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## Editorial...

David Dowling, Editor

**W**HAT an amazing difference Bollgard 3 has made to the industry. In Central Queensland (and other areas) we have some farmers still waiting on more rain for planting. At the same time, we are getting open bolls on the early planted crops at Emerald. For some growers, it may become a case of getting off the planter and onto the picker – and maybe doing the reverse next August.

Cotton has now become a year-round crop, for better or worse. Of course, it has opened up many new cropping options and planting/harvesting windows which didn't exist before. On the other hand, it has taken away that long winter off-season which gave everyone a chance to re-charge the batteries.

Re-charged or not, we are now well and truly into the new season, and, touch wood, things aren't looking too bad. At this stage, the season is generally looking much more conducive for cotton production than last season. Just to re-cap, last season started of incredibly wet and cold, then the switch was turned to incredibly dry and hot.

Well, so far we are looking much milder and much more 'average.' The cotton is enjoying it more and so are the humans.

For example, comparing 2016 to 2017, from October 1 to the first week of December, Moree had 25 cold shock days (below 11°C) in 2016 versus only five this year. Hot shock days (above 36°C) fell from 10 to one and overall day degrees were similar and just about spot on the long term average.

Over the same period further south, at Hillston, hot days fell from five to two and cold days from 38 down to 21. Overall day degrees were also well down – a chilly start down south.

To complete the picture, Emerald had no cold days versus two last year; only two hot days versus 18 last year and day degrees are down slightly.

Of course, it all depends what happens from now onwards. But at least the set-up for the season is looking more promising.

Hopefully the pleasant weather will continue for a few more weeks and find all *Cottongrower* readers enjoying a mild and happy Christmas and a wonderful New Year.

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