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Potential ‘game-changers’ chosen for cotton industry’s 2022 emerging leaders program

Australia’s cotton industry has selected 15 of the country’s most outstanding, up and coming cotton stakeholders for its premier entry-level leadership program.

Eight women and seven men from across NSW, Qld and the ACT will participate in the 2022 Australian Future Cotton Leaders Program (AFCLP), with support from Cotton Australia and the Cotton Research and Development Corporation (CRDC).

The program aims to develop their leadership knowledge, skills and experience so that they, in turn, can play key roles in further developing the industry.

Cotton Australia CEO Adam Kay said the calibre of applicants highlights the role Australia has in leading the world in improving cotton quality and environmental stewardship.

“I am excited about the 2022 Future Cotton Leaders Program because of the potential for real benefit to the participants and the industry as a whole. They have some game-changing ideas and a passion for improving sustainability, quality and yield.”

Mr Kay said the development of our future cotton leaders is essential as the industry seeks to further improve water and pesticide use efficiencies while maximising quality and yield.

“The program is professionally delivered, empowering participants to give as much as they take, encouraging fresh thinking and innovation from our emerging cotton decision-makers.”

CRDC Executive Director Dr Ian Taylor said the participants represent the diversity of the cotton industry and its supply chain.

“The 2022 cohort includes cotton growers and farm managers, researchers, extension officers, marketers, and fashion designers - a talented mix of people who are already working to improve the future of the Australian cotton industry. In their day to day roles, these emerging leaders are already tackling big issues like cotton’s heat and drought tolerance, water use efficiency, ginning optimisation and showcasing cotton as a renewable resource for emerging designers,” Dr Taylor said.

“Previous graduates of the AFCLP have been drivers of change and we have confidence that the 2022 participants will continue that tradition.”

In 2022 the program will feature face-to-face forums, interactive online discussions, one-on-one coaching and integration with industry activities. Participants will also undertake an individual

project related to their area of interest. The program will conclude at the Australian Cotton Conference in August 2022.

The full list of successful applicants follows:

Jenna	Bell	Whitton	Grower/support coordinator
James	Bierhoff	Moree	Grower
Emma	Bond	Ormeau	Grower/Fashion Designer & Educator
Kim	Byrnes	Moree	Grower
Charlie	Clark	Goondiwindi	Farm Manager
Patrick	Fillipi	Sydney	Cotton Research
Danni	Ingram	Emerald	Grower
Bradley	Jonsson	Ravenshoe	Grower
Sam	Lee	Dalby	Extension of Research
Jess	Lehmann	Canberra	Biosecurity Project Officer
Demi	Sargent	Richmond	Cotton Researcher
Kimberley	Stevens	Biloela	Grower
Jess	Strauch	Goondiwindi	Cotton Marketing/Queensland Cotton
Matthew	Whittaker	Gunnedah	Grower
William	Woolcock	Wee Waa	Grower

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Cotton Australia is the peak body for Australia's cotton growers.

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CRDC invests in research, development and extension on behalf of the Australian Government and cotton growers.

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