

# Developing skills in spray technology

By Ingrid Christiansen and Peter Hughes, Qld DPI and Australian Cotton CRC

**H**ow much effort is invested in making decisions about spray choices to manage pests in any cotton crop each year? With this thought in mind, once a choice has been made that a spray is needed, are you certain that the spray job is effectively reaching the target? Can you do it better?

New resources and training are being made available to cotton growers, consultants and spray operators to assist with effective spray application whilst minimising off-target drift.

## SPRAYpak

With funding from CRDC, this comprehensive reference manual for spray application in the cotton industry has been completely revised by Ian Rankine (4T Consulting) and Peter Hughes (DPI/Cotton CRC). SPRAYpak will be available at a series of regional spray technology workshops over the coming months.



Consultants from each valley joined the Cotton Industry Development Officers for the Cotton CRC's intensive training course on spray application technology.

## Intensive training

The Cotton CRC recently held a training course in spray application technology for industry development officers and representative consultants from each valley. Developed by Peter Hughes (DPI/Cotton CRC), the three day course covered a

range of issues for both ground rig and aerial situations.

Sessions were led by Peter Hughes and Dave Murray (DPI/Cotton CRC); Bill Gordon, Jamie Nicholls, Nicholas Woods and Gary Dorr (C-PAS — the Centre for Pesticide Application and Safety) and Graham Betts (ASK GB). Discussions focussed on how to effectively reach the target through appropriate equipment set-up. There was also an opportunity to view the C-PAS wind tunnel — a unique research facility developed with assistance from CRDC.

Funded by a CRDC/DPI project, the aim of the course was to increase the knowledge of spray application technology amongst those extending information to the industry and discuss research findings. The course also confirmed that this level of detailed training was of major benefit to consultants and growers.

## Course highlights

Several techniques were used to evaluate the effectiveness of different spray set-ups. Understanding what can practically be achieved in a given situation for a required spray coverage and label requirements was identified as one of the key issues of interest. Several agronomists identified that they will change the way they make recommendations after learning more about the principles and practicalities of spray application choices.

Growers, consultants and operators should encourage each other to participate in regional workshops. Contact your local Cotton CRC Industry Development Officer if there are specific issues for your local spray application workshops.