

SECTION 7
RESEARCH &
EXTENSION

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CRDC Board meets in the Burdekin

The CRDC Board at its May meeting reviewed the corporation's farming systems R&D strategy in conjunction with a field trip to the Burdekin region of Queensland.

The Board joined with Cotton Australia's NORCOM group in a joint inspection of research trials and commercial cotton crops.

"The Board highly values these opportunities,

having undertaken a similar field trip in the Namoi during March and has plans for a Border rivers field trip later in the year," CRDC Executive Director Bruce Finney said.

"The visits have provided valuable insights to farmer and research led innovation and the resulting changes occurring on-farm.

"There is no doubt farmers are adapting and applying R&D to better manage the impacts of variable and reduced rainfall.

"Australian bred cotton varieties continue to provide the basis for productivity growth and improved fibre quality.

"Beyond this farmers are adapting their farming systems to be increasingly flexible and input efficient."

Bruce said many farmers are challenging the 'norms' by opportunistically irrigating cotton crops planted on row spacings that in the past would only have been considered for dryland planting.

The Board discussed the balance between investments sustaining current practices and technologies with the need for improved practices and new technologies.

CRDC board members on a field trip to the Burdekin region.



Crop rotation guide for new farming systems

A new Crop Rotation Guide has been released by CRDC and the Cotton CRC.

CRDC's Manager – Farming Systems Investment, Tracey Farrell, says the new guide is very timely and offers growers a simple chart to assist them with quickly weighing up the pros and cons of a wide range of crop rotations in cotton farming systems.

The most recent guide was published by CRDC in 2002. Tracey said so much research undertaken by the cotton and grains industries in recent years had begun to answer many questions about the complex relationships between crop rotations, disease, pest and weed risks and soil health in an irrigated farming system.



Tracey Farrell and Sally Ceeney launch the new Crop Rotation Guide.