



Macquarie bale up

MAY 2021

SEASON SUMMARY

The 20/21 season was overall a cooler season with much more rainfall in-crop than we have had in the past four years. We were well below our average on our growing day degrees by around 200 in most areas. It was a tough season to predict as it was unclear how this would impact yields. The architecture of the plant saw fewer bolls down the bottom on the plant than previous season, however this was balanced out by a very productive mid and top crop due to a mild finish. Insect pressure was generally low overall. Interestingly the total solar radiation was above the 10 years mean for the Trangie region and above last season which was much hotter but had lots of dust and smoke that may have impacted the crop.

Generally, crops had 3 passes of defoliation and leaf came off very well, some of bigger crops may have struggled to get that lower leaf off but conditions were favourable.

Around 75% of the cotton across the region has now been picked, and overall growers are very happy with the yields, the northern end of the valley has averages around 12.5-16bales/ha and mid valley is averaging 11-

15bales/ha while the cooler end is doing around 10.5 – 13.5bales/ha. Given the season was cooler expectations were very conservative and most have been pleasantly surprised. Ginning is 22% complete across the valley and so far, the classing has been generally good, colour has been great 21's and 31's and leaf is coming in around 2-3, staple is good and micronaire is where it should be, there has been a very small amount of low mic. Base grade is very common and the turn out % is the best it has been in many years. Picking days are getting shorter with the cooler weather and there have been a few bales come in with higher moisture.

Winter sowing conditions were great, and many had the task of picking cotton and sowing crops at the same time, casual employment staff have been in high demand with a significantly reduced number of backpackers in the country. Gins have reported no major staffing issues and they are going into full swing across the valley. Prospects look positive for another decent year next season due to allocations and carry over water. Burrendong dam is currently at 57.9% and general security allocation is 63%.



