



CROP PROTECTION



Canopy® finds new fit in cotton IPM strategy

Canopy®, the new product in Caltex's Precision Spray Oil™ range, is finding increasing acceptance among cotton growers to combat sucking insects causing yield damage in both conventional and Bollgard crops.



• **Suzie McCutcheon**

With the addition of green mirids to its list of registered claims during the 2006/2007 season, Canopy has broad application potential in cotton pest management.

Cotton Growers Services Narrabri branch manager, Susie McCutcheon, said Lower Namoi cotton growers had quickly adopted Canopy as a core part of their Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategy.

"Canopy is mainly used early season to keep pest numbers down or again in late season if sucking pests are a problem. It was once a mainstay of *Heliothis* sprays (in conventional cotton), but has found a continuing fit in Bollgard crops as well.

"With Bollgard removing the need for *Heliothis* sprays, sucking pests have become the main pest in cotton. Once you get about 6-8 weeks into the growing season sucking pests start coming in."

This observation was also made by the Australian Cotton Research Institute IPM program leader, Dr Robert Mensah. Dr Mensah was involved in early trials of Canopy in IPM programs and was one of many experts who spoke on the topic: "Mirids And Green Vegetable Bug Sucking Your Profits All The Way To The Gin" at the 13th Australian Cotton Conference on the Gold Coast in August 2006.

Ms McCutcheon said Canopy was very IPM friendly and was especially soft on beneficial insects, including bees, while giving enhanced control of target pests.

"A lot of crops around Narrabri and Wee Waa were successfully sprayed with Canopy and the softer chemistries which cleaned up aphids, mirids and small *Helicoverpa* where there were any.

"Having the registration for mirids will be a big plus for Canopy as mirids cause more damage than many people think. Some of the other 'IPM' products don't appear to be as soft as first thought and can also cause flaring of mites if beneficial numbers have been knocked around by spraying.

"We saw increased usage of Canopy last year and you'll see a bit more this year as people are now familiar with where it fits. Given a decent season you will see lot more going out in dryland cotton as well as the irrigated crops, but because of uncertainty surrounding the season and bore water entitlement cuts most growers hadn't even ordered seed by September," Ms McCutcheon said.

More information on Canopy is available from Stuart Paterson at Caltex on 0408 682 087.

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