



COTTON
AUSTRALIA

ANNUAL REPORT
2022-23

PLANET. PEOPLE. Paddock.





CONTENTS

Chairman’s report	2	Essential grower services	26
CEO’s report	4	Communications	30
About Cotton Australia	6	Education	34
Thank you to our levy payers	7	Cotton to Market	40
Cotton Conference	10	myBMP and BCI	44
Water	16	AgSkilled	46
Sustainability	18	Valley reports	48
Research Direction and Stewardship	20	Cotton Australia Board	54
Spray drift	22	Cotton Australia Team	55
Workforce	23	Financial summary	56
Energy, Mining and CSG	24		



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

In last year's Annual Report Chairman's address, I forecasted a crop of around 5.5 million bales and that turned out to be an accurate forecast, making it the best crop result in Australia's history.

The contrast with just two years before that is astounding and really does point to the resilience of our growers, who not only bounced back from some lean years but were in a position to take full advantage of the return of better growing conditions.

Resilience again came to the fore late last year when a massive rain event hit most of our growing regions in NSW and southern QLD. In one week in November NSW emergency services reported every inland river catchment was either full or flooded from the QLD border to the VIC border with 99 active warnings and nine major flood warnings in place.

Cotton Australia revised down its crop forecast for 2023 as farmers dealt with flooded fields, ruined crops and severe infrastructure damage. The cotton planting window closed before many southern NSW growers could plant their crops. To the relief of many, warmer conditions returned and the flood waters subsided, leaving dams full and soil profiles healthy. We are pleased to say that again we are looking at an excellent crop yield of around 5.5 million bales.

The cotton industry has much to look forward to. With the Cotton Australia Strategic Planning process underway we have gone through the plan which sets out a pathway for us to operate for the next five years and ensure we can adequately operate with our reserves to ensure we are prepared for what will inevitably be our next dry period.

As it was for the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan, we need to ensure we remain **ADVANCED, VIABLE AND VALUED** and we are working to finalise that plan to achieve that through our strategic goals, focus and initiatives. That process is working well and much progress has been made. I want to thank all involved for their efforts as we work together with a common purpose.

Aligned with this effort is the Strategic Roadmap Process which is aimed at identifying how we can remain competitive globally in a changing fashion and textiles market. The collaborative effort with Cotton Australia, the Cotton Research & Development Corporation (CRDC) and the Australian Cotton Shippers Association (ACSA) is examining five key topics via broad consultation with growers and the industry: traceability, industry data, sustainably-certified cotton/*myBMP* program, human rights, and Australian cotton marketing.

These are exciting times as we tackle issues that face all of us across the industry and look into areas that can only better prepare us for global challenges, growing consumer demand for quality sustainable cotton and competition from other major cotton growers, and from other textiles and fibres.

The need for this strategic roadmap became clear as we became aware of changes occurring in the global cotton and textile landscape. With technology bringing us closer together, we need to play a part on the global stage on issues like new overseas legislation affecting market access, the demand for transparency on social and environmental impacts, and global frameworks requiring evidence of social and environmental governance back to farm level. During meetings on the Roadmap I spoke of the unique opportunity we now have to capitalise on our small, geographically contained industry, three decades of sustainability work, and a strong human rights record through the roadmap.

I firmly believe that we are in a strong position because of our focus on sustainability areas and our framework **PLANET. PEOPLE. Paddock**. The framework sets the future direction for the industry's investments and action and sets real sustainability targets for nine priority sustainability topics including water, climate change and biodiversity. The framework is focused at farm-level and is being delivered through existing industry structures and programs. This is not an insular approach as each of our priority target areas involves external stakeholders in various ways including our Australian Cotton Sustainability Reference Group and Sustainability Working Group (SWG). Transparency is a key issue and we look forward to providing regular updates on our progress to ensure everyone knows which targets we are achieving and which areas need more work.



To that end, the fourth independent environmental assessment, which takes place every ten years, is due out in 2023.

We have another area of constant assessment and that involves our stakeholders through Cotton to Market. They are doing a tremendous job taking our reputation to fashion brands, retailers and Non-Government Organisations (NGO), all of whom want to know more about our sustainability journey, see the evidence, hear about the research, the science and

the innovation, particularly around traceability. They also want to see first-hand cotton on-farm and we are facilitating that through the program.

We are in a great position globally moving into 2023 and beyond and that's because of the hard work and commitment of those before us, those collaborating with us today and those who will continue on the path to even better environmental and sustainability outcomes into the future.

NIGEL BURNETT
CHAIRMAN, COTTON AUSTRALIA



CEO'S REPORT

It's wonderful to be coming off a record crop for our industry last season and to be currently picking a crop of a similar size.

Whilst the La Niña conditions of the last few years had many upsides, much of our industry suffered from the considerable flooding in October and November 2023. The fact that in a five-year period we can go from the smallest crop in 40 years to the largest on record has certainly been factored into Cotton Australia's strategic planning for the next five years.

Over the last year our Cotton Australia team has built on the relationships with the key governments, state, territory, and federal. With the change of federal government, the advocacy around the Murray Darling Basin Plan came to the forefront with Cotton Australia and its allies lobbying governments to consider all other options before invoking buybacks. Buybacks have been shown to have a derogatory effect on regional communities and while our individual growers are well protected, the loss of water licences is felt through the service industries of our towns. In relation to water,

Cotton Australia achieved a great win for Queensland growers with the lower bounds pricing decision and a great win for Dawson Valley growers with the extension of the Strategic Reserve water.

Throughout the year the team conducted many successful education events and initiatives including stands at the Sydney Easter Show and the Brisbane EKKA and numerous regional Teach the Teacher events. These events allow us to leverage the virtual reality video we produced a few years ago but had been unable to utilise through Covid.

myBMP continued to be a focus for the team because of the importance of the program for social licence and because of the premiums that can be achieved. The program delivered over \$5 million of additional revenue to our growers through premiums for Better Cotton last year and these will continue into the future.

The AgSkilled program initiated by Cotton Australia six years ago has continued to deliver valuable training in NSW. Cotton Australia continues to advocate for a similar model in QLD as the Federal Government see the program as an exemplar that should be running in every state. We see training as an important factor in workforce retention. The focus on

attracting workforce has continued with the Cotton Jobs Australia platform and efforts to recruit ex Australian defence force staff into our industry.

The communications team has maintained media engagement, both mainstream and social throughout the year, leveraging the great stories from on farm as well as the impressive sustainability credentials the industry has achieved.

The Cotton to Market effort has reached new levels thanks to federal government ATMAC funding that has allowed us to increase the reach to brands, retailers and supply chain partners both here and abroad. The Camp Cotton event again recruited new brands and retailers who all responded positively to engagement with our growers, researchers and industry personnel.

The Australian Cotton Conference run in August 2022 by Cotton Australia (in conjunction with ACSA) and was a huge success with over 2500 people from all facets of the industry attending. The conference highlights a key aspect of the industry, "sharing of information and collaboration", both of which are critical to our future success.



Behind the scenes our administrative team ensured the organisation ran smoothly. Special thanks to our General Manager Michael Murray and the whole Cotton Australia team for their hard work and dedication to the industry. Their efforts are on display at each General Meeting where growers from each Cotton Grower Association get to see firsthand the work and provide feedback on research priorities to help guide the CRDC investments.

I wish all our growers the best for the coming season and look forward to working with our team and Board to deliver against the new 2023-2028 Strategic Plan.

Adam Kay

ADAM KAY
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
COTTON AUSTRALIA



Adam Kay and Federal Agriculture Minister Murray Watt

ABOUT COTTON AUSTRALIA



Cotton Australia is the peak body for Australia's cotton growers, representing up to 1,500 cotton farming families, predominantly in New South Wales and Queensland with increasing growing activity in the Northern Territory and Western Australia.

The organisation strives to maintain and enhance what is widely regarded as a world-class agricultural industry that is sustainable, valued for its economic and social contribution, and its production of very high-quality cotton that is in demand around the world.

Cotton Australia exists for its growers. Its resources, human and financial, are directed to initiatives and programs that benefit cotton producers directly and indirectly. For over 50 years, Cotton Australia has grown alongside an industry that demands the highest standards, and during that time, has delivered a series of sustained wins for its growers.

Cotton Australia was established in 1972 (as the Australian Cotton Foundation) and in 2009 merged with the Australian Cotton Growers Research Association (also established in 1972). Led by a Board of up to 10, mostly cotton growers, the organisation is funded by a voluntary levy paid by growers on each bale of cotton produced.

Cotton Australia provides a united voice for cotton growers across research and development, stewardship, natural resource management, biosecurity, and cotton production issues such as water. This is achieved through policy and advocacy, education, communication, and grower services.

Cotton Australia has offices in Sydney, Narrabri, Toowoomba and Brisbane, and field staff based in most cotton production regions. The activities of the Board and staff are directed by an Annual Operating Plan, underpinned by the organisation's 2018-23 Strategic Plan that sets out priorities and core areas of business.

Cotton Australia is a member of, and works in collaboration with, key partners to align messages and coordinate efforts. We work with affiliate organisations including the National Farmers' Federation, National Irrigators' Council, Queensland Farmers' Federation, NSW Irrigators' Council, cotton grower associations, Cotton Seed Distributors, the Cotton Research and Development Corporation, CottonInfo and a number of valley-based organisations that all contribute to supporting our industry.

In 2022, Cotton Australia celebrated its 50th year with a conference and gala event at the Australian Cotton Conference on the Gold Coast. In 2023 we remain focussed on our sustainability framework PLANET. PEOPLE. Paddock. as we strive to improve on our already impressive environmental record.

THANK YOU TO OUR LEVY PAYERS

Cotton Australia exists to serve our growers, but we can only continue to deliver the services that support the growth and the sustainability of our valuable industry with financial support. Thank you to all who contributed the full Cotton Australia levy for the 2022-23 year. Your consideration and support enables us to do what we do for you.



THE AUSTRALIAN COTTON CONFERENCE 2022

A TIME FOR CELEBRATION



Delegates at the 2022 Australian Cotton Conference.