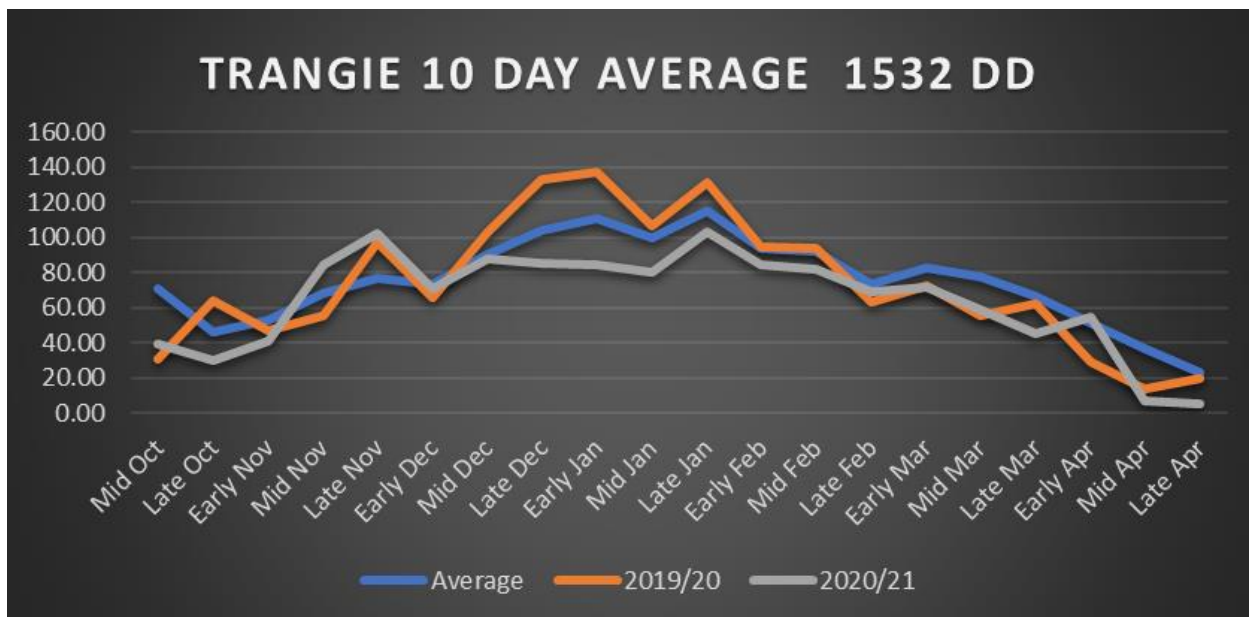


Fig 1: Day Degrees (10-day intervals) (Source: csd.net.au)

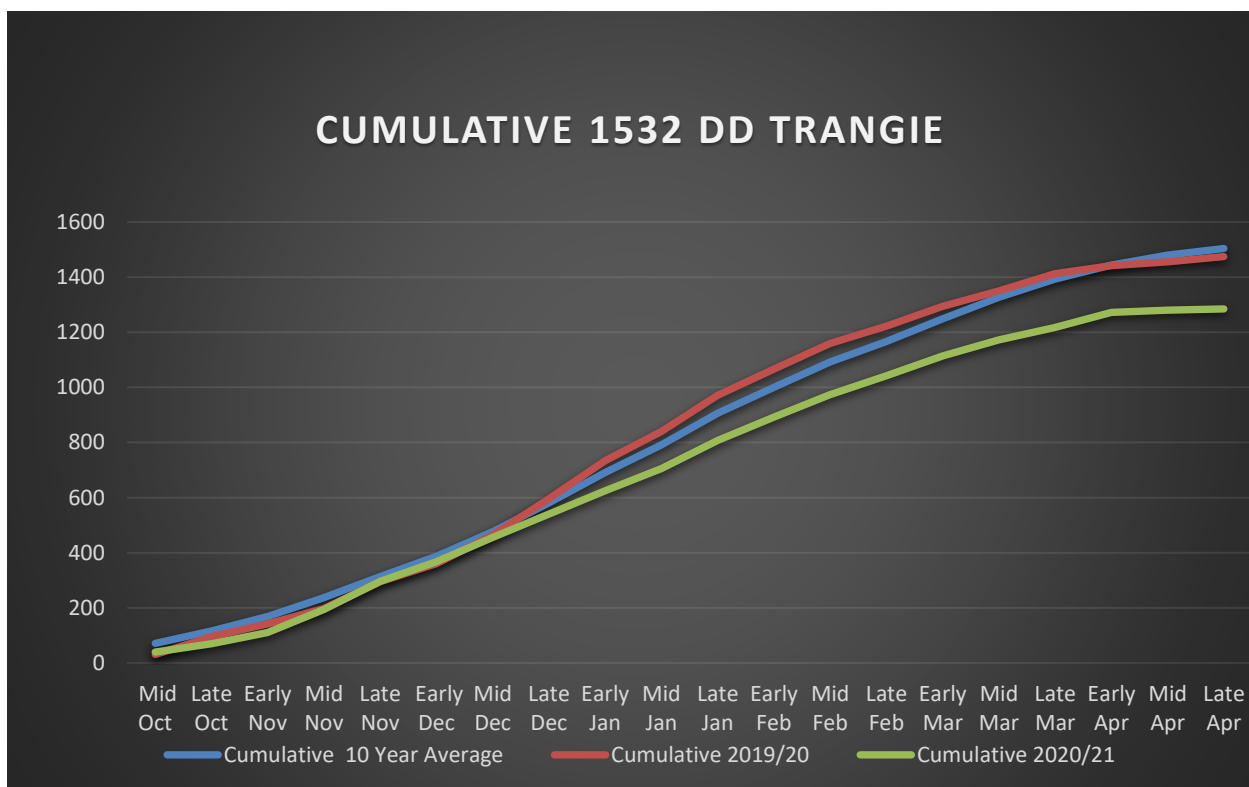


Fig 2: Accumulated Day Degrees (Source: csd.net.au)



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Best Practice



NEW KID ON THE BLOCK *(but not really)*

While there is a pair of big shoes to fill left from Julie Wise Cotton Australia's new Regional Manager in the Macquarie Valley is on deck and ready to support growers.

