Canopy to become 'spray of choice' for cotton

The Caltex Precision Spray Oil™, Canopy® could become the product of choice for cotton growers in the coming season if heavy insect pressure is experienced in Australia's major cotton growing areas.

This is the prediction of Caltex Crop Protection Territory Manager, Stuart Paterson, following the recent registration of Canopy for the control of mirids, supplementing its existing registrations for aphids and *Heliothis*.

Mr Paterson said Canopy had already seen tremendous uptake among growers in recent years because of its strategic fit with the cotton industry's Insect Resistance Management Strategy.

"Canopy is suitable at every stage of the recommended spray strategy in all cotton valleys, where sucking insects such as aphids and mirids are emerging as major pests now that *Heliothis* has been largely under control over recent seasons, especially in the newer cotton varieties," Mr Paterson said.

Canopy is the first spray oil in the world to be registered as an insecticide in cotton.

The product was originally used as a spray adjuvant to enhance the activity of partner chemicals, resulting in better adhesion and longer persistence, particularly in 'soft' biological products vital for integrated pest management.

According to Mr Paterson, it has now been firmly established that Canopy is an effective insecticide in its own right, being the first spray oil in the world to achieve registration as an insecticide in cotton.

"The additional registration of the product for mirids means that its use won't be restricted by Research Permits which may have limited its use when mirids were the main target pest," he said.

"We expect Canopy to be much more widely used this coming cotton season, both for its effectiveness against sucking pests and - importantly - because, being a precision spray oil, it does not add to resistance problems and is soft on beneficial insects.

"In addition to the control of sucking pests we may see it increasingly used to control *Heliothis* in some Bollgard crops where egg laying and larvae emergence in flowers has started to make growers nervous.

"Canopy has a proven effect on ovipositional behaviour, making the plant surface unattractive for egg laying and we are also investigating whether the product has some ovicidal activity following anecdotal evidence that this may be the case," Mr Paterson said.

Scientific trials by the Australian Cotton Research Institute had already proved the effectiveness of Canopy in mixtures with biological chemicals including *Bt* and viral sprays.

This was thought to be solely due to better leaf adhesion and protection of the active insecticidal ingredients inside the spray oil droplets. However, more recent studies have shown that Canopy's own insecticidal properties play an even more significant role.

"Unlike normal 'spray oils' which risk "burning" of crops, Canopy was specially formulated for crop safety at up to five times the recommended rate which makes it the ideal tank-mix partner," Mr Paterson said.

FURTHER INFORMATION: Stuart Paterson Caltex Australia **Phone: 0408 682 087**