



Information when you need it



the gwydir grower

9 April 2020

NSW has suspended the normal restriction for Oversize Over Mass Movement over the 2020 Easter period. For us this means that people who are picking will be able to move machines following the usual rules, rather than being limited by Easter Restrictions (See below).

Suspension of 2020 Easter travel restrictions - New South Wales



To assist the movement of freight, Transport For NSW have decided to suspend the usual oversize overmass (OSOM) daytime travel restrictions this Easter (2020). This decision has been made as a direct result of COVID-19 and applies only for Easter 2020.

Generally, there is no day time travel allowed for OSOM vehicles over the Easter long weekend from sunrise on Good Friday through to sunset on Easter Monday. These restrictions will not apply this Easter.

All over-dimensional movements will be permitted to operate as 'business as usual' either under Permit or Notice.

Please note: Movements requiring NSW Police escorts may not be possible due to Police availability during the COVID-19 response.

Further information can be found at [NSW Roads and Maritime Services Oversize and/or overmass \(OSOM\) vehicles and loads](#).

Regards

Road Access T 1300 656 371 F 1300 361 570

Crop Check

Day Degrees 1st Nov 2019 – 8th April 2020

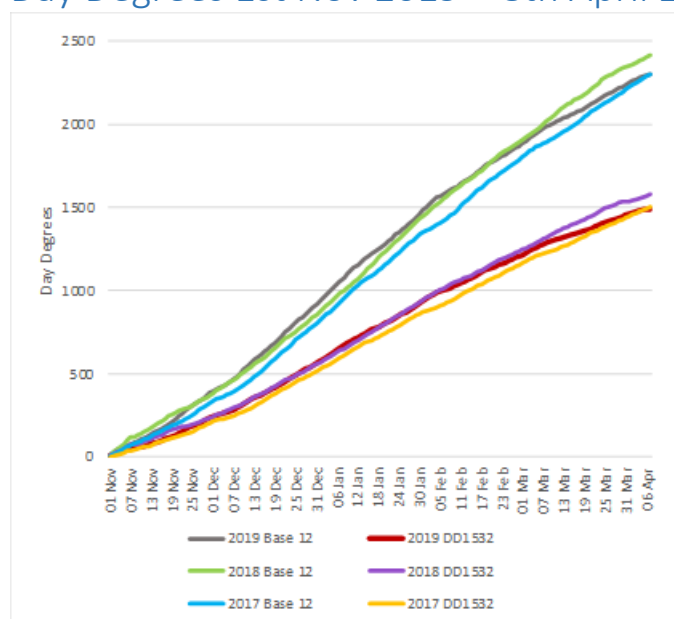


Figure 1: Accumulated Day Degrees 2019 DD 1532, 2018 DD 1532, 2017 DD 1532 compared to Base12

Source: <https://www.csd.net.au/ddc>

Table 1: Day Degrees seasonal comparison 1/11/19 – 8/04/2020

	2019	2018	2017	10 year mean
Base 12	2301.1	2413.1	2299.7	2231.3
DD1532	1489.9	1577.4	1500	1472
Cold shock days	8	4	3	4.1
Days above 36°C	59	65	54	41.4
Nights above 25°C	21	12	9	9
Days above 40°C	14	12	11	8.6
Average temperature (°C)	26.5	27.2	26.5	26.1

Source: <https://www.csd.net.au/ddc>

Defoliation – What the consultants say...

Last season the CottonInfo REOS also asked the local consultants about their defoliation practices which is available on the CottonInfo blog [here](#).


Keep Defoliation on Target

Defoliation is underway and the Cotton Industry is reminding all growers, consultants and applicators to be vigilant when applying harvest aids this season. Don't forget to check SataCrop <https://crop.satamap.com.au/>, which identifies sensitive crops in our regions. We encourage all farmers to use this platform to share information on ALL crops in your area.










Fig 1: Moree region – Cotton crops in white, dark green citrus and permanent trees in light green.
(Source <https://crop.satamap.com.au/>)

CottonInfo has also produced a Defoliation Preparation 2-page document that is a great summary of **best practice for defoliation**. Please share this document with your clients, applicators and contractors or print it off and leave it in the tractor or spray rig. The full document is available on the CottonInfo Website [here](#).



