The Indian Ocean is still neutral but trending dry. This is a concern coming into planting. Although thresholds of IOD positive aren't likely to be reached, the amount of available moisture in the mix will be reduced. And then there's the SAM. Once we're into the planting window it's important to keep an eye on this indicator, alongside colour charts. A positive SAM will help push tropical moisture in over cotton areas when we need it in the next few months

Until Next time

Geoff Hunter

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