The biennial Australian Cotton Conference in 2022 has proven to be a social highlight on the cotton industry calendar, an opportunity to celebrate the season just had, learn from a huge variety of presentations and check out the latest technology.

With Covid making its impact felt across the globe in early 2020 and millions of Australians confined to their homes in quarantine and lockdown it was clear that gatherings and social activities would not be on the agenda.

By 2022 – four years after the 2018 Australian Cotton Conference – Australia's cotton industry was ready and as predicted the 2022 event drew attendees from far and wide making it the biggest event of its kind in the southern hemisphere.

More than 38 forums, panel discussions and presentations were warmly received by the nearly 2500 people in attendance.

Conference Committee Member and CA CEO Adam Kay said it was wonderful to get everyone back together after four years to share knowledge, social times and celebrate the success of the industry.

"One of the strengths of the industry when we all get back together is we share information, knowledge and social times while celebrating the success of the industry. We've come a long way in the last four years, from the lows of the of the 2020 crop to the highs of this year's crop, and things are looking good for next year so there's a real buoyancy and vibrancy here in the industry."

Organisers and members from Wincott.



Darling Downs farmer and Finalist in the Cotton Grower of the Year Award, Dan Hayllor, spoke for many farmers when he said irrigation, staff management and workplace health and safety were the top three on his agenda for the event and he was able to gain valuable help in each area.

SURVEY SHOWS VAST MAJORITY LOVED COTTON CONFERENCE 2022

The final survey results from attendees at the 2022 Australian Cotton Conference revealed close to 98% rated the event as excellent or good with 98.5% saying they would attend again, based on their experiences at the event.

Mr Kay thanked the 475 people who took the time to respond to the conference survey.

"It's clear that the vast majority appreciated the efforts that went into the 2022 Australian Cotton Conference and that's reflected in the response. With most attendees heading back into a busy time, it's amazing that nearly 20% of attendees gave us their views. Statistically that's very significant."

The organising committee will examine all the responses and comments carefully to isolate areas for improvement for the Australian Cotton Conference in 2024.

Like all good surveys, some of the gold can be found in the comments section. One writer enthused about the *myBMP* workshops, run by Cotton Australia's Rob Crothers and Nicole Scott: I enjoyed the BMP Workshops – great hands-on approach to actually get some modules done!

Fashion brands showcased their Australian cotton garments during the conference.



Another contributor was mindful of the attendance of generations of families with grandparents and parents being able to attend sessions once the kids were taken to the well-received kids club activities.

An anonymous contributor to the survey made some strong points: "As someone who pretty much attends cotton conferences around the world, I definitely think that the Aussie conference is one of the best, if not the best! The quality of arrangements, the exhibits, the participation, the vibe, the number of growers and supply chain participants you can see at once, the venue, and most importantly the community over all is all outstanding."

Presenters during the conference.



THE FORUMS, THE PANELS DISCUSSIONS, THE PRESENTATIONS!

While the trade exhibition at the 2022 Australian Cotton Conference is always a favourite, much of the knowledge sharing took place in the 3 days of presentations, panel discussions, forums and *myBMP* masterclasses.

More than 100 presenters gave their time and expertise to update the industry on an incredible range of subjects, from the global supply chain disruptions, water use efficiency, cotton and circularity, What's driving Brands and so much more.

Most sessions were presented in alignment with the Australian cotton industry's sustainability framework PLANET. PEOPLE. PADDOCK. framework that set a pathway and future direction for the industry's investments and action.

With so many sessions on across the 3 days, it was highly likely that there was something you would have liked to have seen but missed. And if you did miss something the more than 80 recorded audio-visual presentations were made available on the conference website.

Presentations covered all aspects of cotton production and the industry.



OTHER EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS

What was also significant was the many individual events held as part of the Cotton Conference program.

CottonInfo celebrated its 10th birthday, connecting growers with research and recognising a decade of impact delivered by the industry's extension program.

Established in 2012, CottonInfo is a joint initiative of Cotton Australia, Cotton Seed Distributors (CSD) and the Cotton Research and Development Corporation (CRDC). It is a unique industry partnership that communicates the outcomes of research, encourages grower adoption of technology and innovation, and improves industry practices.

The conference was timely for Namoi Cotton which used the event to highlight its 60th anniversary. Namoi Cotton which was established in 1962 and today has an extensive network of ginning, marketing and logistics operations throughout the cotton growing regions of New South Wales and Southern Queensland.

Fashion brands showcased their Australian cotton garments during the conference.



The conference also marked the graduation of the 2022 Future Cotton Leaders participants, 15 of the country's most outstanding, up and coming cotton stakeholders.

Cotton Australia CEO Adam Kay said the eight women and seven men from across NSW, Qld and the ACT were a testament to the objectives of the premier entry-level program.

"Given the calibre of the graduates, I expect the coming months and years will see every one of these talented and intelligent individuals making a significant mark in this industry in so many ways.

"Identifying the potential of our young leaders and partnering in their professional development is one of the greatest things we can do to continue to improve the Australian cotton industry. I look forward to taking part in the identification of our Future Cotton Leaders participants."

AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED AT CONFERENCE AWARDS DINNER

The 2022 Bayer Cotton Grower of the year and the AgriRisk High Achiever of the Year were announced at the Australian Cotton Conference Awards Dinner on the Gold Coast, along with the ADAMA Chris Lehmann Trust Young Achiever and the Cotton Seed Distributors Researcher of the Year.

The Bayer Grower of the year for 2022 was Nick Gillingham, Sundown Pastoral Co's "Keytah" with Tipperary Station's Bruce Connolly, taking out the AgriRisk High Achiever of the Year award.

The ADAMA Chris Lehmann Trust Young Cotton Achiever of the Year went to Jessica Strauch from Goondiwindi and the winner of the Cotton Seed Distributors Researcher of the Year Award was soil scientist Dr Oliver Knox. The winner of the prestigious Incitec Pivot Fertilisers Service to the Cotton Industry Award was also announced at the dinner. The honour went to Bernie George, the Water Services and Compliance Manager at Australian Food & Fibre.

AGM

On Tuesday 16th August, before the conference started, Cotton Australia ran its AGM with over 60 people in attendance.

Chair Nigel Burnett presented his Chairs Report outlining the key issues from 2021/22 and he paid tribute to retiring Director and former Chair Hamish McIntyre who served on the Board for 11 years (3 years as Chair).

Chairman of the Corporate Governance Committee Rob Dugdale updated the members present on the company's financial position.

The three Directors completing 3-year terms and renominating, were all re-elected. They were Nigel Burnett, Rob Dugdale and Arthur Spellson.

Following the AGM, the Board met and Nigel Burnett was re-elected Chair with Fleur Anderson elected as deputy Chair.

Experienced director and senior executive April Cavanagh was appointed to a casual vacancy on the Board. April has extensive experience in financial services, agriculture and manufacturing, having worked in Brisbane, Sydney, London and regional Australia.



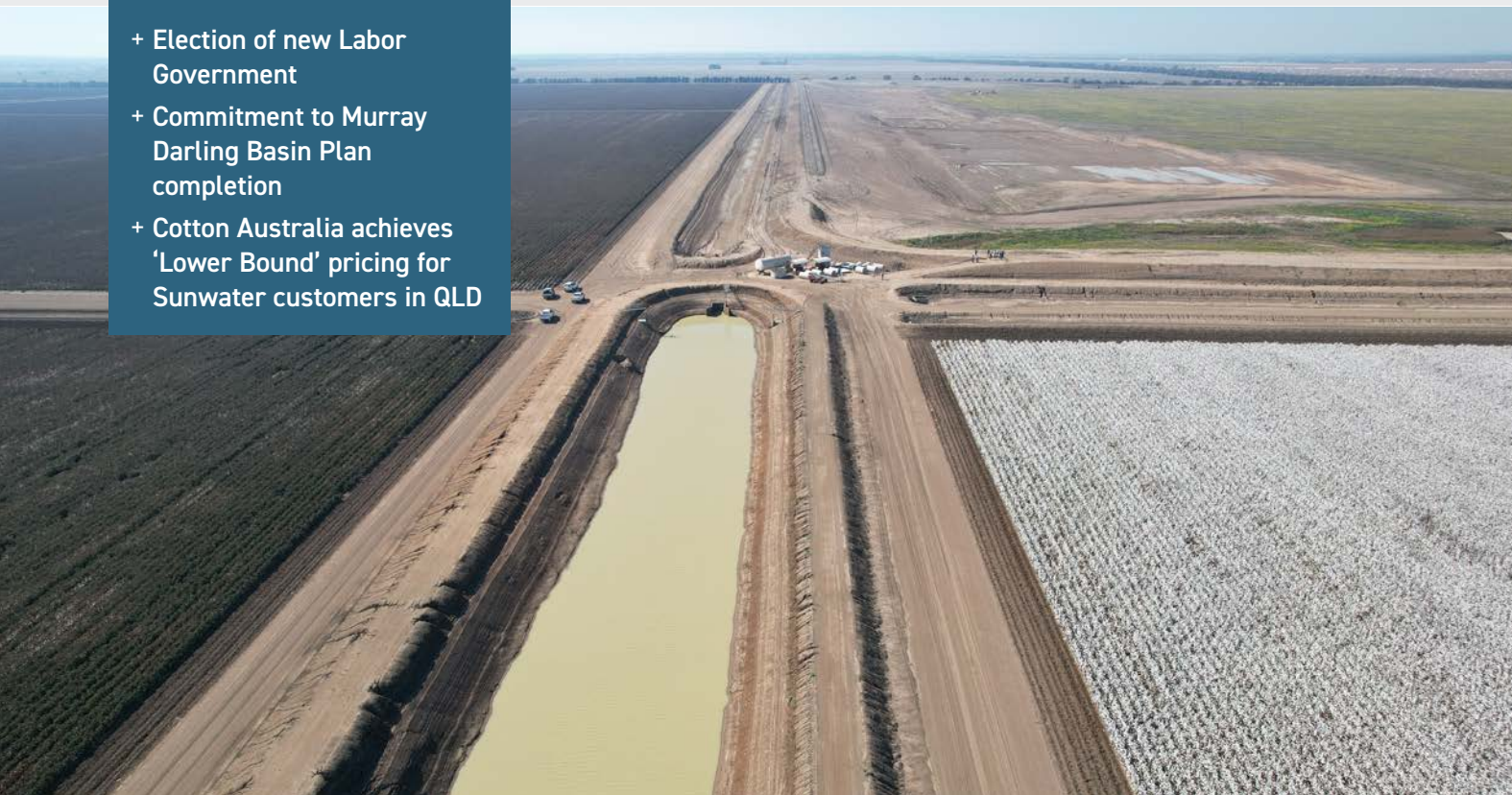
Board of Directors.



