



BRUCE PYKE

COTTON COTTON COTTON RESEARCH ROUNDUP

CRDC

BRUCE FINNEY



TAKING BMP COTTON TO THE WORLD

A workshop in Sydney on October 21 will seek to coordinate and carry forward the cotton industry's post farmgate research and marketing effort. This will build on the momentum gained when ACIC and CRDC, with the support of all post farmgate sectors of the industry, obtained an Australia Government EMS Pathways Program grant earlier this year.

The main purpose of the grant is to help the industry extend BMP through the whole production chain. Market-based incentives, such as the potential for marketing 'clean, green' BMP cotton, should facilitate this outcome and serve as an incentive for fostering good natural resource management.

A number of research and commercial projects within this field are taking place across the industry at present, with a range of aims and timeframes. The October workshop will be an opportunity to focus on these activities, sharing information and aligning the overall effort to the same objectives, without necessarily combining them under central control.

There is no doubt cotton quality is set to become a major focus within the industry as we face ever-growing competition from countries such as Brazil and the US. Both CRDC and the Cotton CRC see value chain and natural resource management as comprising an increasingly large proportion of overall cotton research — and this workshop will bring both issues together, seeking to advance the economic and environmental interests of the industry.

GENE TECHNOLOGY WORKSHOP TACKLES COTTON ISSUES

CRDC hosted a series of lectures and workshops on plant gene technology and intellectual property issues in Canberra in September, attended by representatives from the Australian Cotton Growers Research Association, the Cotton CRC and Cotton Australia. The gene technology workshop was delivered by CSIRO Plant Industry and dealt with the latest developments in the science behind gene technology, including DNA, cloning, gene transfer techniques, industry regulation and consumer issues.



Getting down to business at the CRDC Genelink workshop in Canberra. New ACGRA Chairman, Hamish Millar (Emerald,) is on the left.

The intellectual property workshop addressed the increasingly complex, but important, issues involved in the commercialisation of cotton R&D. The workshop featured case studies, patents, copyright, trademarks, confidentiality agreements, licensing requirements, contracts, legislation and plant breeding rights as they relate to biotechnology projects.

WEEDS CONFERENCE TACKLES IMPORTANT COTTON ISSUES

The 14th Australian Weeds Conference, held in Wagga Wagga in early September on the theme of "Weed Management: Balancing people, planet, profit" included six cotton related papers from researchers who receive CRDC funding assistance.

- Stephen Johnson (Cotton CRC and NSW DPI) presented a paper on the impact of variable phenotypes of bladder ketmia (*Hibiscus trionum*) on management of this complex in cotton, looking at the variability in 29 populations of this weed from Emerald to Narromine.
- Hanwen Wu (Cotton CRC and QDPI) is researching weeds in dryland farming systems on the Darling Downs. His paper was about the emergence, persistence and management of barnyard grass (*Echinochloa colona*).
- PhD student Jeff Werth's paper was on the potential for glyphosate resistance evolution in Roundup Ready cotton systems.
- Graham Charles (NSW DPI) covered the changes the cotton farming system has had on species shift, finding that chang-

ing weed management strategies over the past 10 years had favoured glyphosate-tolerant, small-seeded biennial and perennial weeds.

- Lower Namoi Industry Development Officer, Annie Johnson, presented a paper on the extension of weed research outcomes through the Australian cotton industry, with an important message that the key to the management and adoption of research outcomes is cooperation between cotton growers and research and extension personnel in the cotton industry.

If you would like any more information on any of these topics, email CRDC's Communications Manager, Elizabeth Tout, at elizabeth.tout@crdc.com.au

The major weed extension resource in cotton is WEEDpak which is a comprehensive identification and management guide for the Australian cotton industry. The principle focus of WEEDpak is the importance and practice of Integrated Weed Management. The manual also contains a weed identification and information guide and specific management strategies for problem weeds, Roundup Ready cotton, rotation crops and cotton volunteers.

ANNUAL FARMING SYSTEMS FORUM IN NOVEMBER

Each year CRDC, along with the Cotton CRC and the ACGRA, has organised a Farming Systems Forum on a topic of immediate importance for the research effort and crop management. The 2004

6 ▷

topic will be *Nutrition and greenhouse gas emissions*, including a number of important issues such as sampling techniques, leaching and deep drainage, NutriLOGIC and Bollgard-related issues.

The forum will begin with a field tour at the Australian Cotton Research Institute at 1pm on November 29, followed by a barbeque dinner, with a full day of talks on the 30th, finishing at about 3.30pm.

An important aspect of the Farming Systems Forum is jointly thinking about where future research on these issues should head but it also provides an excellent opportunity for growers, extension staff and researchers to get together and share knowledge.

The Farming Systems Forums are always very popular and numbers are restricted — but it is important to have a good representation of growers present. If you are interested in attending, please email Helen Dugdale on helen.dugdale@crdc.com.au — the earlier the better.

WATERPAK LAUNCHED IN NARRABRI

Water is the major limiting factor for cotton production in Australia, and efficient water management is important both for



CRDC Executive Director, Bruce Finney (left) with Deputy Prime Minister John Anderson and CRDC's Chair, Bridget Jackson, at the WATERpak launch in Narrabri.

protecting the environment and for assisting cotton growers to achieve high yields and profits. Deputy Prime Minister and Federal Member for Gwydir, John Anderson, launched WATERpak — an important tool for achieving irrigation efficiency — in August at CRDC.

For the first time WATERpak brings together in one place many years of irrigation research conducted by diverse organi-

sations in the Australian cotton industry. It provides technical information and practical advice to assist cotton irrigation practices, minimise environmental impacts, and increase farm profits. It has been designed to complement the BMP Land and Water module.

WATERpak was developed by CRDC and the Cotton CRC, in collaboration with a number of Queensland and NSW government departments, the CSIRO and private companies. Manuals and CDs are available free to growers and consultants from CRDC or the Cotton CRC.

BRIGHTER OUTLOOK FOR R&D FUNDING

A larger than expected crop last season is delivering higher industry levies and Australian Government contributions to CRDC than we had budgeted for in the 2004–05 financial year — which is good news for the research effort. We should also see an increase in royalties, with up to 70 per cent of the crop expected to comprise Bollgard II and Roundup Ready varieties in the coming season. This will give us some more capacity to fund extra research projects within the current program as needs or promising opportunities arise. 🌱