

# Students invade cotton fields

A number of university and PhD students have become cotton devotees during the summer, studying various aspects of the industry under the Cotton CRC's summer scholarship program, which provides funding for short-term study opportunities for university students.

Nick Luelf, an agronomy student from the University of Sydney, is investigating different rotations and their impact on microbial biomass and activity. He hopes to develop an understanding of the fate of below-ground plant material produced during the season, and to determine if different rotations offer potential benefits for increasing soil organic content by changing the microbial community.

The project is based at ACRI Narrabri under the jurisdiction of co-researchers Oliver Knox, Nilantha Hulugalle and Gupta Vadakattu.

Mark Barnett from Wallabadah, a Bachelor of Rural Science student at UNE in Armidale, is examining the effectiveness of Lynx spiders and Damsel bugs in controlling mirids in a joint project with Mary Whitehouse and Martin Dillon.

Chris Kilby, from Goulburn, a CRC scholarship holder studying Agricultural Science at the University of Sydney, is working with CSIRO's Brian Duggan looking at yield composition in cotton. He is comparing modern and outdated cultivars to see how yield composition has changed over time as well as across environments.

Rhiannon Smith, studying Natural Resources at UNE, is examining the environmental benefits of tree plantings in cotton growing areas of the Namoi Valley, supervised by Guy Roth, Stacey Spanswick and John Duggin.

Mick Rose, from The University of Sydney is completing his PhD on "Environmental benefits of On-Farm Wetlands".

Marwan Keshlaf, originally from Libya and currently completing his PhD at The University of Western Sydney (Hawkesbury Campus) is investigating "Foraging Activity and Pollination Efficacy of Honey Bees in Cotton in Australia".

Adriana Najar, from The University of Queensland (supervised by Robert Mensah) is investigating "Mechanisms Underlying the Efficacy of Petroleum Spray Oils (PSOs) against Aphids on Cotton".

For more information contact Nicky Schick, Cotton CRC, Phone 02 6799 1511.



Nick Luelf.



Mark Barnett.



Chris Kilby.



Rhiannon Smith.



Mick Rose.



Marwan Keshlaf.



Adriana Najar.