



# BILLY BROWNING

"Narramine Station"  
Narramine, NSW



Billy Browning was raised in the cotton industry having grown up on the family farm, "Narramine Station". From his early school days, the agricultural industry had a rising and passionate advocate in Billy. At every opportunity Billy would encourage his peers or anyone with a slight interest in agriculture to come and experience working in the industry, just in case it was a fit for them. Billy explains, 'On-farm experience is where the greatest knowledge is gained, even if it's only a few hours, anybody that is even considering a career in agriculture should try and gain as much experience as possible in my eyes.'

He has always wanted others to share his passion for farming and agriculture, believing it is fundamentally important to get young people on farms to make the direct connection between food and fibre and their origins.

In 2012, Billy was a Cotton Australia Young Farming Champion and participated in the well-known Art for Ag program. He thrived having the opportunity to be a young farming champion, which involved going into urban schools to advocate and teach those students about agriculture.

Billy is a born communicator, his outstanding interpersonal skills and his ability to share a compelling and engaging story with vision are among his greatest attributes. He is a young man of integrity and it is this, that draws people to him. Throughout his young life he has been able to form strong networks for the common good and for the future of agriculture, particularly cotton farming here in Australia. As a fourth generation farmer, Billy has demonstrated a strong desire and initiative in being an active part of the cotton growing community. He was recently elected on the Macquarie Cotton Grower Association (MCGA) Committee and is involved with the Macquarie River Food and Fibre. He has been an asset to both of these influential industry bodies.



'What better way to understand industry issues than immersing yourself in these committees. Since moving back to "Narramine Station", my contribution has been through promotion and participation. By reaching out and being involved in the local CGA and water management committee and hosting field days with industry representatives on farm,' Billy explained.

Billy has been a passionate advocate of the cotton industry's best management practice initiative. He has volunteered his farm and time to participate in benchmarking and research projects on electricity usage and pricing for the betterment of the whole industry. A young man with huge capacity and vision, Billy recently achieved accreditation with myBMP and opted into BCI.



His support for the industry is enormous. More recently, Billy appeared in a social media video for Cotton Australia promoting the cotton industry and our efficiencies in water use. 'I think our social licence is a massive thing today and sharing our story is one way we can improve on this,' says Billy.

'We recently hosted the fashion industry at "Narramine Station", giving them a walking tour around the farm and through the crop. We showed them how we grow the crop, where the water comes from and how we do things. It was just amazing to see their reaction and how genuinely interested they really were.'

It is no surprise that Billy was named the 2018 Macquarie Valley Cotton Grower's Young Achiever.

One of the most notable of Billy's achievements is his dedication to removing the stigma around mental health.

'Promoting mental health awareness is a real passion of mine and we have been using the farm as a backing for that. Promoting mental health in regional communities, encouraging men and women in the farming industry to speak up, to let them know they are not alone is so important. If we can band together, we can beat this illness, that's for sure,' says Billy.

When Googling Billy's name, you immediately become aware of the vast reach he has achieved on the topic of mental health. Both his and his family's message about mental health is a passionate one. The Brownings have selflessly put themselves in the spotlight at one of the hardest times in their lives to make sure that other families don't go through what they did. They have shared their story and celebrated their father's life in a way that has certainly saved others and made it easier for them to take the steps to get the help they need. They have an amazingly positive way of looking at the world and the industry that they work in and love.

Billy and his family were featured in a documentary about prioritising mental health in small businesses. He has featured in countless social media posts and has stood up in front of many crowds to talk about mental health. Billy is a young man with immense selflessness and courage.

He was chosen as one of eight individuals by Australian Rugby Union to be an integral part of their campaign 'Part of More' to share his story with a national audience. Billy talks about his passion for small communities who pull together the "belonging" that he gets from the Narramine Gorillas Rugby Club, for whom he has served as Treasurer. It also gave him a valuable platform to promote a charity he spearheads called 'Beat the Breakdown'.

Billy Browning is a young man the Australia cotton industry is sure to see a great deal more of.