WATER

Supporting growers on state and federal water issues

- + Election of new Labor Government
- + Commitment to Murray Darling Basin Plan completion
- + Cotton Australia achieves 'Lower Bound' pricing for Sunwater customers in QLD



NEW SOUTH WALES

Cotton Australia continued to advocate for the volumetric licencing of Floodplain Harvesting, and is pleased that licencing now applies in the NSW Border Rivers, Gwydir Valley, Macquarie Valley and Barwon-Darling. Cotton Australia congratulates Border Rivers Food & Fibre (BRFF), Gwydir Valley Irrigators Association (GVIA) Namoi Water (NW), Macquarie River Food and Fibre (MRFF) and Barwon-Darling Water for their extensive and effective advocacy on this issue, recognising this has been a journey of approximately 15-years.

With the election of a Labor Government in NSW, Cotton Australia hopes in the near future that the irrigators in the Namoi Valley will be issued volumetric Floodplain Harvesting licences, based on the same framework that applies in the other Northern Valleys.

While Cotton Australia has long-supported volumetric licencing, it does need to be recognised, licencing will reduce the overall historical take, and at least some irrigators strongly believe the allocation framework has discriminated against them.

The Natural Resource Access Regulator (NRAR) in NSW continues to vigorously enforce compliance, and Cotton Australia reminds all entitlement holders to ensure they fully understand and comply with all the conditions outlined in both their Water Access Licences (WAL) and all associated approvals.



CA CEO Adam Kay, Minister for the Environment and Water Tanya Plibersek, CA GM Michael Murray

WATER POLITICS

Advocacy around the water policy portfolio remained one of the most important areas of focus for Cotton Australia over the past year and direct political engagement is a crucial element in our efforts on behalf of growers.

The election of the Federal Labor Government in May 2022, and the appointment of the Hon. Tanya Plibersek as Environment and Water Minister, signalled a renewed commitment to completing the Murray-Darling Basin Plan in accordance with Labor policy. This includes a commitment to finalising water recovery, including the 450GL "Upwater" as well as a committed to the 605GL "Downwater" – SDLAM projects.

Cotton Australia met with Minister Plibersek on November 1, 2022 and while recognising Labor's election commitments, advocated for reduced reliance on water entitlement acquisition and more emphasis on investment complementary measures. We urged for an openness to extending timeframes on the 605GL Sustainable Diversion Limits Adjustment Mechanism Projects while allowing for the introduction of new projects.

Cotton Australia participated in a Federal Government consultation process to identify better ways to acquire water entitlement that was run during June 2022. While the process identified a number of opportunities, it was extremely disappointing in February when the Minister announced a straight "buy-back" process to

complete any required water recovery in those valleys that still have a valley-based target gap, including the Condamine-Balonne, Barwon-Darling, Namoi, and the NSW side of the Border Rivers.

Cotton Australia continues its very productive water advocacy partnership through membership of National Farmers Federation (NFF), National Irrigators Council (NIC), NSW Irrigators Council (NSWIC) and Qld Farmers Federation (QFF) and the valley-based irrigation organisations.

QUEENSLAND

In March this year Cotton Australia, in conjunction with QFF and its other members achieved a long advocated for goal with the Queensland Government announcing no Sunwater irrigator customers will pay above "Lower Bound" prices. This rectifies a decade long inequity where irrigators in some schemes were paying well above the stated Qld Government Policy of "Lower Bound Costs" due to two contradictory government policies. From the first of July, 2023 the new pricing regime will collectively save growers millions of dollars each year, and put all Sunwater irrigator customers on the same pricing framework.

Working with the Dawson Valley Cotton Growers Association, Cotton Australia successfully advocated for the second three-year release of the Dawson Valley Strategic Reserve water which should see approximately 60,000 megalitres leased to Dawson valley irrigators. This is a great outcome, with the economic and social outcomes from the first three-year period demonstrating significant increased production, record through-put from the Moura Cotton Gin, and increased regional employment.

SUSTAINABILITY

- + Embedding our industry's PLANET. PEOPLE. Paddock. sustainability framework
- + Delivering on industry's commitment – Here for Good
- + Driving industry sustainability

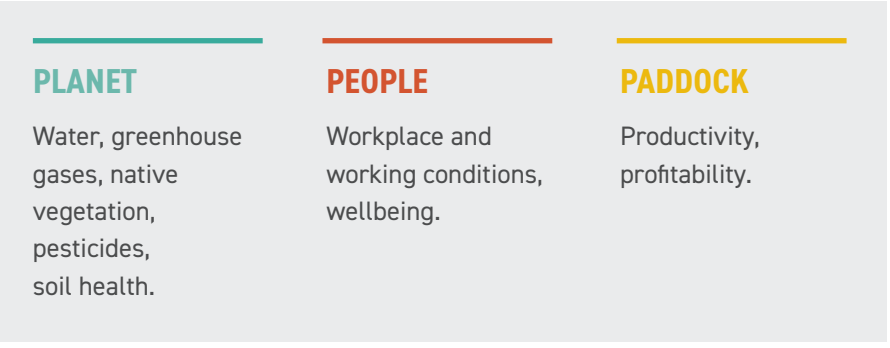


The Australian cotton industry commissioned its fourth independent environmental assessment during the year. Occurring every 10 years, these are used to provide a third-party expert assessment of what the industry is doing well and identify what can be done better.

Our industry was the first major Australian agricultural sector to commission these decadal independent assessments. The results of the assessments give the industry confidence its environmental management is transparent, in line with stakeholder expectations, and adds weight to our sustainability credential conversations with government, brands, plus the finance and insurance sectors.

The industry's commitment to be "here for good" was reflected in the Australian cotton industry's PLANET. PEOPLE. Paddock. sustainability framework, framing the session themes of this year's Cotton Conference.

The industry drives sustainability by proactively managing nine topics across the three PLANET (environment), PEOPLE (social) and Paddock (economic) pillars. These are:



KEY ACTIONS WE PURSUED INCLUDED:

- + Biannual meetings of the Australian Cotton Sustainability Reference Group (ACSRG) to ensure the framework is credible and in line with community expectations.
- + Being invited to showcase the cotton industry's approach at the 8th National NRM Knowledge Conference "Resilience through Transformation" in Margaret River WA. [NRM = Natural Resource Management]
- + In an Ag industry first, we released the first of what will be annual updates, tracking progress towards targeted outcomes and publishing detailed sustainability report updates for each of our nine sustainability topics to provide the data transparency our stakeholders are looking for.
- + Participating in the development of the National Farmers' Federation sustainability project, the Australian Agricultural Sustainability Framework (AASF). Both the cotton industry's sustainability framework and myBMP are informing the AASF's principles and indicators.

WHERE TO FROM HERE

Embedding the findings of the 4th Env Assessment, together with industry's own ongoing assessments of how to improve its P.P.P. framework.

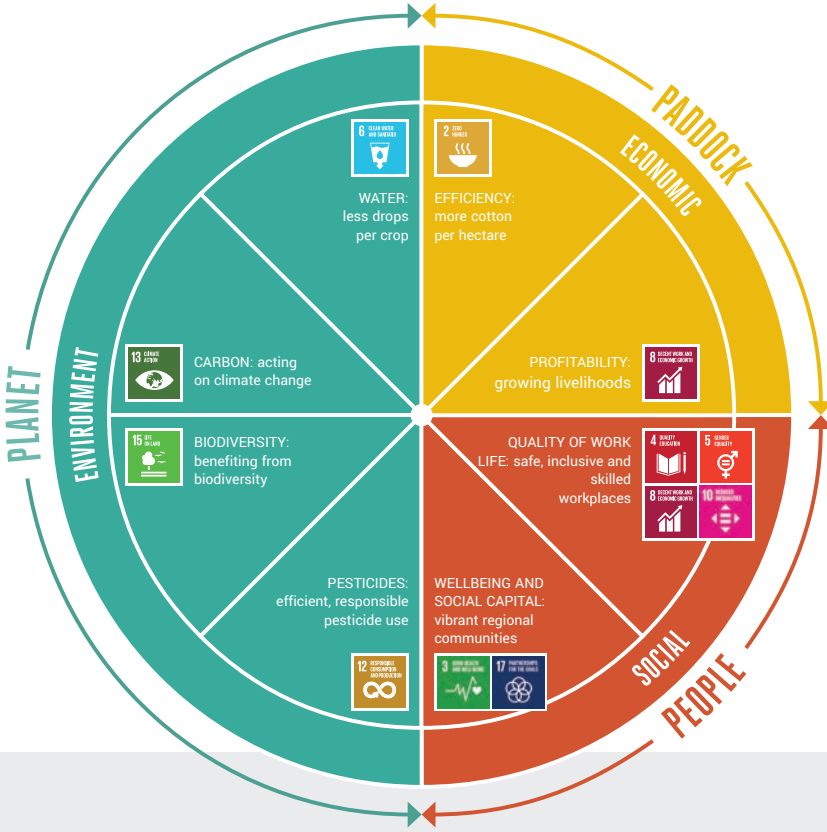
Enhancing the P.P.P. framework's data collection and reporting, to give even greater confidence to customers of Australian cotton.

Continue to engage frequently and in many different forums with stakeholders to ensure we are aware of emerging risks and opportunities, and stakeholders are aware of industry's sustainability ambitions.

Work towards finalising the P.P.P. framework's target concerning biodiversity.

Progressing ACSRG scrutiny of indicator trends and the materiality of emerging issues.

