

## **PLANT POPULATION/SEEDING RATE**

Aim for a final stand of 2 to 3 plants/ft of row. Calibrate planters to deliver 2.5 to 4 seeds/ft (2 to 3 in irrigated fields). Increase planting rate if seed quality is poor or in fields in which seedling diseases are a problem. Calibrate planters for each variety to be planted. Seed sizes of different varieties range from 4000 to 6500/lb and significantly affect the number of seed planted.

Therefore, final rates may range from less than 6 to more than 8 lb/A. Thick stands (5 or more plants/ft) are undesirable but sometimes occur unintentionally. They can produce satisfactory yields under careful management of nitrogen and insects, though dense stands tend to increase the node number at which plants begin fruiting.

Because technology costs of transgenic varieties are directly linked to seeding rates, significant incentives exist to minimize the number of seed/ft. In research trials conducted from 1995 to 1997, rates as low as 2 seed/ft resulted in plant stands ranging from 1.2 to 1.9 plants/ft and maximum lint yield over the 3 year study. Practically, a target of 2.5 seed/ft is a reasonable trade-off for economizing with transgenic cotton. In a hill-drop planting system this seeding rate would be equivalent to 2 seed every 8 to 10 inches.