

Rob Newell: Australia



Major Crops: Cotton
 Farm Size: 1,000 ha
 Years Farming: 27
 First Planted Biotech Crops: 1996
 Favorite Benefits: Reduced pesticide spraying. Increased bird populations. Community appreciation.
 Family: Married with 6 grown children

“Without a doubt, plant biotechnology is the way of the future for farming.”



Video Transcript:

Well, there's been a big change from growing cotton back in the late '70s when we used to use the likes of DDT and many other broad-spectrum insecticides. After a number of years, the insects built up resistance to many of the insecticides, and were doing half the job. ... And then come along Ingard and now Bollgard. And it's one of the best things ever to happen to the cotton industry – Bollgard II coming along. I haven't sprayed the crop at all this season. ...

... It's basically a win for growers and a win for the environment. ... When we used to spray a lot – like nothing moved in the crop basically. And therefore, there were no beneficials there. So, now with not spraying, the crop's full of beneficial insects...



So, we've got more lady beetles – lady beetles, spiders, wasps out there eating the pest insects. Therefore, there's more sort of food for the birds... We're seeing a lot more birds around than we've ever seen before. ...

But also, the benefit to the broader community in general – the neighboring, grazing properties never used to like our sprays too much. And I can't blame them. But now, they've noted that we're not spraying as much. And they're very happy about it. ...



... And might I say, we're a lot happier too for not spraying all the insecticide. ...

Basically, everyone's a lot happier. ...

What concerns me is that many farmers in Australia may fall behind other countries around the world that have GM. It concerns me that a lot of these state governments have got a ban on GM. And farmers are going to be the losers. ... But one day, we'll all be growing GM crops – I'm certain. The progressive, productive farmers of the future. ...

... And the benefit is very obvious. It's the way of the future, without doubt.