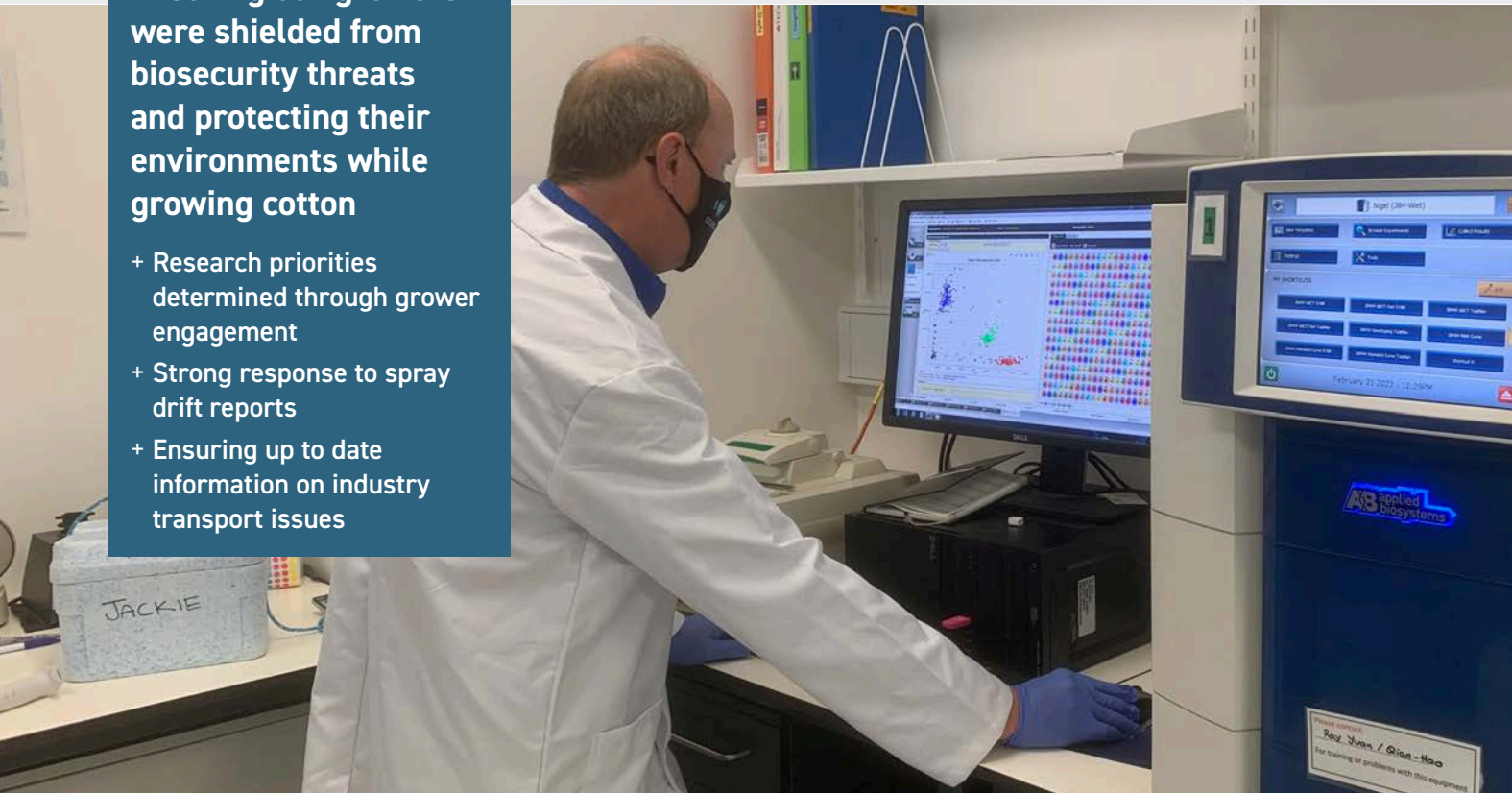
AUSTRALIAN COTTON SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK
PLANET. PEOPLE. Paddock.



RESEARCH DIRECTION & STEWARDSHIP

Ensuring our growers were shielded from biosecurity threats and protecting their environments while growing cotton

- + Research priorities determined through grower engagement
- + Strong response to spray drift reports
- + Ensuring up to date information on industry transport issues



RESEARCH PRIORITIES

Cotton Australia has a pivotal role in advising the Cotton Research and Development Corporation (CRDC) on growers' research priorities.

In 2022 Cotton Australia convened a Research Priority Forum in Sydney, and workshop with grower representatives from across the industry their key priority areas of research and conveyed those priorities to CRDC.

Throughout the year Cotton Australia liaised with CRDC on key projects and helped communicate outcomes to our growers.

Cotton Australia received numerous reports of late crop destruction, in contrary to Resistance Management Plans. While recognising the weather

had made things difficult for many growers, Cotton Australia liaised with Bayer and individual growers to resolve these issues.

TIMS COMMITTEE

Cotton Australia continued its role as facilitator of the Transgenic Insecticide Management Strategy (TIMS) Committee.

The TIMS Committee provided advice on proposed changes to the Resistance Management plan for Central Queensland, which was accepted by the Australian Pesticide and Veterinary Medicines Authority.

The TIMS Committee was extended to include a representative from Northern Australia.

The TIMS Committee is going to monitor the progress of the ExtendFlex permit and registration process.

There was extensive discussions and ongoing work in regard to planting windows for Northern Australia

PERMIT FOR GREY MILDEW

Cotton Australia has obtained an emergency permit (PER 92749) for the use of Maxentis EC (azoxystrobin and prothioconazole) to control Grey Mildew in Northern Australia. The permit is valid until 2025, during which time ADAMA (the commercial provider) will conduct trials to work toward a registration for Maxentis EC for both Grey Mildew and Alternaria in cotton.



SPRAY DRIFT

Cotton crops suffered damage from 2,4-D spraydrift, estimated to be among the worst on record, and certainly the worst since the 2017-18 season

Major spraydrift damage reports started to appear over the Christmas-New Year period, and into January with almost all regions severely impacted.

Numerous growers reported multiple cases of spraydrift, and while the final yield loss to the industry is impossible to accurately estimate Cotton Australia is aware of some fields being abandoned due to damage.

Some growers applied one or two additional irrigations to extend the plant's season and allow it time to restore yield.

Cotton Australia responded to the crisis by:

- + Alerting the Australian Pesticide and Veterinary Medicine Authority (APVMA), NSW Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Biosecurity Queensland (BQ) to the extent of the problem and asking them to take urgent compliance action.

- + Raising awareness of the issue through increased media and other communication, and in particular urged all applicators of pesticides to ensure they strictly followed label conditions.
- + Extending the regular Cotton Australia spraydrift awareness radio advertising campaign.
- + Consulting extensively with CGA Chairs, and later with CGA's to develop ideas for short to medium term strategies to significantly reduce the risk of off-target drift.
- + Liaising with other industry groups, in particular Grain Producers Australia.

In addition to the immediate response to the crisis Cotton Australia continued its support of the Satacrop susceptible crop mapping service.

Cotton Australia welcomed the introduction of the 100 Weather and Networked Data (WAND) towers, a tool that will provide readily accessible data on weather conditions, in particular the status of hazardous temperature inversion conditions.

The WAND Tower network is an initiative funded by the Cotton Research Development Corporation (CRDC) and the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC), in partnership with commercial provider Goanna Ag.

Cotton Australia is continuing engagement with APVMA, NSW EPA and BQ to ensure timely responses to spray drift incidences.



WORKFORCE

Ensuring our growers are highly trained and have their workforce needs met

- + Cotton Australia funds pilot program to train ex-ADF staff
- + Extensive engagement with government remains a core focus
- + Skills and training delivered after needs analysis conducted

A strong focus for Cotton Australia continues to be addressing the workforce shortage issues plaguing not just the cotton industry but agriculture and many other sectors impacting Australia broadly. With the borders now open to backpackers and other seasonal workers, the challenges remain for growers who need skilled farm workers or those with the desire to learn and stay on farm after gaining the skills to make a contribution to farm output. To that end Cotton Australia is continuing to work with state and federal governments and other providers to search for solutions to ongoing labour shortages.

Cotton Australia activities

- + Cotton Australia supported a pilot program to train former Australian Defence Force Personnel to operate cotton pickers with the intention to expand the program in the future.
- + Cotton Australia successfully delivered a series of Sustainable Spray workshops across Queensland which was funded under the Government's Micro credential training initiative

- + Cotton Australia is continuing negotiations with the QLD Government for the establishment of an industry led workforce training initiative called SmartAg Queensland
- + Cotton Australia is an active member of the National Farmers Federation Workforce Committee
- + Cotton Australia is an active member of the Queensland based Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance
- + Cotton Australia is a participant on the QLD Government Roundtable responsible for overseeing the implementation of the States Workforce Strategy
- + Cotton Australia established and is continuing to provide a link for cotton growers to advertise their jobs to prospective applicants on the Cotton Jobs Australia webpage
- + Cotton Australia negotiated a reduced cost for member growers to advertise vacant positions on the Backpacker Jobs Website

SUSTAINABLE SPRAY APPLICATION WORKSHOPS

The project surpassed the target of 160 with 164 eligible participants enrolled to undertake the training which was delivered in 12 workshops across regional Queensland. We have delivered more workshops and had more people attend these workshops than we anticipated while coming in under budget. This really proves the concept of industry led training delivered in partnership with government which leads to outstanding results and savings.



ENERGY, MINING AND CSG

Advocating for
affordable, secure
and reliable utilities;
protection of high value
agricultural resource



MINING AND COAL SEAM GAS (CSG)

Cotton Australia advocacy continued to reflect the different needs between NSW and QLD growers regarding the resource extraction industries. The CSG industry's footprint in QLD has continued to expand and Cotton Australia readily acknowledges the diversity of views held in existing CSG areas compared to areas just being explored for future extraction

In contrast, NSW has a sole cotton growing/CSG precinct, NW NSW and a single project that is currently in the establishment phase, Santos' Narrabri Gas project. Associated with this is the pipeline corridor project which Santos took ownership of during the year; Cotton Australia is continuing to monitor as the corridor runs between Narrabri and Newcastle.

