



BRUCE PYKE

COTTON COTTON COTTON RESEARCH ROUNDUP



BRUCE FINNEY

COTTON AND GRAINS SHARING R&D EFFORT

Linking research and development effort between industries makes good sense, particularly when commonly the same producers and researchers are involved in both. In discussions between the cotton and grains industries R&D corporations, CRDC and GRDC, nearly 40 such opportunities are under active development.

CRDC and GRDC have established new research program management procedures to identify collaborative R&D opportunities and it now represents a new and important way of doing R&D business.

CRDC's R&D investment management team and GRDC's practices program management team will formally meet twice annually.

CRDC General Manager R&D Investment, Bruce Pyke said almost 40 current opportunities are already being actively pursued.

"Some of the key areas where opportunities exist for greater collaboration include grain/cotton farming systems, the National Invertebrate Pest Initiative (NIPI), the National Integrated Weed Manage-



Collaboration in cotton and grains R&D is assured with the chairs of both corporations, Keith Perrett (Chair GRDC) and Mike Logan (Chair CRDC) ensuring support at all levels of both organisations.

ment Initiative, Best Management Practices (BMP) packages, sabbaticals for senior researchers, extension and knowl-

edge management programs and sharing methodology on program evaluation and impact analysis," he said.

"Both teams gained a great deal from the initial meeting and will meet again in October to consider joint aspirational targets for cotton/grains farming systems and how these might be achieved through developing collaborative R&D investment programs.

"Because we have been collaborating informally with GRDC for some time, a number of the identified opportunities for joint and collaborative investments are already in progress."

These include:

- The National Program for Sustainable Irrigation (NPSI);
- Farm Health and Safety, Climate Change Research Strategy for Primary Industries (CCRSPI);
- Greenhouse gas emissions research;
- Monitoring Helicoverpa insecticide resistance;
- Management of spray drift and glyphosate resistance in cotton/grain systems; and,
- Participation in the glyphosate sustainability working group.



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CRDC and GRDC are working together to develop joint communications activities including publications, monitoring and evaluation of research uptake and needs and also jointly developing website content. A new focus on joint capacity building initiatives will be considered for commencement in 2010–11.

Bruce revealed that CRDC has contracted two new projects to start in the 2009–10 financial year. They are;

- Reducing Spray Drift; and,
- Potassium & Phosphorous Nutrition R&D.

And he added that the CRDC and GRDC have since met in Emerald and Brisbane with Sugar RDC, BSES and QPI to discuss potential future investment in Central and Northern Queensland cotton/grains and cotton/grains/sugar farming systems research.

NPSI IN NEW HANDS

In July this year, the responsibility for management of the National Program for Sustainable Irrigation (NPSI) was transferred to the Cotton Research and Development Corporation (CRDC).

This comes in the wake of the 2008 Federal Government budget, when the decision was announced to close down Land and Water Australia (LWA) – the then managing partner organisation.

In recognition of the importance of irrigation R&D to the future of the cotton industry, the CRDC successfully sought to take on the responsibility for the ongoing management of the program.

As a long-term partner in NPSI, this outcome will ensure the value of CRDC investments in irrigation research will be maintained.

NPSI invests in and manages a wide range of irrigation and water resource research projects across Australia. The impact of the research undertaken by NPSI has been felt at the property level with farmers, at the catchment level with policy makers and planners, and at scales that cross many commodity and state borders.

NPSI research and extension aims to aid all irrigators, from citrus growers to dairy farmers. The broadacre crops of cotton and grain are equally involved in many of the program's projects.

With a vision for Australian irrigation that is valued for its environmental, economic and social contribution, the program aims to achieve this by investing in research, development and its adoption to improve the productivity and sustainability



Guy Roth.

of irrigation.

Program Manager Guy Roth says this has many outcomes for the cotton industry.

“This collaborative investment enables the cotton industry to benefit from a greater investment than it could achieve on its own. It also broadens the human capacity and thinking on irrigation,” he said.

For further information on NPSI research and information, go to the website: www.npsi.gov.au or contact Guy Roth 0417 223 179

ICAC CAPE TOWN

The 68th Plenary meeting of the International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC) was held in Cape Town South Africa in early September.

ICAC Plenary meetings are important annual events for maintaining communication among the world's cotton producing and consuming nations.

The Australian delegation was headed by Peter Ottesen, General Manager – Crops, Horticulture, Irrigation and Wine Branch of DAFF and also included Richard Haire (CEO, Queensland Cotton), Adam Kay (CEO Cotton Australia), Mike Logan (Chair CRDC), Bruce Pyke (General Manager R&D Investment, CRDC) and Ralph Schulze (member of the ICAC task force for Commercial Standardisation of Instru-

ment Testing of Cotton – CSITC).

Plenary sessions discussed issues such as:

- World cotton consumption and production;
- The role of cotton in providing income security in many developing nations which contributes to food security for millions;
- Improving cotton production of small holders; and,
- The need for a satisfactory conclusion of the Doha Round.

In addition to attending the Plenary Sessions, it was a busy week for the Australian delegation as there was a range of other meetings and breakout sessions held during the week.

Richard Haire participated in the Private Sector Advisory Panel (PSAP) meeting, presented a paper entitled Biotech Cotton in International Trade at an open technical session and chaired a Breakout Session on The Impacts of Carbon Trading on the Cotton Industry at which Bruce Pyke was an invited panel member. Ralph Schulze and Bruce Pyke also attended the CTSIC meeting.

HEALTHY FARMING FAMILIES

CRDC is following up on its pilot project for farming families' health with the running of new Sustainable Farming Families Future Directions workshops.

The pilot course was first staged in 2006–07 in Wee Waa and Dalby, with excellent attendance and very positive reviews from participants.

The latest round of workshops will be the third since 2006.

CRDC's Helen Dugdale reports that the original workshops and subsequent follow-ups were a tangible, industry-leading example of how to get the crucial message of farming family health and wellbeing to farming families in the most effective way.

The workshops will give vital feedback to individuals involved and also to industry on the health outcomes and viability of a program like Sustainable Farming Families, for people involved in growing cotton.

“A hands-on workshop will help ensure the unique demands of the agricultural lifestyle and work environment can be successfully managed. This involves a further physical assessment and check up, where questions can also be asked and answered.

The workshops will be held on March 2 in Wee Waa and March 3, 2010 in Dalby.

For more information contact Helen Dugdale, 02 6792 4088.

