



NSW DEPARTMENT OF
PRIMARY INDUSTRIES



News Release

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Show yours off! At the Gwydir Valley Cotton Crop Competition

Entries for the 2006/07 cotton crop competition are now open. The Gwydir Valley Cotton Crop Competition is again being run by the Gwydir Valley Cotton Field Day Committee.

NSW Department of Primary Industries and Cotton CRC Regional Cotton Extension Officer Julie O'Halloran said that entries are being sought for both an irrigated and dryland cotton competition.

"We have had a great response over the last couple of years despite reduced cotton areas and hope for this to continue again this year, despite the hard season" said Ms O'Halloran.

"Judging criteria is based on three equally weighted criteria components: **Ginned yield, Profitability**, which is determined by applying standardised costs to the crop inputs and **Crop Management** which looks at various aspects of cotton production."

"Nutrition management is an example of one of the crop management areas that the judges will assess" said Ms O'Halloran. Judges will discuss with the grower how fertiliser decisions are made, as well as visually looking at the crop for signs of too much or not enough of a particular nutrient. The aim of nutrition management is to ensure that the crops needs are being met, while optimising inputs to minimise costs and environmental impacts.

Other crop management judging criteria include: Integrated Weed Management, Integrated Pest Management, Water Management, Disease Management and rotations in the farming system.

Polly Gibbons, the Cotton Australia Grower Services Manager for the Gwydir Valley said the crop management criteria that the judges will focus on are also components of the Australian cotton industry's Best Management Practices (BMP) program.

"The BMP program is designed to help growers improve their farm management practices by reducing the risk of harm to human health and the environment allowing growers to manage their operations with due diligence" said Ms Gibbons.

"The process is not a complicated one. A Pre-Certification Assessment is the first stage of the BMP process and is carried out by Cotton Australia Grower Services Managers"

Management practices that minimise the risk to the environment have the added benefit of contributing to sustainable cotton production.

All entries or inquiries should be directed to Julie O'Halloran, Regional Cotton Extension Officer with NSW DPI on 0427 018 684. Entries close Monday 5th of March.

Further information: Julie O'Halloran 0427 018 684