Cotton Australia's advocacy focused on its three key policy areas: Protect the productive capacity of the water

our industry relies on; Protect the productive capacity of the soil our industry relies on; and, If CSG or other extractive industry development occurs, appropriate compensation for growers.

In Queensland, Cotton Australia's focus over the year, was on trying to improve the protections landholders have, should they be negatively impacted by Coal Seam Gas extraction.

In particular, the focus was on the rights of landholders that do not host Coal Seam Gas infrastructure on their land, but may have deviated wells transverse below their land, and trying to improve protections for landholders who may suffer an economic loss due to Coal Seam Gas induced subsidence.

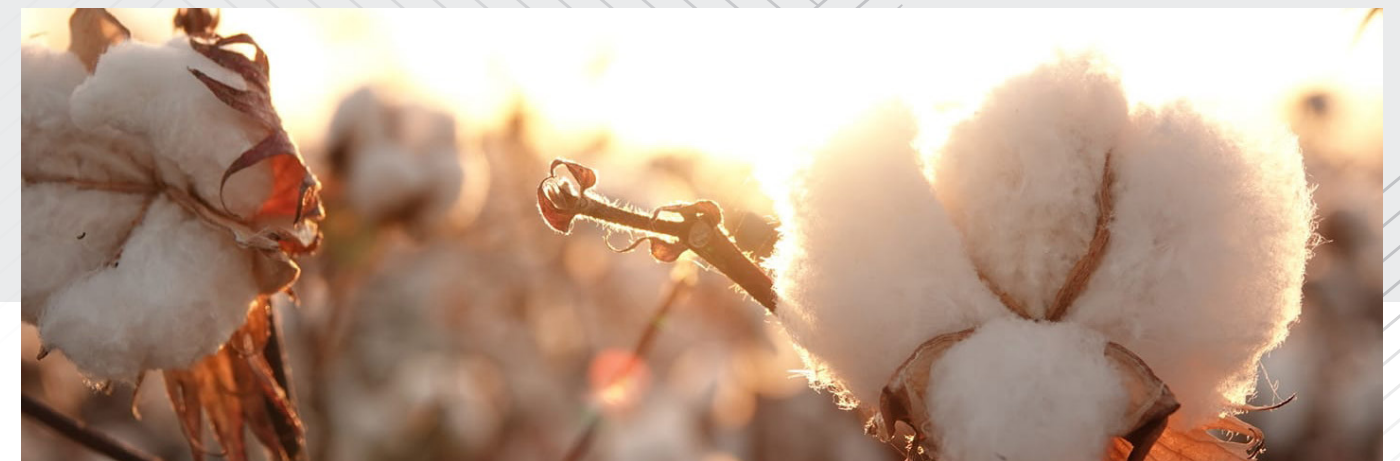
In pursuing these areas, Cotton Australia:

- + Provided advice, in conjunction with other agricultural peak bodies, but did not endorse Arrow Energy's Voluntary Deviated Well Agreement.

- + Submitted on Gasfields Commission QLD Regulatory Review of CSG Induced Subsidence
- + Regularly liaised with growers, Gasfields Commission, Office of Groundwater Impact, other agricultural peak bodies and members of the resource industry.

ENERGY

Safe, reliable and affordable energy; fit for purpose tariffs and being part of the energy transition.



ELECTRICITY

NATIONAL AND NEW SOUTH WALES

Cotton Australia has continued to represent growers via membership of Essential Energy's Customer Advisory Group, which included facilitating a site visit to an operating gin, demonstrating firsthand the operational and energy logistic challenges during harvest and processing. As Essential Energy was drafting its next five-year tariff structure statement during this year, Cotton Australia provided input. For example, feedback on proposed pricing principles, appropriate tariffs and initiatives to trial new technology and the way energy flows across the grid.

Also informing Cotton Australia's advocacy about the appropriateness of new technology were the emerging results of the Flow on Benefits of Microgrids for Agriculture project funded by the Commonwealth's Regional and Remote Communities Reliability Fund (RRCF). The feasibility of farmers engaging with the electricity network as non-traditional customers was a key line of inquiry for this project which wrapped up in the later part of this reporting year. Case study insights were presented at the Cotton Conference, namely that the return on such investment is only possible when it includes storage (batteries) or the ability to supply local users via the existing grid.

These insights "that agriculture/cotton growers can be part of the new energy solution" were also leveraged by Cotton Australia's role in the NSW Government's stakeholder think tank advisory on the delivery of the Energy Infrastructure Roadmap and the establishment of Renewable Energy Zones.

Membership of the Agricultural Industries Energy Taskforce provided another opportunity to share these insights. Taskforce advocacy also included Cotton Australia engaging with electricity companies at joint Round Table meetings, asserting that energy infrastructure companies need to lift their 'social licence to operate' and be more focussed on complementary rather than competitive coexistence. The energy transition will result in rural areas being faced with hosting more energy infrastructure necessitating Cotton Australia's continuing engagement on how best to resolve this tension.

QUEENSLAND

Cotton growers were able to participate in the Queensland Government funded Energy Savers Plus Program, giving them access to audits of farm energy use and management advice. This included improving pumping and water delivery operations as well as financial information to consider infrastructure upgrades, further reducing costs and potential waste.

Cotton Australia continues to engage in the annual Queensland Competition Authority's (QCA) Regulated Regional Electricity Pricing process, and has also continued its advocacy with the Queensland Government and Energy Queensland for tariff settings that recognise the "lumpy" nature of our energy demand, but does not discriminate against it, and force disconnection from the grid due to unaffordable energy.

In March this year, Cotton Australia was pleased to see in the QCA's draft pricing report that it would be recommending the introduction of a "solar soaker" tariff which would be available to all small businesses and allow them to access relatively inexpensive electricity outside the peak evening hours and in particular during the middle of the day.

ESSENTIAL GROWER SERVICES

TRANSPORT

Cotton Australia provides growers and contractors with accurate information on the rules and regulations of transporting farm equipment and product, in particular cotton-picking machinery and round modules.

While we are enjoying a period of relative stability in this area, in 2022-23 some growers and contractors experienced difficulties with bringing round modules from Northern Australia to southern cotton gins in the most economical manner.

To assist growers, Cotton Australia has commenced advocacy with the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) to attempt have the maximum load height increased, to facilitate the movement of double-stacked modules, loaded onto standard trailers from Northern Australia to southern cotton gins.

Cotton Australia also provided growers with detailed advice on the movement of oversize cotton picking machinery over the Easter Long-Weekend, where special exemptions have been granted for agriculture in general and cotton harvesting equipment in particular.

WHS:

- + Through our membership with the National Farmers Federation, Cotton Australia continues to support the ACCC's recommendations to fit Operator Protection Device (OPD) to all new quad bikes from 11 October 2021. We support cotton growers who are transitioning to side by side vehicles and are continuing to lobby governments to provide rebates to all businesses which are currently only available in NSW and VIC.
- + Cotton Australia and CRDC have established the Australian Cotton Industry WHS Committee which also includes representatives from SafeWork NSW and the Office of Industrial Relations in QLD. The committee aims to collaborate through increased engagement and produce consistent communications around the critical issues of work health and safety within the cotton industry.
- + Cotton Australia participated in the Electrical Safety Forum in QLD which aimed to bring together government, electricity providers and agricultural industry representatives to reduce unsafe electrical practices. As part of this membership Cotton Australia assisted in the development of the Look Up and Live app.
- + Cotton Australia is participating in the Queensland Government Office of Industrial Relations steering group undertaking the review of the Rural Plant Code of Practice.
- + Cotton Australia is a member of Farmsafe Australia and attended the national conference.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Cotton Australia have been integral in the establishment of the Regional Tech Hub which is continuing to help rural Australians understand the telecommunications options available to them, decide which option best suits their needs, and resolve problems they experience with their phone and internet connections.

- + Cotton Australia is continuing to work with and support Field Solutions Group to establish telecommunications infrastructure across NSW and QLD cotton producing regions

- + Cotton Australia participated in the Regional Rural and Remote Communications Coalition delegation to Parliament House Canberra. Delegates met with members of parliament (government and opposition) and senators to advocate for fair and equitable telecommunications across regional Australia
- + Cotton Australia is an active member of the National Farmers Federation Telecommunications and Social Policy Committee
- + Cotton Australia is a member of the Regional Rural and Remote Communications Coalition



Grower Ross Burnett and Federal Agriculture Minister Murray Watt





COMMUNICATIONS

Advocating for growers, and informing industry members, through media and digital channels

- + New channels for media coverage realised
- + Digital audience size improves
- + New projects ensure cotton's messages reach new audiences

Cotton Australia's Darrin Davies interviews Darling Downs grower Grant Porter for a social media video.



It has been another busy and productive year for Cotton Australia's Communications team which continued its broad portfolio of work and projects, all connected by the strategic imperative to present an honest and accurate story of the contribution of cotton to the Australian economy and communities throughout the growing regions. The most important driver for the communications team is to balance the external demands for information with the equally important responsibility of keeping growers informed of industry innovation, research developments, scientific advancements and political/policy decisions.

Through the year we continued to utilise our Cotton Matters and email bursts to communicate directly with

growers and industry stakeholders and open rates continue to meet and, in some cases, exceed benchmarking standards. We also assist in communication through other methods from highlighting grower stories in online written content, photography and audio-visual components.

In addition to the key achievements detailed in this report, Cotton Australia's communications team continued to play a role in assisting the CEO, General Manager and policy specialists to communicate effectively the many functions and developments within their areas. This was also achieved through the Current and Future Activities documents, our social media channels, our CGA's and other industry groups.

While each regional manager effectively manages communications to their relevant growers, the Communications team acted as conduits to enable the seamless flow of information to ensure our key stakeholders remained informed.

This support included: providing media and social media training to staff and growers (where appropriate), developing presentations, writing and proofreading documents and submissions, providing technical, administrative, and graphic design support, developing speaking notes and speeches, maintaining key organisational documents, advising on communications best practice, and supporting company events.