DEFOLIATION PREPARATION

 <h3>TRAINING AND ACCREDITATION</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A current chemical user accreditation certificate (AQF 3) is required by any operators applying chemicals in NSW All spray contractors and staff need to be licensed by EPA or Biosecurity Queensland 	 <h3>RECORD KEEPING AND PROTOCOL</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislation requires accurate records to be made Records need to be kept for 3 years in NSW and 2 years in QLD Check labels for any extra records that need to be kept in addition to state requirements 	 <h3>CROP MONITORING AND MATURITY</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spend time in-crop assessing maturity Focus on seed maturity utilising various methods such as boll cutting, percentage open and NACB maturity assessment Run down soil water (past refill) and nitrogen - this starts earlier in the season 	 <h3>PRODUCT CHOICE AND RATE</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See table below Choose products which are fit for purpose. Ensure to follow label instructions Be aware of the effects of mixing partners and adjuvants on volatility and drift potential Adjust label rates to account for temperatures pre and post application 	 <h3>DROPLET SIZE</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coverage is Key Always adhere to the label requirement Larger droplets can assist in crop penetration Assess current environmental conditions prior to, during and after application 	 <h3>CONDITIONS TO CONSIDER</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crop condition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water stress Nutrition levels Low humidity Temperature Monitor weather forecast in the lead up to, and 3-5 days post application Leaf impediments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waxiness Honeydew Dust Rainfastness of product Wind direction and speed 	 <h3>MINIMISE DRIFT</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be aware of sensitive crops, riparian zones and native vegetation All products have the potential to drift. Always spray under suitable conditions Comply with mandatory label requirements for buffer zones Planning ahead and communication between grower, agronomist and applicator is KEY
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DON'T FORGET TO CLEAN AND DECONTAMINATE SPRAY EQUIPMENT PRIOR TO, AND AFTER DEFOLIATION

For more information on how to make the decision to defoliate and to maximise yield and fibre quality visit www.cottoninfo.com.au/blog/defoliation-what-do-consultants-say

Plant health top tips – APRIL: COME CLEAN GO CLEAN

Come Clean. Go Clean is one of the simplest yet most effective ways of minimising the spread of weeds, diseases and pests. With the increased prevalence of glyphosate resistant weeds and the constant threat of pests and diseases, it is important to **ensure that all machinery, vehicles and equipment arriving on and leaving farm are mud and trash free**. Read the entire CottonInfo Blog [here](#).

Thinking about farm hygiene & green bridges into next season.

With flourishing weed and pasture growth with our recent rainfall, it is likely that we will see a future resurgence of pest activity, particularly from species such as Helicoverpa, mirids and aphids after what has been a relatively quiet season.

In pasture and rangeland areas, large numbers of Helicoverpa spp. are currently flourishing on weeds and pasture that has grown after recent rainfall. Many of these larvae will diapause in cooler regions and re-appear in spring when large influxes of emerging moths are likely to challenge legumes such as chickpeas and newly sown cotton. With some regions now having adequate soil moisture to support a winter crop it will be important to keep fallow areas free of weeds and importantly ensure that this season's crop destruction is 100 per cent effective. This is critical for minimising the opportunity for pests such as mealybugs to overwinter in your fields and re-emerge in 2020-21.

For some insights as to the wide variety of weeds that are currently hosting Helicoverpa spp check out this [video](#).

Read the full CottonInfo e-news [here](#)

SOS Gwydir – Funding Approved

SOS Gwydir is a group of farmers, consultants and resellers that are concerned about off target spray drift. The overarching goal of SOS Gwydir Valley is to ensure spraying takes place in the correct weather conditions and with compliant spray quality from any platform (hydraulic boom, PWM, optical etc) to get the best job possible in the field sprayed and stop off target spray drift.

In collaboration with Mungindi Cropping Group we applied for funding through the EPA and found out this week it's been approved!! This is great news for SOS Gwydir and MCG.

