



# the cotton thread

Border Rivers, St George and Dirranbandi

## July 2020



St George cotton grower, Glenn Rogan, demonstrating some of the LoRaWAN technology set up on his farm as part of a CRDC Grass Roots grant project. A video series covering this project has recently been released on the [CottonInfo YouTube channel](#).

## Crop Update

Balonne and MacIntyre crops have been harvested with yield and quality results a mixed bag, largely driven by water availability and some late season boll rot and tight lock. Fully irrigated crops have yielded in the 10-13b/ha range while those with lesser water have reflected lower yields. The January temperatures were well above the 10 year average temperature for January (St George +4°C and Goondiwindi +2.1°C), however, this does not appear to have impacted fibre quality characteristics. Most crops were likely to have

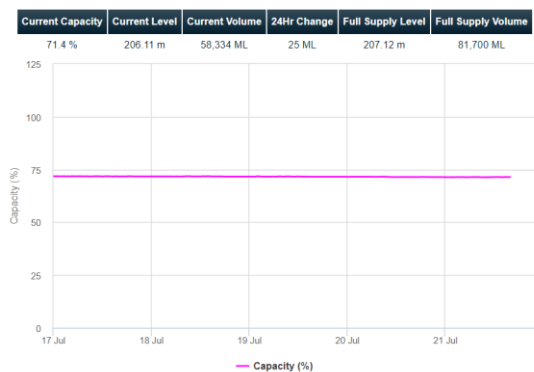
been in the fibre elongation phase at this time. February and March temperatures dropped to more normal temperatures coinciding with the fibre thickening period for many crops.

The Balonne region has started to receive cotton produced in northern Australia for processing which has seen a split in crop processing to accommodate this.

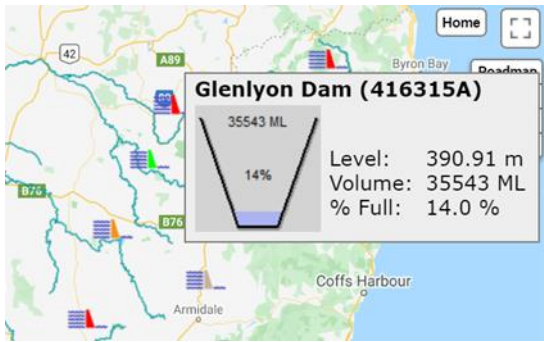
With St George and Dirranbandi both in reasonable irrigation water scenarios, many are starting to look towards the 2020/21 crop and preparing for it. Beardmore dam is currently holding just over 58,000ML which is 71.4% of capacity.

**EJ Beardmore Dam**

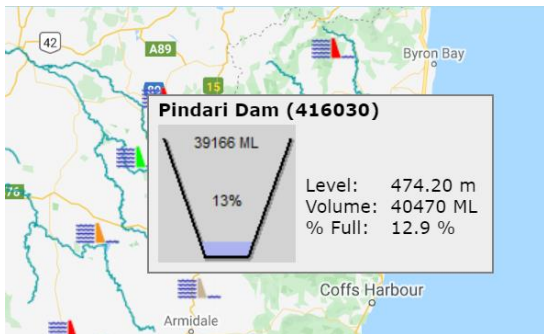
Updated 21 July 2020 at 15:50



[Source: Sunwater website](#)



The MacIntyre growers will be looking for more water in the major storages and on-farm to boost prospects for the next crop. Pindari dam is currently holding 40,470ML (12.9% of capacity) and Glenlyon dam is holding 35,543ML (14% of capacity).



Source: WaterNSW website

## Demo Farm Video Series Launched

The St George Cotton Growers association ran a project over the past summer, enabled by a Grass Roots grant from the CRDC. Set up as a demonstration on a local irrigation farm, this project featured technology that monitored irrigation processes and communicated via a system called LoRaWAN.