Cotton Australia CEO Adam Kay being interviewed by ABC



Ali Kuchel lands a drone after capturing aerial footage in the field.



Traditional media engagement happened almost daily in an organic way, predominantly through direct contact with the communications manager, media and stakeholder engagement, with requests for comments or contacts for stories. The other key aspect of media engagement occurs with proactive engagement, either through CA media releases to the broadest possible media landscape via email or person-to-person contact with media individuals, targeted specifically because of their willingness to provide fair and reasonable coverage of cotton issues – in rural, remote and regional settings and in metropolitan newsrooms throughout the country.

The Australian Cotton Conference, Cotton Awards and the Goondiwindi Circularity Project continued to provide a media focus for the year.

Media coverage for the Cotton Conference and Cotton Awards, announced at the event's gala dinner, generated over \$1m in equivalent advertising revenue and had a potential reach of circa 4 million people.

Other important generators of positive media attention include:

- + Federal Agriculture Minister Murray Watt makes his farm visit as Minister to a Queensland cotton farm
- + Election of new federal government
- + Global support grows for good quality Australian cotton
- + Records cotton crop achieved and export record set
- + Farmers lead with chemical reduction strategy
- + Farmers increase water efficiency
- + Crop update for World Cotton Day
- + Cotton exports take third spot as its most valuable export commodity

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability and the industry's efforts to rebuild trust remained key issues with every opportunity utilised to promote the industry's credentials in these areas.

One example was 'Transparency the Focus in Australian Cotton Sustainability Update' with the Australian cotton industry underlining its commitment to transparency and accountability by unveiling for the first time an innovative sustainability 'Data Pack' to support its latest cotton sustainability report. That report showed a 3.6 per cent annual improvement in Australian cotton water use efficiency and a 6 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions per bale, but also an increase in herbicide use as a result of a wetter season increasing the need for weed control.

There was additional reporting of the meetings of the Australian Cotton Sustainability Reference Group, and the appointment of an independent expert to reassess the industry's environmental performance through an environmental audit.

Another joint release with the CRDC in November resulted in coverage for the cotton industry's new framework to help farmers improve soil health. Shining a light on the new framework designed to help all Australian farmers make better soil management decisions by taking the complexity out of soil health.



An AAP photographer photographing Education Manager Jenny Hughes at the Sydney Royal Easter Show.



The Watson family speaking with camp cotton delegates.



Michael Murray addressing QLD Parliament event.

SEASONAL UPDATES/EXPORT FIGURES AND GLOBAL TRADE

The mixed growing conditions over the annual reporting year provided numerous opportunities for positive and negative exposure. Coming off a record year with good rain filling dams and profiles, growers were confident of another near record year for the 2023 crop. An extraordinary rain and flooding event impacted much of New South Wales and southern Queensland, leaving many southern growers with substantial damage on their properties but also a narrow window to plant their cotton. Initially this reduced the crop expectations however with favourable conditions returning in early 2023 many crops recovered and forecasts remain for another very crop in 2023.

Trade issues again became prominent due to the continued attention the communications team generated for the Australian crop update on World Cotton Day, resulting in extensive media coverage notably on Channel 9's Today Show, The Australian and radio 2GB and Radio National. Sky News and AusBiz Australia's leading provider of live news content in Australian business, markets, economy and startups.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Cotton Australia engaged with a range of stakeholders over the past year in a variety of forums including major industry events from field days to conferences.

The annual political dinners were held in Queensland providing the Board and senior staff on hand with a valuable opportunity to engage directly with politicians and decision makers from all sides of politics in the interests of growers and their policy needs.

In addition, Cotton Australia gained a valuable opportunity to hold a 50 year celebration event for cotton at Parliament House in Brisbane. The evening provided many opportunities for an update on cotton from industry leaders and industry pioneers with political leaders from across the political spectrum standing side by side as they enjoyed an historic presentation on the path of cotton and its current and future value to Australia. That event was followed by presentations at both the Rural Press Club in Queensland and the NSW Farm Writers group.

Proactive media engagement was possible across Australia during the year with one highlight being Sydney in-person catch ups with Journalists from the ABC and SBS.



Adam Kay and QLD Ag Minister Mark Furner.

DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

New initiatives and social media strategies have enhanced Cotton Australia's messaging and online engagement with farmers, consumers, and the public.

Since Rob Virtue's departure from the Digital Communications Manager role, Cotton to Market's, Ali Kuchel, has been assisting in the position with assistance from Darrin Davies.

The communications team developed a new digital strategic plan that analysed social media platforms and developed a quality-over-quantity, engaging content approach to improve engagement with online audiences. Rather than posting daily, the team is strategically posting on a lesser frequency with appealing content, resulting in an increase in engagement.

The digital strategic plan involved analysing audiences on each social media platform and previous content performance to shape future content as each platform has a different audience.

In the past eight months, the team has focused on utilising all publishing aspects of each social media platform. This includes the 24-hour story feature on Instagram and its interactive tools such as quizzes, creating short reels and videos, and utilising user generated content. Cotton Australia posted its first Q&A on Instagram where followers had the opportunity to ask a question and CA chairman Nigel Burnett and CEO Adam Kay answered the questions via video.

Engaging with audiences on social media (liking followers' posts when Cotton Australia is tagged) has led to an increase of user generated content Cotton Australia can re-share on its platforms. Cotton industry organisations are also increasingly tagging Cotton Australia in their posts on social media.

Cotton Australia also restored its inactive LinkedIn profile. LinkedIn is a business-to-business, corporate facing platform that has grown significantly since it was revitalised in June 2022, and is attracting strong engagements from brands, industry, and supporters of Cotton Australia.

KEY PROJECTS FOR 2022-23 INCLUDED:

- + International Women's Day
- + World Cotton Day
- + Country Road 100% Australian cotton dog jumper collaboration
- + Cotton Conference live on Instagram
- + Cotton Farming Circularity Project phase 2
- + Producing engaging video content on industry projects
- + Re-launching LinkedIn

Cotton Australia continued communications engagement with growers and industry with Cotton Matters, Current and Future Activities document and Members Memo.



EDUCATION

Working with educators and students to grow responsible consumers and a future workforce

- + New resource – Wrapped in Cotton
- + Live events deliver accidental learning
- + Education on show at the Cotton Conference

Agriculture teachers learn to start a syphon during a cotton farm tour as part of the NAAE conference, Toowoomba



Education at Cotton Australia has gained momentum this last year and boosted teachers understanding of our industry.

The 2022 school year was welcomed after two years of disrupted teaching and learning.

As restrictions eased, school excursions, incursions and in-person education events returned, including conferences and agricultural shows. These large-scale, public-facing events provided countless opportunities to meet teachers and students in informal settings and chat about opportunities to access our resources on-line, explore career opportunities in the cotton industry and promote upcoming events.



Moo Baa Munch Toowoomba 2022.

DIGITAL EDUCATION RESOURCES REMAIN POPULAR

Over the past year, we saw a slight growth in our YouTube videos with the top three educational videos amassing an impressive 27,000 unique views. Adding to the nearly 1,200 views of our Virtual Reality at Sydney Royal and EKKA Agricultural Shows, a further 2,000 people have accessed the 360-degree VR film online.

There has been a decline in access to Cotton Classroom resources on the Cotton Australia web site as teachers have returned to face-to-face teaching allowing for more hands-on engagement.

COTTON AUSTRALIA'S DIGITAL EDUCATION RESOURCES:

LESSONS AND UNITS:

+ more than 3,685 pageviews

HOW TO GROW A PAIR OF JEANS:

+ more than 4,335 pageviews

EDUCATION KIT:

+ more than 3,780 pageviews

EDUCATION VIDEOS:

+ more than 2,768 pageviews

POSTERS:

+ more than 874 pageviews

SEED TO SOCK YOUTUBE VIDEO:

+ more than 15,571 views

THE AUSTRALIAN COTTON STORY FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS YOUTUBE VIDEO:

+ more than 6,190 views

THE AUSTRALIAN COTTON STORY FOR HIGH SCHOOLS YOUTUBE VIDEO:

+ more than 4,775 views

COTTON 360 YOUTUBE VIDEO:

+ more than 2,039 views

WRAPPED IN COTTON RESOURCE SET 2 WAS LAUNCHED:

+ Following on from Set 1 focusing on why designers choose sustainable Australian cotton, Set 2 focuses on using Canva to create repeating designs. Set 2 is the hands-on course work allowing Textile and Design students to use the theme, sustainable cotton, to feature on their garments. Emma Bond from boutique fashion label Maddi & Pip has been fantastic to work with to bring authenticity to these resources.





Cotton Conference 2022 teachers with Jenny Hughes.



HEIAQ conference Wrapped in Cotton Teacher Workshop.



Griffith Teach the Teacher June 2022 Group photo in front of harrow.



Adam Kay Dick Estens Jenny Hughes at AES Awards Dinner 7 December 2022.

WORKING WITH TEACHERS

Teachers are tasked to teach food & fibre curriculum outcomes and Cotton Australia work with them to ensure they have all the most current data and resources for this to be successful. Throughout the year, we had articles published in the Geography Teachers Association by-annual magazine, Interactions as well as the Technology Educators Association magazine, both are available digitally to all teachers.

TEACH THE TEACHER

Cotton Australia's Regional Managers are key to the success of Teach the Teacher. In total this year, we had 95 teachers attend from Moree, Narrabri, Gunnedah and Griffith then an early season tour in 2023 in St George. After each event, we see how teachers' attitude and knowledge of all things cotton has expanded and they are better placed to take back current information into the classroom. Some of these teachers have gone on to book student tours and two of these teachers applied and gained scholarships for the Cotton Conference.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATORS (NAAE) CONFERENCE

Cotton Australia was a Gold Sponsor at the bi-annual NAAE conference, held over five days with 120 agriculture teachers and industry professionals at the University of Queensland in January 2023. The conference was supported by Rabobank Client Council, including Southern Queensland Council Chairman Stuart Armitage and Georgie Krieg who hosted the teachers on the cotton farm tour.

