

## **VARIETY SELECTION**

Choosing which variety to plant is one of the most critical steps in producing a cotton crop. Currently producers not only choose a variety based on genetic performance but also according to pest management traits. Rarely is a single variety perfectly suited to every environment; however, the clear successes of DP 555 BG/RR in recent seasons will no doubt make it again widely planted in 2008. Growers must consider what other varieties should complement DP 555 BG/RR on their farm. There may be as many as 10 different technology systems available in 2008: conventional, Roundup Ready, Roundup Ready Flex, Bollgard/Roundup Ready, Bollgard II/Roundup Ready, Bollgard II/Roundup Ready Flex, Widestrike/Roundup Ready, Widestrike/Roundup Ready Flex, Liberty Link, and potentially Bollgard II/Liberty Link. It is possible that single gene Bt cotton may not be available past 2009, providing impetus for the evaluation of other variety/technology packages on farm. Growers should consider spreading risk across planting dates, maturity class, and individual varieties.

Variety selection at the grower level should be based on research data and local field experience. Attention should be given to both yield and fiber quality. Sources of data include trials from university experiment stations and county demonstration plots, seed company trials, and consultant trials. UGA Variety performance data are published in the Georgia Cotton newsletter and the UGA Cotton Web page at [www.ugacotton.com](http://www.ugacotton.com). Results from at least two years and several locations provide some indication of anticipated performance. Generally, the more years and locations the better, and while data are helpful, grower experience on the farm is the ultimate test. In addition, the adage, "Try a little, not a lot," is still the preferred approach when implementing new technology and production practices on the farm.