The projects approved for funding include:

- 1) Spray application survey - this provides a baseline for current practice and would be repeated on an annual basis to see how we are changing. Results will be collated and a report provided back to Gwydir SOS, so everyone will see the results.
- 2) Water Quality - if you do the survey you also get access to free water quality testing. These will be comprehensive tests of the water you use for spraying. Pat Hulme (Sustainable Soil Management, Warren) will collate the results and provide individual reports back to determine the correct mixes for your commonly used chemicals.
- 3) Community engagement - this was to be our Beers and Banger Spray Application Sessions, to be held on farm around the district. Unfortunately, with COVID-19, these will have to be postponed, but we can do all the ground work to run them out post COVID. In the meantime, we will look at other ways to get spray information out to everyone. One idea is to develop a Q&A platform with all the SOS groups (Riverina, Macquarie, Namoi, Gwydir, Mungindi & St George), podcasts where a couple of consultants, spray operators, or the like are interviewed on certain topics, webinars with Harry

Pickering (ADAMA) & Dave Farmer as an alternative to the workshops, updates from researchers such as Graeme Tepper - Inversion Towers. We are open to ideas.

If you have any questions regarding best spray practice or would like to have your email included in the SOS Gwydir contact list to receive updates please email sosgwydirvalley@gmail.com.



Meet your cotton researcher – Dr Nicole McDonald, University Southern Queensland

Nicole is doing some very interesting research to better understanding and plan for the future cotton industry workforce. She was recently interviewed by Sharna Holman from CottonInfo for the Cotton to Top Podcast Series. If you run a cotton business with employees, make sure you listen to this podcast – its GREAT! With ideas and information to attract and retain staff in the Australian Cotton Industry based on data collected across our industry. Nicole tells us the reason why NextGen want to work in the cotton industry, the importance of a sense of purpose for job satisfaction and why you need people whose values align with your farm business. Listen to the podcast here: <https://www.cottoninfo.com.au/podcasts/podcast-5-our-cotton-industry-workforce>.



What's your background?

I grew up in Toowoomba and am a real city girl moving to Brisbane and now Melbourne. I love dancing, movies, statistics, and hiking. I studied psychology and at the end of my degree I realised that I did not want to be a counselling psychologist but absolutely loved research. I'm really passionate about exploring individual's strengths, interests, and values and how these can lead to purposeful and meaningful work.

How did you end up in Cotton Research: An opportunity arose to do a CRDC supported PhD

project investigating the career motivations of on-farm workers in the cotton industry. I knew nothing about agriculture or cotton but am always keen to learn new things and this was just too good to pass up. After conducting my first interviews, I was hooked on the cotton industry. The people are amazing, the plant is fascinating, and the culture of continuous improvement is one that I wanted to be involved in, so I've looked for any opportunity to get more involved and to become a part of the industry. I've been given a lot of support from others in the industry along the way for which I'm really grateful.

What excites you about working in the Cotton Industry? What excited me about cotton is that the people are extremely collaborative and willing to openly share their expertise and experiences. They're also always looking for new ideas and ways to innovate or improve. It's actually a 'people' researcher's dream. Coming from the university system where things can be really theoretical, I love being challenged by industry to find the 'so what' and practical application of my research. I don't always succeed, but if I keep listening and learning I hope I can show a ROI and contribute to a stronger industry.

What is your current research project?

Agriculture 4.0 – the digital revolution is happening right now. This research seeks to identify the workforce structures and skills required to keep cotton businesses implementing innovative approaches now and into the future.

How will it benefit the grower?

It is expected that the research will discover what probable (not just blue sky possible) changes we will see in workforce requirements in the near and distant future. Identification of skills requirements, training needs and practices, workforce change management processes, and impacts of world of work trends on the attraction and retention of ideal workers will help growers be more informed when conducting strategic workforce planning within their businesses.

How will it benefit the industry?

The research is expected to provide evidence that is useful for skills training providers, contributing to applications to secure investment in workforce training, assisting workforce policy development in advocating for industry and informing career development and education initiatives to attract the next generation of talent to the cotton industry,

What do you like to do when you aren't researching?

When I'm not researching I love chilling out. Binging tv shows, listening to podcasts, eating out, catching up with mates, and going bush walking – I also enjoy a craft beer or two.

Thanks Nicole. For more information Nicole McDonald E. nicole.mcdonald@usq.edu.au M. 0403 204 199, Twitter: @nic_career

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