HOME ECONOMICS INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIA - QUEENSLAND (HEIAQ) CONFERENCE

In August we exhibited at the HEIAQ conference in Brisbane with 230 teachers in attendance. This included teachers from; Textiles Studies; Textiles and Fashion, Fashion Studies, Design, and Design Studies, all curriculum areas with links to cotton.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND APPLIED STUDIES (TAS) TEACHERS

TAS is one of the fastest growing and most innovative subject areas in NSW as all students complete a mandatory technology course in Years 7 and 8. The range of subjects includes: agriculture, engineering, information processes, software design, textiles design/technology and more. Cotton Australia sponsored the 2022 TEXTSTYLE Awards and presented an award to Amelia Fauchon from Calrossy Anglican School in Tamworth, for her HSC textile projects – congratulations Amelia.

WORKING WITH STUDENTS

Cotton Australia is regularly invited to work with students and where possible, we attend both incursions and excursions with individual schools or industry partners throughout cotton growing regions. This year in Sydney we ran incursions at Rockdale Public School, Ramsgate Public School, Alpha Omega High School and the TAFE Fashion FAB LAB for tertiary students. In May, Adam Kay was a key guest speaker at the Barker College Agriculture HSC review day. The day was attended by around 200 students and 10 agriculture teachers from various schools across Sydney.

MOO BAA MUNCH @ DOWNLANDS COLLEGE QLD

In October Cotton Australia presented at Moo Baa Munch, a program led by the AgForce School to Industry Program. We welcomed 620 students to engage with industry to learn about food, fibre and career prospects. Our workshops over the two days focused on the sustainability of Australian cotton combined with a hands-on activity concluding each session with some information on careers opportunities.

YOUTH ECO SUMMIT (YES) - SYDNEY OLYMPIC PARK

YES is all about sustainability in action, with the curriculum based 2-day learning expo held in November full of interactive displays and hands-on workshops, providing structured learning opportunities. The event was attended by nearly 3000 primary school students enjoying a fun day out learning about sustainability which was the focus of Cotton Australia's Food & Fibre workshop, looking at the carbon cycle and the importance of 'good bugs' as well as the use of technology to improve agricultural sustainability. PIEFA also attended the sessions.

BLAYNEY NSW DPI JUNIOR JUDGING DAY

In March 2023, Cotton Australia was invited to host a workshop for nearly 200 secondary agriculture students from around the Blayney region. The intensive program saw all students rotated through workshops on beef, sheep, wool, grain & cotton to learn how the commodity is judged or classed and then after lunch, they are put to the test and to judge each commodity. The top three winners from each category then presented their justification of their results to the industry representative who then awarded ribbons.



Cotton Conference The Southport School 2022.



Youth Eco Summit Sydney Olympic Park 2022.



Ramsgate Priary School Incursion 15 June 2022.



Blayney Junior Judging Day section winners March 2023.

EVENTS

SYDNEY ROYAL EASTER SHOW (SRES)

The 2022 SRES was a huge success after a year in covid-hiatus. Crowds were capped at 80,000 daily, and this allowed for fantastic interaction across all of the 12 days. Cotton Australia's education exhibit was well staffed with students from Barker College assisting the over 700 visitors who watched our Cotton Virtual Reality film to give them an immersive on-farm experience. The growers that came to talk directly with the public found the experience very worthwhile and rewarding. Attending large public events like this has far reaching outcomes in terms of exposure, but also in many of the contacts made along the way.

EKKA

Cotton Australia's stand in the Agricultural Hall was very prominent with a 13 x 10m space. Huge thanks to grower Jamie Grant who is on the RNA council and supported us at every step. He supplied a round module that was like a magnet to attract visitors to our stand for a photo opp. We had over 500 visitors view our Cotton Virtual Reality film. We were supported by some Queensland growers and our staff over the nine days who all spent the time chatting to interested visitors about cotton. During the event we greeted and talked to ministers (National and Queensland) which was fantastic for promotion across our social media channels.



Sydney Royal Easter Show 2022.



Ekka 2022 Ag Minister Mark Furner with Paul Sloman, Jamie Grant and Jenny Hughes.



Ekka 2022 with Agriculture Minister Murray Watt and CA staff Ashley Hollis, Renee Anderson and Jenny Hughes.

PRIMARY INDUSTRY EDUCATION FOUNDATION AUSTRALIA (PIEFA)

Cotton Australia's partnership with PIEFA continues to deliver results to further the reach of our resources and sustainability messaging. PIEFA represents Cotton Australia through their affiliations with myFuture, speaking at conferences and exhibiting at teacher events. During this year, PIEFA presented or attended 24 conferences/ events with an audience of approx. 4000. PIEFA currently have 8,127 Social Media Followers (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and there are 6,266 subscribers to PIEFA's monthly newsletter that Cotton Australia contributed to monthly.

With the support of PIEFA, Renee Anderson was invited to feature on a career video for Education Services Australia's myFuture portal that teachers from across Australia access for career support in the classroom. For National Agriculture Day, we organised Harriet Blackall as a guest panellist for PIEFA's Career Panel last November.

All of Cotton Australia's digital resources can be access on PIEFA's PrimeZone web site and over the year, there have been over 10,000 people access these which is a fantastic result.

WORKFORCE

Cotton Australia's education program is key to attracting the NextGen cotton workforce and we exhibit in many career days hosted by industry of schools. Some of these this year have included the Northwest Regional Careers Expo in Tamworth with over 600 students from surrounding areas in attendance, Farrer High School with over 200 students attending and Macarthur Career Day in Western Sydney with 500 students attending. We also had a presence at the UNE Careers Day, Moree Careers Day and Walgett Careers Day.

AGCAREERSTART - A STRUCTURED GAP-YEAR PROGRAM FOR UNDER 25'S

Cotton Australia partners with National Farmers Federation on this program which is currently funded until the end of 2024. Cotton Australia congratulates the two participants, Julian Craven who worked in Griffith with Gavin Dal Broi and McKenzie Buchanen with AFF in Moree, who completed their years on cotton farms as part of the AgCareerSTART program. Both attended the Cotton Conference and this year, Meckenzie has stayed employed on farm while Julian has gone on to continue his university studies. In 2023, we look to have ten placements on cotton farms.

EXCITED 4 CAREERS IN AGRICULTURE WITH CQU

This was the first of this two-year project that brought career guidance into the classroom to strengthen the ability of teachers, parents, and industry professionals to support students in exploring their interests, strengths, and values and how these relate to the world of agricultural work. We worked with CQU's Dr Nicole McDonald delivering the hands-on workshops with Leeton Public School and Murrumbidgee High, followed by excursions to the Southern Cotton Gin last September.

CAREERS IN AGRICULTURE MAGAZINE WITH QFF

Cotton Australia joined Queensland Farmers Federation, the Queensland Government, Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance, and many agricultural peak bodies to develop content for a new digital magazine to assist teachers, career advisors and students discover the range of occupations in agriculture. Careers in Agriculture does not 'reinvent' the wheel, rather is aimed towards engaging young individuals and encouraging them to join the agriculture sector using existing resources from a wide range of industries - all in the one place.



Check out the magazine here: www.careerharvest.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/FINAL-QFFCareersInAgriculture.pdf

SCHOLARSHIPS

THE AUSTRALIAN COTTON CONFERENCE

Cotton Australia's Scholarship program for the Cotton Conference was a huge success with all recipients giving fantastic feedback on the quality and quantity of current information and networking opportunities at this event.

We supported 64 people attending;

- + 12 Undergrads from 6 universities studying Agri-business, Agri-science, Journalism & Psychology
- + 8 Teachers from Agriculture, Textiles and one Undergraduate
- + 34 senior High School students with 6 accompanying teachers

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATORS (NAAE) CONFERENCE

Cotton Australia sponsored two teachers to attend NAAE, who are both new to agriculture. Tipperary Station School Principal Carla Clough and Bundaberg teacher Martin Van Der Merwe. Both Carla and Martin are super keen to immerse their students in all things cotton and will be great advocates for us in the teaching community.

COTTON TO MARKET

- + Funding secured for Cotton to Market growth
- + Impressive growth of Australian cotton product
- + Cotton Australia Launches World First Data Dashboard

Textile Exchange's Hollie Stringer, with Darling Downs farmer Kurt Von Pein and myBMP manager Rob Crothers.



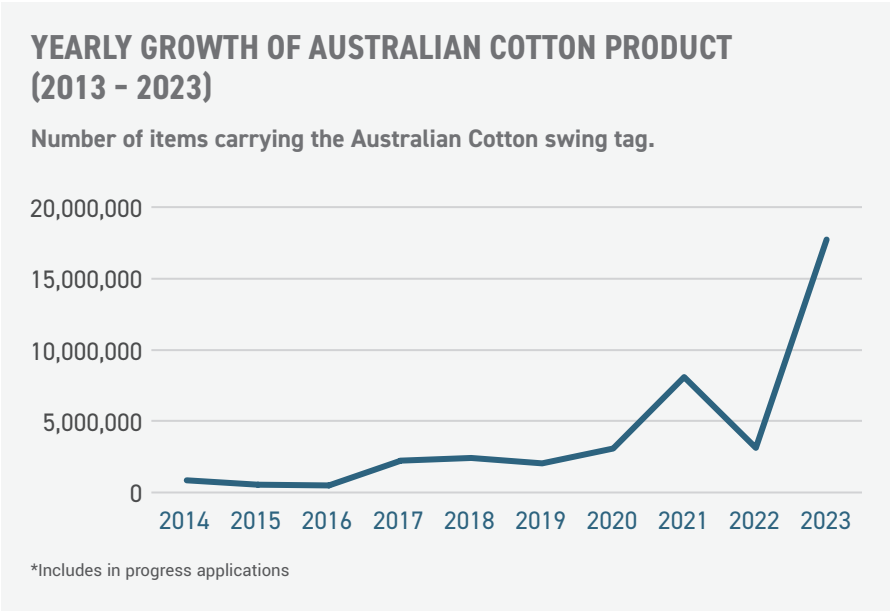
ATMAC GRANT SUPPORTS COTTON TO MARKET GROWTH

\$1.5 million of government funding was secured via the ATMAC grant program to deliver phase 2 of the program, in association with the Australian Cotton Shippers Association. A number of new initiatives were implemented thanks to a coordinated export market development plan that included driving demand for Australian Cotton with brands and retailers and promoting Australian cotton to spinners in new markets.

