

IRRIGATION AND VARIETY INFLUENCES ON CROP MATURITY AND DEFOLIATION TIMING**D.S. Munk****S.D. Wright****R.B. Hutmacher****J.F. Wroble****University of California Cooperative Extension****Fresno, CA****Abstract**

San Joaquin Valley cotton is a full season crop that is planted early in the spring and harvested in the late fall. Delays in planting can result in declining crop yield and quality, and proper agronomic management practices can also play a significant role. A late maturing crop can be subject to poor leaf defoliation and incomplete boll opening thereby affecting harvester efficiency and proper module storage conditions. This paper evaluates the role contrasting maturity class and irrigation management plays on late season crop maturity. A moderate maturity Acala cotton is contrasted with a moderately-late maturity Pima cotton and a late-maturity inter-specific hybrid variety. Each of these cotton types are compared in 4 irrigation main plots that include a UC Cooperative Extension irrigation guideline treatment, a low stress treatment, and two deficit irrigation treatments. The results presented demonstrate the importance of good irrigation scheduling and variety influence in facilitating defoliation during optimum periods in the early fall as well as minimizing the potential for harvest, module storage and lint quality problems.