

**SECTION 4
AREA ROUNDUP**

This section brought to you in association with



<54...GWYDIR VALLEY

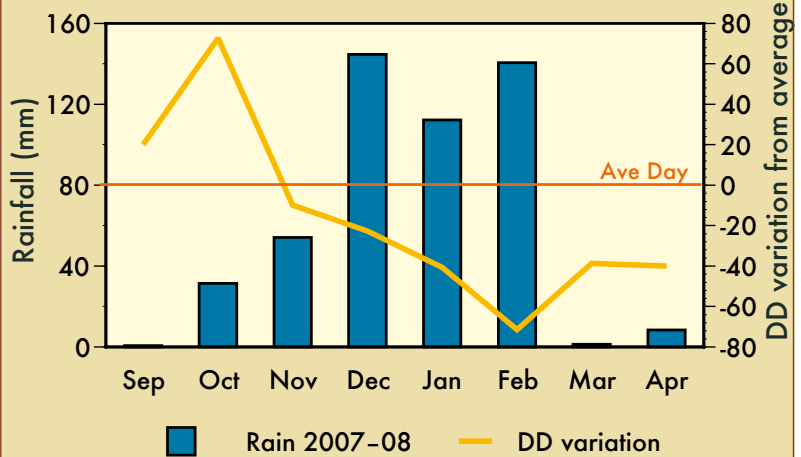
A major problem this season was widespread herbicide drift damage. Some crops were hit more severely than others — some two to three times. The drift coincided with cooler weather during the important stages of squaring and early flowering and affected early fruit set. Some crops were able to compensate 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
Cold shock	21	8	1	0	0	0	4	18	52 (+6)
Hot shock	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

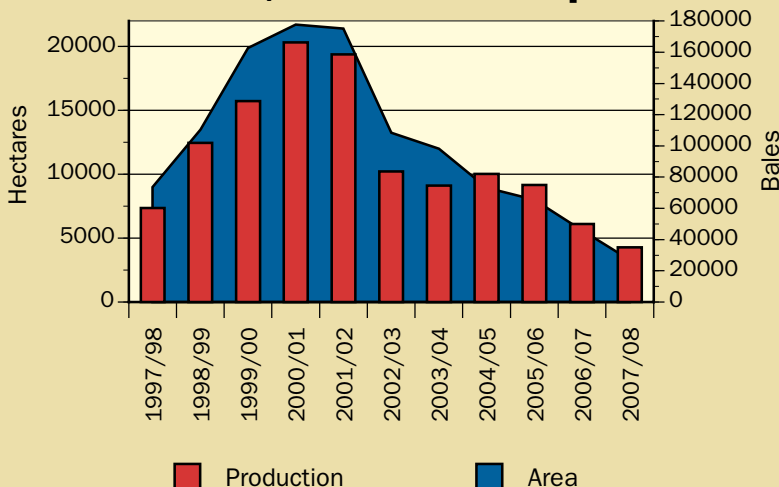
The weather was very favourable for growing cotton in terms of temperature with a total of 2174 day degrees (October 1 to March 30) for Hillston and 2081 day degrees for the Murrumbidgee. A factor that contributed to the good yields this season was the lack of extremes with only a few days over 40°C 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





Insects

Wireworm pressure was heavy early. Heliothis pressure was extremely low with very few, if any, sprays applied, except on conventional crops. Mirids required controlling at least once across the area.

Disease

The area once again was relatively disease free with only isolated patches of black root rot. In the Murrumbidgee there were also cases of Pythium and Rizoctonia due to the cold and damp conditions.

Water/irrigation

Some areas (Murrumbidgee) were lucky to receive up to 150mm of in-crop rain while others received almost nothing. There was no soil moisture at planting and the majority of crops were watered up. Water use varied between 7.0 and 13 megalitres per hectare depending on the rainfall received.

Weeds

Many growers opted for a residual herbicide layby spray to support the Roundup. Grass herbicides were also used to control barnyard grass in some cases.

Defoliation

The area had a fantastic finish yet some later crops were finished in cooler conditions. The majority of crops were shut down with a large rate of growth regulant which meant most of the crops were mature for an early defoliation. Some of the later crops had problems with showery weather and a lack of wind causing problems with leaf contamination. These crops required a third application of defoliant. Picking started about mid April and was completed by the end of May.