Craig Chandler has been appointed to the position after Julie Wise's departure.

Craig was born and raised in Wellington, comes from an agricultural background, and has spent more than 30 years working in the farming sector throughout New South Wales.

In 2003, Craig was a founding partner of TEAM Irrigation Dubbo, a business that grew over 16 years to become a leading irrigation and water technology supplier in Australia. Through this business experience, Craig developed extensive knowledge of all aspects of water policy and compliance, WHS and risk management, and safety and quality assurance.

Craig also brings to the regional manager role extensive knowledge of the Macquarie Valley irrigation area through past relationships with local water groups.

Craig is excited to join the Cotton Australia team and work closely with growers in the Macquarie, supporting them in the implementation of the industry's myBMP program.

Craig will also work to introduce growers to Cotton Australia and share the work we do on behalf of the cotton industry, as well as represent the industry to a range of regional stakeholders and organise industry events and workshops.

Growers can now contact Craig on 0428 077 270, or craigc@cotton.org.au.



Pic 1: Craig Chandler and Julie Wise doing a hand over in the Warren Cotton Australia office.

TRENDS IN PHOSOPURS AVAILABILITY

I was lucky enough to have a 'chew the fat with Dr Pat' session last week. We were chatting about some trends that have been creeping in across the valley regarding our immobile nutrient friend "Phosphors (P)".

I have asked our resident Soil Scientist Dr Pat Hulme to give me his thoughts on the impact that extended drought and big cereal crops could have had on our P levels in our soils. With stubble burning being more prevalent this season due to a lot of residues and bigger than average grain removal we do have an irregular set of circumstances that could impact our tried and tested nutrient budgeting, here is what he had to say.

"There have been reports of measured soil P being lower now than it was a year or so ago. This is likely due to a combination of phosphorus tie up in plants and soil nutrient export.

A phosphorus management plan could consist of a phosphorus budget supported by strategic soil tests. The phosphorus budget

would have inflows of P fertilizer and outflows of grain, lint and forage that has been exported from a field. Use soil tests to check this budget. Soil test strategies could be to either sample selected fields before each cotton crop, or to rotate through fields and sample a proportion each year. ***Trends in nutrient levels can be detected more accurately if samples are taken from a similar part of the field at a similar time on each occasion.***

Remember that each soil test addresses a specific question. Colwell P measures readily available P in neutral to alkaline soil. BSES P measures both available P and slowly available P. P Buffer Index is an indication of the amount of fertilizer P required to raise Colwell P by 1 unit. (See links below and paper attached for further information)

I have also had a chat Cottoninfo's Dr Oliver Knox who has explained the relationship and differences between measuring the Colwell P and BSES P, here is what he had to say.

"P is a bugger of an element. **Largely immobile**, meaning *if* you must put it back you need to add it pre crop and mix it into the soil if possible (i.e spreading). Trials have shown there is also the issue with P levels in Colwell tests remaining similar over decades ***despite not fertilising fields and removing P in harvested material***, which ***seems to imply we are mining the BSES pool and assuming it is feeding the available Colwell pool***. The trouble here is that it can suddenly fall over, and this is possibly what you're seeing in the Macquarie".

The best solution is to have an adequate replacement strategy to think about returning the P you are taking off.

There is also the issue that the critical value for P is not as fixed as it is for other nutrients. The P buffering index has a role in this as well, as in how easy it is to rebuild available P

levels. MLA offers some good P capital and maintenance application advice based on soil PBI. (This is very easy and practical, and you can just input your soil test results into the spreadsheet, it is largely aimed at stocking but you can input your results and use the calculations).

