

District Reports...

near future. Although it may come too late to see an increase in cotton planting this season, let's hope we all get some decent rainfall in the gauge for Christmas.

Sam Lee
November 24, 2019

Border Rivers

Only small areas of cotton have been planted in the Border Rivers. These crops consist of a mix of furrow and sprinkler irrigation, and are either the result of on farm capture of runoff from the significant March storm event over Goondiwindi or groundwater entitlements.

The area planted is likely to be around 800 hectares. Pre irrigation or watering up has seen a range of 1.2–2 megalitres applied in a mix of back to back and long fallowed fields. Planting conditions and soil temperatures have been pretty good with good establishment observed, and earlier planted crops are around 6–8 nodes.

More recent planted fields are currently establishing, and while seedling development is progressing satisfactorily, some fields planted in early November have developed slowly due a sporadic mix of cool to cold nights and some hot windy weather seeing moisture falling away fairly quickly. Insect pressure and seedling disease appears to be at fairly low levels at this point so overall crops at this stage are looking in good shape for this stage of the season.

At the time of writing we have seen isolated storms fire up starting on November 23 with a mix of relatively light totals and the odd heavier fall. As mentioned in previous reports, the entire catchment is parched with storages remaining at very low levels.

Pindari dam is at 4.4 per cent capacity and Glenlyon dam is at 2.9 per cent capacity, which sees a combined capacity of 3.7 per cent. Significant rainfall will be required to influence storages and to see any significant dryland planting opportunities. But some storms have started to brew so hopefully we see more as we lead into summer. Here's hoping for some decent rain and a big flood, with best wishes for a safe and happy Christmas and New Year.

Chris Teague
November 30, 2019

Gwydir Valley

If we're to focus purely on the crops that we have in the ground, things have got off to a reasonable start this cotton season. With planting starting for the most part around October 20 and wrapping up by early November, we did experience four cold shock nights which slowed emergence up a little.

The usual culprits of seedling disease complex have been present, but generally not at concerning levels. Brown flea beetle has caused damage to cotyledons on some crops in the district, but plants have now grown through this.

Very dry beds were again an issue this season (which seems to be a recurring theme lately) and careful attention to detail in planting has made the difference here. Beds subbed up probably

better than expected given these conditions. The issue was the quantity of water it took to achieve this – most fields required 2.5 ML per hectare, with reports of some estimates close to 3.0 ML per hectare.

In the past week or so, storm activity has increased and while it hasn't provided significant relief in the Gwydir Valley, it is encouraging to feel some humidity in the air and we remain hopeful that a few good events materialise soon. There currently hasn't been any dryland cotton planted in the Gwydir, or the neighboring valleys for that matter.

At the beginning of November the Gwydir Valley CGA hosted the Charity Dinner and Awards Night, which was a huge success raising over \$34,000 for local bush schools, the Westpac Rescue Helicopter and other local charities. A real testament to the Valley in continued support in such difficult times, and a thoroughly enjoyable evening had by all. The much deserving winners on the night were:

- Dryland Crop Competition – Tony Bailey with a yield of 3.07 bales per hectare;
- Irrigated Crop Competition – Rob Carter (AFF) with a yield of 16.4 bales per hectare;
- Young Achiever – Ryan Hunt (Agflow); and,
- Service to Industry – James Quinn (CSD).

Alice Curkpatrick
November 26, 2019



The Service to Industry Award was presented to James Quinn.



Young achiever, Ryan Hunt (Agflow).