Yield/quality

The average yield for the southern area was 11 bales per hectare. The quality was generally very good yet there were crops that had leaf issues. The high leaf was due to the fact that the plants had so much cotton there was nowhere for the leaf to drop. So the crisp leaf dropped into the canopy and, when combined with dew, became entangled in the lint.

Next season

There is still potential for an expansion of cotton area in the Murrumbidgee yet this is dependent on a good general security water allocation. Once again all areas in the south are facing a zero general allocation on the rivers (Lachlan and Murrumbidgee).

Trials for the coming season include the continuation of a long term gypsum trial, soil ameliorant and the N Efficiency trial.

Tandou

By Brendan Barry

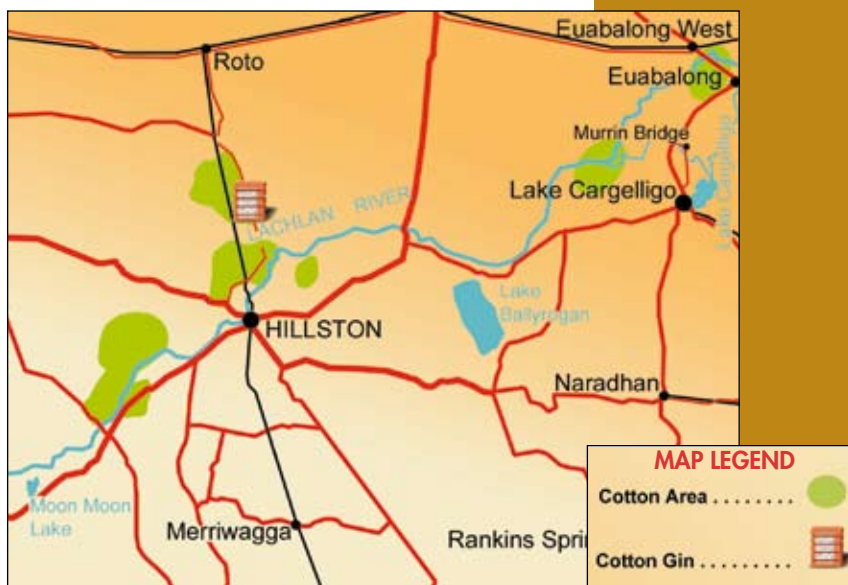
There was no cotton grown at Tandou in 2007–08 and while some water is in storage at the Menindee Lakes there are no general security allocations for this year. A small volume of carryover is being traded into the Murray during spring 2008.

Tandou contract ginned a small amount of 2007–08 pima for a Hillston grower with excellent results achieved. There is currently no winter crop planted at Tandou and summer cropping is pending further inflows to the Menindee Lakes.

SECTION 4
AREA ROUNDUP

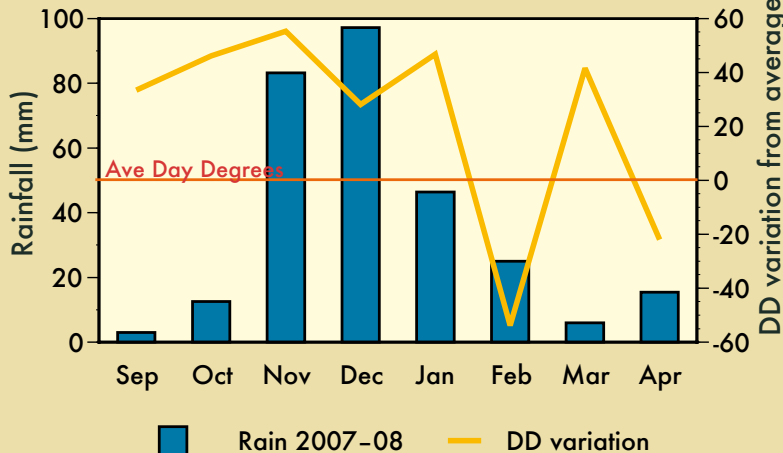
This section brought to you in association with

Southern NSW



Hillston 2007–08 seasonal climate

Total Day Degrees: 2512 (+176); Total rain: 289 mm (+42)



	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total
Cold shock	24	15	2	0	0	1	8	21	71 (-1)
Hot shock	0	1	7	6	15	1	13	0	43 (+13)

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