<https://www.mla.com.au/extension-training-and-tools/tools-calculators/phosphorus-tool/>

The Soil quality tools are useful on this as you will need to know your Phosphorus Buffering Index (PBI). The PBI provides an indication of the likelihood of applied fertiliser P being tied up. The higher the number the more likely the fertiliser P will be tied up: <140 = low; 140-280=moderate; >280=high. Most of the cotton soils are in the low to moderate PBI which increases P placement and timing options. (Source Cotton Production Manual 2021)

<http://www.soilquality.org.au/au/nsw/nsw-sc/examine/region/buffering-index-0-10cm.>

This will assist growers to see where they sit against the rest of the region.

The Cotton Production Manual has some good info around P and removal rates on page 45. Keep an eye out on the next [CottonInfo E news update](#) or subscribe on the link as CottonInfo's Jon Baird explains how to get your P into the right spot at the right time.

MOUSE BAITING REBATES HAVE BEEN ANNOUNCED

NSW farmers will be offered a rebate of 50 per cent on their purchase of zinc phosphide - which is already tax deductible - up to \$10,000. There is no website link I could find for the application but a number to call on the link here [rebate of up to \\$10 K for farmers](#), It is fresh of the press and hopefully more info to come.



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COTTON COLLECTIVE ON IN TOWOOMBA

25th & 26th OF AUGUST 2021

The 2021 Australian Cotton Trade Show will be held in conjunction with Cotton Australia's Cotton Collective and Industry Awards in Toowoomba – August 25-26.

Finalists announced in 2021 Australian Cotton Industry Awards, the finalists are all high achievers and have attained significant success in adapting their farming operations to be as efficient and sustainable as possible. "I thank everyone who nominated for the awards, and I wish the finalists all the best for the next stage in the awards process." The finalists in the 2021 Australian Cotton Industry Awards are:

Bayer Grower of the Year and AgriRisk High Achiever of the Year

- Howard Rother, Rother Farming, Cecil Plains, QLD
- Ian Carter, Connamara Partnership, Quirindi, NSW
- Thomas Popp, RMI Pty Ltd, Goondiwindi, QLD
- **Tony Quigley, Quigley Farms, Trangie, NSW**
- Ashley Geldard, Columboola Cotton, Miles, QLD

ADAMA Chris Lehmann Trust Young Cotton Achiever of the Year

- James Kanaley, Kanaley Agricultural Consulting, Griffith, NSW
- Emma Ayliffe, Summit Ag, Lake Cargelligo, NSW
- Angus Dalgliesh, Nutrien Ag Solutions, Dalby, QLD

Cotton Seed Distributors Researcher of the Year

- Oliver Knox, University of New England, Armidale, NSW
- Iain Wilson, CSIRO, Canberra, ACT
- Mick Bange, CSIRO (formerly), Narrabri, NSW

WHATS ON

2021 CSD COTTON MANAGEMENT TOUR

WARREN – 15TH JULY 11.AM WARREN GOLF CLUB

NARROMINE – 15TH JULY 5PM SOUL FOOD DEPOT

CONDOBOLIN – 21ST JULY 5PM CONDOBOLIN RSL

Please register here <https://csd.net.au/cmt>

Agenda

- Commercial update
- Sicot606B3F and XtendFlex updates
- CSD digital tools
- Cotton Disease Update
- Seed Quality
- Local Ambassador Trial information.

MCGA MOUSE BUSTER CHARITY GOLF DAY

30TH JULY – NARROMINE GOLF CLUB – 9.00AM REGISTRATION 9.30AM SHOTGUN START; 3 person ambrose with 6 drives each. Novelty holes and great prizes If you would like to sponsor prizes in this day please contact info@macquairecottongrower.com

That's it for another edition of the Bale UP as always call me if you have any brilliant ideas, you want me to chase up.

Cheers Amanda

Amanda Thomas

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