

SECTION 4  
AREA ROUNDUP

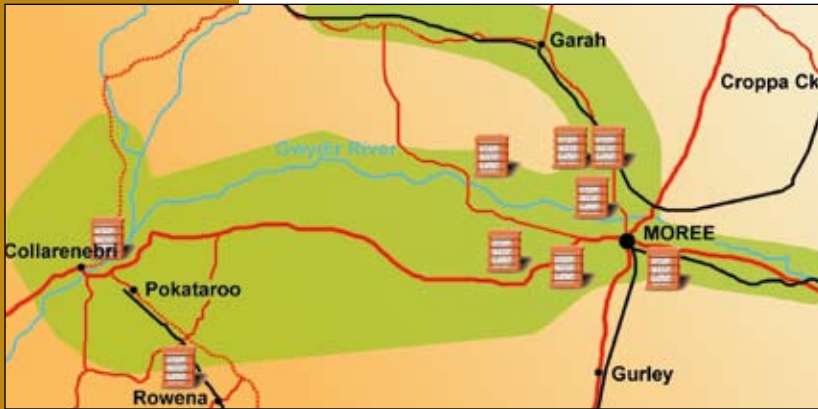
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**MAP LEGEND**

Cotton Area .....

Cotton Gin .....



# Gwydir Valley

By Lauryn Hanna

**A**pproximately 11,000 hectares of cotton were planted in the Gwydir Valley in the 2007–08 season, comprising of conventional, Bollgard II and Bollgard II Roundup Ready and Roundup Ready Flex stacked varieties. There was little rain prior to planting with only 0.6mm recorded in Moree in September.

Due to the dry conditions throughout most cotton growing regions, the Bollgard II planting window was extended until December 1, giving growers the opportunity to capitalise on good rainfall in October and November. Some late planted crops then suffered the effects of waterlogging due to large falls in December. Good rain fell throughout the season, but crops were subjected to a cool, dry finish.

## The Gwydir Valley cotton area

### Insects

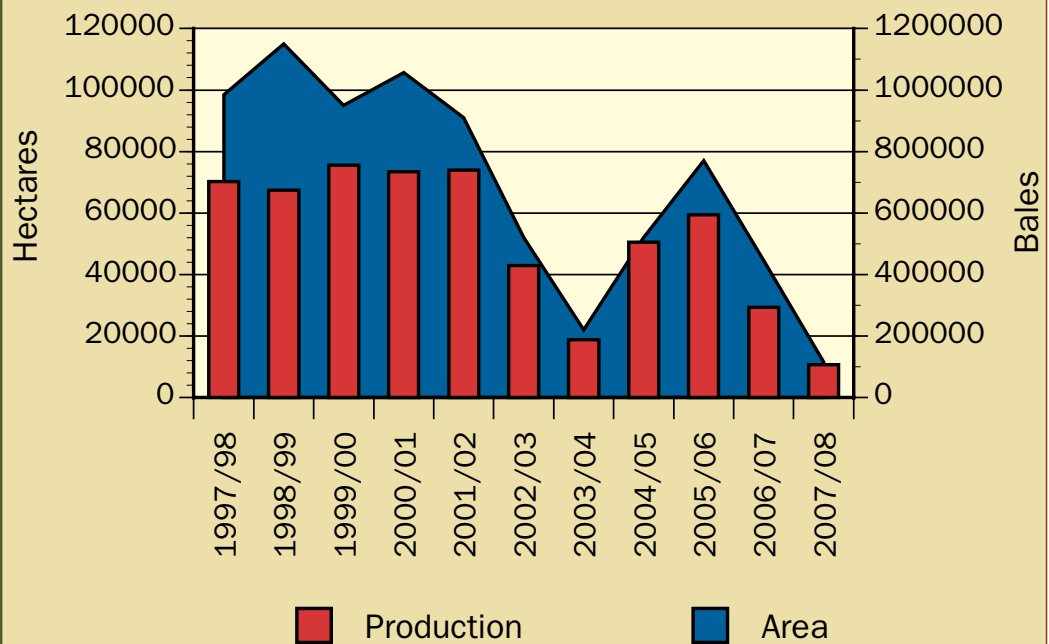
Insect pressure throughout the season was relatively low with most crops requiring between two to four sprays. There were very limited areas of conventional cotton grown this season, with these crops requiring around 10 sprays overall for Helicoverpa and secondary pests. Thrips were a problem in some crops early in the season and were sprayed to control populations.

