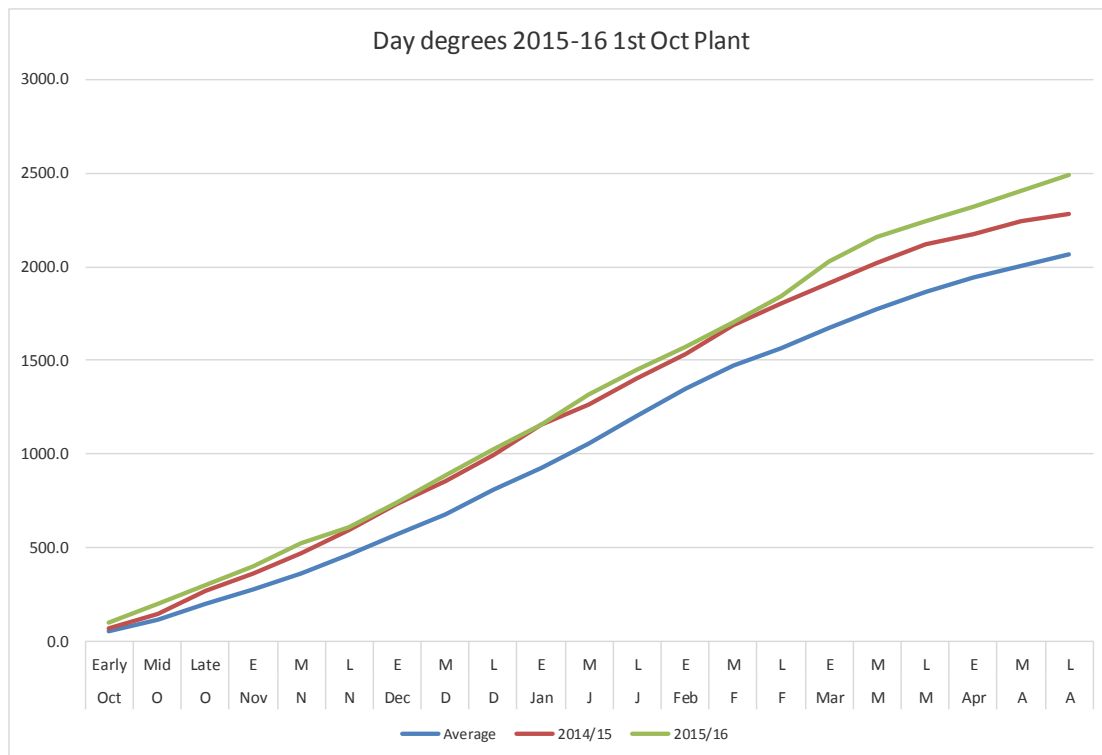


IREC Cotton industry report 2016

It was another productive and profitable year for cotton growers in Southern NSW.

It was a great growing season again with record Day degrees and the lowest number of cold shocks on record. The combination of a good early start in late September and early October, warm but not extreme temperatures through the boll fill period, warm conditions in February and March to finish crops and the high potential of the full season CSD Bollgard II variety 74BRF has resulted in exceptional yields. Picking weather conditions were very good in late April and early May but wet weather made harvest difficult as the season progressed.



Yield reports are still coming in but it is common to hear farm averages in the 11 to 14 bale/ha range with some individual fields going close to 17 bales/ha. It is estimated that over 600,000 bales have been produced in the 2015/16 season.

Surface irrigated water use for the season has been in the range of 8 to 11 ML/ha.

Seed prices have also been up for the 2016 crop with returns in the \$300 to \$350/ tonne range common. This has added close to \$1,000/ha to grower returns.

Prices are staying above or at \$500/bale for at least the next two seasons so if seasonal conditions allow ground preparation to be timely the southern cotton industry will at least remain at or above 50,000 ha in the Southern NSW valleys region.

Over the last 12 months the cotton industry in the south has been acknowledged with a number of Australian industry grower awards. Peter and Caroline Touhey at Daisy Lodge, Carrathool won the Australian High achiever of 2015. The Southern Valleys Cotton growers association held a field day at Daisy Lodge in late March with over 300 attending.

Tim and Roger Commins at Whitton also recently won the Australian High achiever of 2016 award at the Australian Cotton conference attended by over 1900 delegates.

The 2016/17 season will see the release of four new CSD Bollgard 3 varieties with two of the varieties having a shorter season length (while maintaining yield) having a good fit in southern NSW.

There is a positive feel in the cotton industry with good options for irrigators to return high \$/ML for up to three years out. A first time cotton grower at Forbes recently topped the CSD Ambassador awards for 2016 with a farm average of 16.2 bales/ha. There is also interest in cotton trials as far south as Kerang Victoria for the 2016/2017 season.

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CottonInfo is a joint venture of CSD, CRDC and Cotton Australia.