

## INTRODUCTION

Cotton crop has considerable importance all over the world, so, cotton fibers play an important role in the international commerce. In Egypt, cotton is the first industrial crop, because the spinning and textile industry depends on its fibers, also, cotton is an important source of foreign currency in our country. Therefore increasing cotton yield and quality has national interest.

In the last years, total production of seed cotton gradually decreased from 8,418,024 kentars in 1981/1982 season (produced from 1,178,420 feddans) to 5,055,335 kentars in 1989/1990 season (produced from 1,005,533 feddans).<sup>\*</sup> This means that yield per feddan gradually decreased from 7,143 kentars in 1981/1982 season to 5.028 kentars in 1989/1990 season.

Many researchers mentioned that this reduction in cotton production was mainly attributable to the tendency of farmers to delay the date of sowing cotton. In recent years, and as a result of increasing the prices of all field crops, growers began to grow cotton after winter crops such as clover or legumes or even wheat. Consequently, cotton sowing is delayed until the end of April or through May.

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\*- Source : "cotton". monthly bulletin issued by the General Sector Authority for Cotton Affairs (Dec.1990).

Under late planting, cotton growers follow the cultural practices according to the recommendations of the Ministry of Agriculture which are applicable for the optimum date of cotton planting.

For this reason, the present study aimed to find out the most optimum suitable treatments concerning number of seeds /hill, thinning date, population density (distance between hills) and nitrogen level for late planted cotton. In addition, the effect of these four cultural practices on growth, yield, yield components and some technological properties of cotton has been also investigated.

It is hoped that the present investigation may help in getting some information needed to conclude new recommendations for late planted cotton in order to increase cotton yield by modifying the traditional recommendations which are usually made for early planted cotton.