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Cotton Australia joins Queensland regulator in Spray Drift reminder

Cotton Australia is joining forces with Biosecurity Queensland to remind all farmers to check labels, track weather conditions and apply best practice to minimise spray drift and avoid off-target damage in the 2022 season.

With a bumper season expected due to significant rain and a pending dry period, Cotton Australia is forecasting increased crop spraying activity as farmers commence preparing paddocks for winter crops and control emerging weeds.

Cotton Australia policy officer Paul Sloman said the vast majority of farmers do the right thing to ensure neighbouring crops remain damage free.

“We work hard to raise awareness around best practice for spraying with growers, spray applicators, chemical registrants, resellers, regulators and other agricultural industries.

“The education, training and communications campaign is very effective but reading and complying with labels, instructions and all regulations is not voluntary – its compulsory.”

Biosecurity Queensland Senior Scientist Bartley Bauer said managing the risk of spray drift is critical to best practice spraying for growers and contractors.

“Spray drift management strategies reduce the risk of unintended impacts to neighbours and the environment and ensure more herbicide lands where it should, to maximise weed control,” Mr Bauer said.

“Developing a spray plan, checking the weather forecast and selecting the most appropriate nozzles before you start spraying are all vital.

“Conversations with your neighbours about the timing of your spray operations are also encouraged.”

Biosecurity Queensland has a compliance program to investigate misuse of agricultural chemicals and their application. Significant penalties may apply for misuse—up to \$82,710 for individuals and \$413,550 for companies.

“Farmers and spray contractors should be aware of their obligations” under the *Chemical Usage (Agriculture and Veterinary) Control Act 1988*,” Mr Bauer said.

“This includes requirements to follow all instructions appearing on agricultural chemical labels, including spray drift constraints, and to make and keep spray records.”

Cotton Australia also encourages all crop growers to use the spray drift prevention tool SataCrop for mapping intentions and applications to allow growers and applicators to be better informed before spraying.

The new technology requires growers to only map their fields once and has the ability to import field boundaries from compatible software such as PCT, SST, Farmworks, John Deere and Agworld.



Advancing Australian Cotton

More information can be found on the Cotton Australia website: www.cottonaustralia.com.au

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