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Editorial...

David Dowling, Editor



WITH La Niña finally starting to lose its grip on our weather, the outlook for the crop has improved somewhat. At one stage it looked like we mightn't get much of a crop at all, with fairly constant rainfall events keeping planters in sheds for a couple of critical months. Amazingly, most growers – even in southern valleys – managed to get a crop in the ground, although in many cases right at the end of the desired planting window. But many crops are late and will rely on a good finish to the season to realise their potential.

So for many areas it looks like a late finish to the season once again and another rush to prepare for the next season which also promises to be a big one. Cotton prices have come back from their peaks but are still attractive historically – and they need to be considering the relentless input price pressures being faced by Australian agriculture.

The Australian cotton industry has done a remarkable job of solving problems over the years. It has been a combination of world-leading research and a coherent, coordinated industry approach that has overcome many challenges from insects and diseases to environmental and political issues. One problem which seems to be intractable is damage caused by herbicide drift. Despite an amazing and continuing education push by the cotton and grains industry in particular, we are still seeing widespread damage to crops from drift. There are some really clever systems now in place, such as SataCrop and the new WAND network, but some people still don't seem to get the message. It's inevitable that if the ag industry can't fix the problem, governments will step in and we probably won't like the results. And eventually, the penny will drop that if products are drifting long distances onto cotton crops, they are also drifting onto waterways and peoples' gardens.

Apology

Last week, our website took on a life of its own for a couple of days and sent multiple subscription reminders to a lot of people, both current and lapsed subscribers.

The web mechanic is now confident the issue has been resolved. There was no security issue, just an embarrassing issue with the software.

If your subscription has lapsed, we'd be more than happy for you to renew it, but this wasn't a hard-sell.

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