

**CHANGING CULTURAL PRACTICES IN  
CALIFORNIA'S IMPERIAL VALLEY**

**Anne F. Wrona**

**National Cotton Council**

**Memphis, TN**

**Kim A. Hoelmer, P. Shouse, and R.B. Hutmacher**

**USDA/APHIS, Brawley; USDA/ARS, Riverside;**

**USDA/ARS,**

**Fresno, CA**

**Abstract**

Three years' plant mapping data from the Imperial Valley indicate a shift toward earlier planting dates and consistently higher yields. In five months' production time for a short-season cotton crop, growers are producing higher yields, on a valley-wide average, than they did with their former long-season production practices which took approximately nine months to produce a crop. Earlier-timed irrigations after planting and more frequent but shorter irrigation runs correspond with better square and boll retention and lower populations of silverleaf whitefly. Seasonal averages of whitefly eggs, nymphs and adults were an order of magnitude lower in the thirty grower fields sampled in '95 than in the thirty sampled in '96. In addition to changing cultural practices, newly available insecticide chemistries have helped growers reduce numbers of whiteflies.