Throughout the season mirids required control in some Bollgard II crops and there was the odd occurrence of green vegetable bug. Aphids, mites and GVB were evident late in the season, as too was the pale cotton stainer bug. It is recognised as an occasional pest in cotton and does not usually require control, but due to the mild season, some Bollgard II became a favourable environment for these pests. The cotton stainers became evident in fields around boll maturation and first open boll. Many crops required an additional sucking pest application to control this pest and avoid economic damage.

There were some occurrences of cotton bunchy top disease, in which aphids are a common vector. There was also the emergence of Verticillium wilt and Fusarium wilt in some areas as the season progressed. In some crops in late December, Verticillium wilt caused affected plants to die, but most crops were able to come through these disease pressures, highlighting the importance of good varietal selection for disease rank.

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**Gwydir Valley: Area and production**



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**<54...GWYDIR VALLEY**

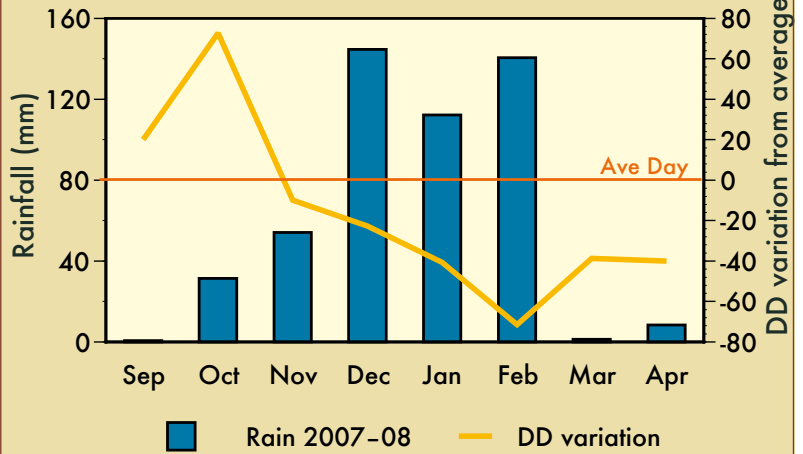
A major problem this season was widespread herbicide drift damage. Some crops were hit more severely than others — some two to three times. The drift coincided with cooler weather during the important stages of squaring and early flowering and affected early fruit set. Some crops were able to compensate for early losses through March and April, but delayed maturity resulted in drawn out defoliation.

Despite some tough growing conditions, irrigated crops yielded between nine and 13 bales per hectare. Dryland crops yielded well above the regional dryland average. The cooler temperatures hampered defoliation, and there was some leaf

in the sample. Ginners reported good colour and quality characteristics and high turnout. Micronaire was down, but within the target range.

**Moree 2007–08 seasonal climate**

**Total Day Degrees: 2517 (-131); Total rain: 493 mm (+49)**



	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total
<b>Cold shock</b>	21	8	1	0	0	0	4	18	52 (+6)
<b>Hot shock</b>	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	4 (-19)

\*Average day degrees from 1957 to 2008.  
Source: CSIRO Plant Industry.

# Southern NSW

## Lachlan and Murrumbidgee

By James Hill

The area for the 2007–08 cotton crop saw a further reduction when compared to previous years — with a total area of approximately 3300 hectares (2006–07 was 5800 hectares). Of this,

800 hectares was planted in the Murrumbidgee valley and 2500 in the Hillston/Lachlan valley area.

The two valleys had a zero allocation on the river, so all of the cotton was grown using ground water.

**Season activities**

This year there have been a number of field walks aimed at new growers and farmers interested in cotton. Field walks included planting, emergence, IPM, cut out Pix, defoliation, harvest, spray application and the main field day. All of the days were well attended.

**Weather**

The weather was very favourable for growing cotton in terms of temperature with a total of 2174 day degrees (October 1 to March 30) for Hillston and 2081 day degrees for the Murrumbidgee. A factor that contributed to the good yields this season was the lack of extremes with only a few days over 40°C and only 30 cold shock days in the Murrumbidgee. February was actually cooler than March yet the warmth of March and April helped compensate for this. In addition there was plenty of radiation with very little cloud.

**Establishment**

Establishment was generally very good yet this really does depend on the planting date and soil type. Some areas, particularly in the Murrumbidgee, were badly affected with wireworm.



**Southern NSW/Tandou: Area and production**