The technology was supplied by a commercial provider, Goanna Ag, and a local farmer and LoRaWAN enthusiast, Andrew Sevil. This technology featured monitoring devices capable of sending small amounts of data over long distances with only small power requirements. The devices ranged from ultrasonic sensors measuring water heights in channels, head ditches and tail water returns; pressure transducers measuring fluid height in water and fuel storages, converted into the equivalent volumes; weather stations capturing rainfall, wind, humidity and temperature data; soil moisture probes

**LoRaWAN demonstration series**  
 19 videos · 1,553 views · Last updated on Jul 9, 2020

A video series on a LoRaWAN demonstration farm that hosted a project organised by the St George Cotton Growers Association, via funding they received in a grant from the Cotton Research and Development Corporation. This project involved the installation of a range of sensors that operate on the LoRaWAN network. The video series includes:

1. Introduction to IoT in Agriculture (15:41)
2. Introduction to LoRaWAN Demonstration Farm video series (1:00)
3. LoRaWAN – what it is and how is it used? (2:20)
4. Components of a LoRaWAN system (1:15)
5. LoRaWAN device components and examples (4:16)

monitoring soil water levels; canopy temperature sensor monitoring leaf temperature and accumulated crop stress; and devices measuring rpm, water temperature and oil pressure on a pump motor. All this data was available for viewing remotely on a mobile phone or laptop/desktop computer.

The onset of the global COVID pandemic meant the intended field day was cancelled however the project and the technology has been captured in a series of short videos.

The videos are broken into topics with the video titles and descriptions allowing viewers to “cherry pick” ones that are of most interest.

The videos can be found on the [CottonInfo YouTube channel](#) or you can access the series directly via [this link](#).

## Cotton Management “Virtual” Tours (CMT) launched

Many will be aware that the usual CSD roadshow or Cotton Management Tour (CMT) is being delivered via online means this year due to COVID restrictions.

The virtual tour was launched on July 13 and for the Balonne and MacIntyre regions, Chris Teague (CSD E&D agronomist) sent an email with links to key vidcasts, downloads and variety information. Alternatively, the CMT page on the CSD website can be accessed [here](#).

Some components of the CMT are restricted. To access these, you will need to be a CSD member as restricted access to the website commenced on July 1.

## Silver Leaf Whitefly Update

Join Richard Sequeira, Principal Scientist, Crop Protection Systems with Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for an update on the new sampling and management system developed to replace the existing SLW matrix. The new system is a comprehensive SLW management system underpinned by comprehensive data and understanding of whitefly population dynamics in all the cotton producing regions of southern QLD and northern/central NSW where SLW is endemic and presents an economic problem.

Meetings are scheduled for Narrabri (August 5<sup>th</sup>) and Goondiwindi (August 6<sup>th</sup>). Numbers will be restricted to meet COVID guidelines and RSVP’s are essential.

It is proposed for these to be live streamed (and recorded) for those who cannot attend. Details will be advised closer to the date on the “live-stream” option.

For more details, contact:

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## AUSSIE COTTON FARMERS GROW COMMUNITIES 2020 is now open...

Supported by the Bayer Fund and in partnership with the Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR), the program will again deliver 30 grants valued at \$5000 across 15 Cotton Growing Areas (CGAs) in Queensland, Victoria, New South Wales, and Northern Australia.

Cotton farmers are invited to nominate a group or project to receive funding under the program. Recipients could include not-for-profit and community organisations across education, rural mental health, nursing, the arts, disability and emergency services and other local charitable projects.

Now in its 7<sup>th</sup> year, this program has already awarded \$900,000 in grants to more than 180 local community projects in the past six years. The support makes a tangible and meaningful impact as these examples from [Pittsworth](#) and [Jandowae](#) show.

Entries close on Monday 31 August 2020 and successful entrants will be announced on National Agriculture Day on Friday 20 November 2020.

To enter nominations or for more information, growers can visit the [FRRR](#) website: <https://www.frrr.org.au/grants/Cotton-Farmers-Grow-Communities>.

## COTTON AUSTRALIA CORNER

### Cotton Matters – key points

- CA Annual report released
- CA meets with Federal water minister
- CA on Instagram
- CA in the media – ABC landline episodes
- CRDC Grass Roots grants open
- Feedback sort for sustainability targets
- Electrical safety awareness training for QLD growers
- Energy efficiency grants available
- For further information click [here](#).

## What's On:

### 4<sup>th</sup> August:

- 10am Cotton Australia AGM – online
- 11am Dirranbandi CGA AGM
- (pm) SOS Balonne Spray Drift meeting and demonstration – St George

### 5<sup>th</sup> August:

- (pm) SOS Balonne Spray drift meeting and demonstration – Dirranbandi
- 3pm SLW update - Narrabri

### 6<sup>th</sup> August:

- 3pm SLW update - Goondiwindi

### Andrew McKay

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