This work included expanding the Cotton to Market team in order to service increased enquiry from brands and retailers, increasing communication and education of supply chain partners and building partnerships with global textile organisations. Despite a record crop and ongoing access issues in China, every bale of Australian cotton was placed in the market and engagement with customers increased substantially.

BRAND PARTNERSHIPS CONTINUE TO GROW

Interest in Australian cotton from brands, retailers and manufacturers grew dramatically during the year on the back of increased resources to drive demand for Australian cotton in market. The Cotton to Market team is fielding daily enquiries and has established over 20 new partnerships with brands making Australian cotton part of their sourcing commitments.



Goondiwindi farmer Sam Coulton with UNE Soil Scientist Dr Oliver Knox, at the phase two trials of the Circular Cotton Farming Project.



Ian Bailey, Kmart, and Brooke Summers at Melbourne Fashion Festival.



COTTON AUSTRALIA DEVELOPED WORLD FIRST DATA DASHBOARD

In what is believed to be a world first for a cotton producing country, Cotton Australia developed a data dashboard to transparently report Australian cotton data across a range of metrics including production, yield, quality, export markets, farming practices, social and environmental sustainability.

Using a combination of Australian cotton industry research and survey data, government and publicly available sources, the dashboard contains over 70 data sets, including progress against sustainability targets. It is hoped this will be used by the industry to report progress and drive decisions, as well as by the supply chain to help them make decisions about Australian cotton as a fibre of choice.

Users can access up to date information, links and sources on topics such as water use efficiency and pesticides, uptake of minimum tillage and integrated pest management, the major markets for Australian cotton and the amount of sustainably-certified cotton grown each year.

The dashboard can be accessed at www.cottondata.com.au

AUSTRALIAN COTTON ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

Thanks to increased funding via the ATMAC grant, the Cotton to Market team was able to attend more international conferences and meetings during the year to spread the word about Australian cotton to global brands, retailers and not-for-profit organisations. The team attended the Better Cotton Conference, the Textile Exchange Conference and the Sustainable Apparel Coalition meeting during the year, with many meetings held with potential partners and supply chain influencers, as well as conference presentations on topics such as impact data, eco-system services payments and women in cotton.

AUSTRALIAN COTTON INDUSTRY ROADMAP TO ALIGN INDUSTRY WITH CUSTOMER NEEDS

The global landscape for cotton and textiles has changed, with new legislation affecting market access, companies required to report on social and environmental impact and global frameworks requiring evidence of social and environmental governance back to farm level. Our brand and retail customers, their shareholders and governments are demanding supply chain traceability, and certified sustainable raw materials backed up by data to support claims.

In response, Cotton Australia, ACSA and CRDC are collaborating to develop a *Strategic Roadmap for the Australian Cotton Industry* that will help the industry remain competitive in a changing fashion and textiles market. Five key topic areas are being addressed: traceability, industry data, sustainably-certified cotton, human rights and Australian cotton marketing.

The industry is together working out where we'd like to be on these key topics, how we'll get there, who's responsible and how any new initiatives may be funded. The roadmap will be completed by the end of 2023.

CAMP COTTON 2022 HEADS TO THE NAMOI

In May more than 30 brands, retailers and textile not-for-profits representing some of Australia's best-known companies left their city offices to fly to Northwestern NSW for a boots-dirty farm and industry tour where they learnt first hand about the Australian cotton industry.

While the weather wasn't kind, the group toured the Watson's family cotton farm in Boggabri, attended a round table event with a number of industry speakers and visited a cotton gin and the research station.

The Camp Cotton event continues to grow each year, an important learning experience and one that always yields a number of new brand partnerships.

AUSTRALIAN COTTON ON DISPLAY AT AUSTRALIAN BY DESIGN FASHION PARADE

For the first time during Cotton Conference, Cotton Australia's brand partners were on display during the "Australian By Design" fashion parade.

Hosted by ACSA, our leading brand partners highlighted the beautiful garments made from Australian cotton during the parade including Rodd and Gunn, Bonds, Sussan, Country Road, ELK The Label, Willow and Claude, Kamakura Shirts and 2022 Future Cotton Leader and fashion designer Emma Bond.

Hosted and curated by Sharen Kenny, the parade showcased the iconic Australian brands who have supported our industry by using Australian cotton.



COTTON AUSTRALIA SUPPORTS TEXTILE EXCHANGE 20 YEAR CELEBRATIONS

Celebrating 20 years in the business, global NGO Textile Exchange partnered with Country Road and Cotton Australia to host a forum for brands to explore sustainable raw material options in August 2022.

Around 75 brands, retailers and other textile businesses attended the event, with Cotton Australia's Brooke Summers joining Textile Exchange, Country Road and a Tasmanian wool grower in a panel discussion.

"Over 800 brands and retailers are Textile Exchange members who look to the organisation on advice about which raw materials are sustainable and renewable. They're an important partner and we're working closely on a number of projects including soil health metrics and an on-farm pilot to collect impact data," Brooke said.

WHERE TO FROM HERE

- + Finalisation and action to progress the Australian Cotton Strategic Roadmap
- + Expectation of a continued increase in the volume of products carrying the Australian cotton mark
- + In-market visits to export destinations to assist with supply chain mapping, traceability and demand creation

The Country Road team in the cotton field during Camp Cotton 2022 at Boggabri, NSW.



Supporting our growers to work at the highest standard

- + Significant increase in myBMP certifications
- + Best practice program celebrates new certifications in northern Australia
- + Better Cotton demand growing

Textile Exchange's Hollie Stringer, with Darling Downs NAPCO farmer manager Col Blackley and myBMP manager Rob Crothers.



Cotton Australia's Ashley Hollis and Janet Barker with LCD Dalby's Andrew Cook.

myBMP is the Australian cotton industry's best management practice program. The program empowers growers to improve their on-farm practices by reducing risk, boosting their business management procedures, and ensuring they are meeting regulatory requirements.

The program began in 1997 and has developed into a comprehensive online initiative covering 10 modules, including:

- + Water Management
- + Biosecurity
- + Pesticide Management
- + HR
- + WHS

Cotton Australia staff, along with CottonInfo's Regional Extension Officers, provide personalised support and technical assistance to myBMP participants.



Jack Schwagger with myBMP regional manager Alec MacIntosh after completing the myBMP certification.



Severe flooding in the later half of 2022 contributed to difficult conditions in 2022/23 however myBMP still managed to achieve another significant increase in myBMP farm certifications.

CURRENTLY THERE ARE:
129 CERTIFIED BUSINESSES
425 CERTIFIED FARMS

The myBMP team has been active in the north of Australia assisting and encouraging growers to complete the cotton industries sustainability program. Three stations in the Northern Territory and three farms in Western Australia's northern region of Kununurra have become myBMP certified.

Due to the standards associated with the myBMP program, approximately 30% of this year's Australian cotton crop was sold at a premium into the internationally recognised sustainability program Better Cotton. Certified myBMP growers benefitted from Better Cotton premiums of approximately \$7M for the year.

The strong links between Cotton Australia and Better Cotton continued with the myBMP team hosting Emma Dennis, the Senior Manager of Better Cotton's Sustainable Agricultural Practice based in London, and Hollie Stringer who is the Sustainable Cotton Senior Coordinator for the international Textile exchange. It was an excellent opportunity to showcase the outstanding achievements of several

myBMP growers and demonstrate how our growers are using world leading sustainable practices to produce cotton.

It was also an ideal opportunity for the growers to understand what the international textile industry is looking for from our cotton growers and the myBMP program. The message from both programs was loud and clear. The international textile industry is quickly moving towards prioritising the purchase of cotton from sustainably recognised programs like Better Cotton and myBMP. This is a trend that is quickly gaining momentum internationally and one that will likely affect the purchasing decisions of the textile industry now and into the future.

AGSKILLED

Providing high-quality training to enhance NSW growers' skills

- + AgSkilled 2.0 program in its final year of funding
- + Strong uptake across industry as producers focus on rebuilding skilled workforce
- + Cotton growers benefit from industry-specific courses

Total College delivering Cotton Pest Management course - Narrabri 2022



- + The AgSkilled 2.0 program continued for NSW growers in 2022/23, the final year of the programs 3-year funding term.
- + This year saw strong demand for training across the regions as growers focussed on building skills for another large season.
- + An additional \$3m was added to the program budget in February 2023, taking the total program budget to \$18m as the Minister announced the expansion of the program to include NSW's livestock farming sectors.

Cotton Australia continued to play a key role in guiding the program, as the cotton industry's representative on the AgSkilled 2.0 Steering Committee.

The AgSkilled model has gained broad recognition as a successful model of industry and government collaboration in the training space,

with numerous program and model briefings and presentations delivered to industry, government and workforce development representatives.

This year, over 850 farmers, farm staff and consultants involved in the cotton industry attended almost 200 training sessions, across 29 different courses. Among the cotton industry attendees, over 60% of students are farm employees and contractors, followed by farm owners and consultants making up the majority of other places.

The most commonly accessed courses for cotton growers focussed on WHS, ag chemical skills, truck licencing, advanced spray training, and cotton pest management. Other courses included GROW, Plan to Profit, HR & WHS Fundamentals, and Drones in Agriculture.

Overall, the AgSkilled program has delivered over 950 training sessions, with more than 6,000 places supported since it began in mid-2020.

WHERE TO FROM HERE

The current program concludes on June 30, 2023. The AgSkilled industry representatives, including Cotton Australia have requested the renewal of the program for a further three years. At the time of writing, we are awaiting a response from the new Minister.



VALLEY REPORTS

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS, QUEENSLAND

REGIONAL MANAGER:

Robyn Lehmann

HECTARES GROWN IN 2022-23:

25,996 ha total
(21,564 ha irrigated; 4,432 ha dryland)

BALES PRODUCED IN 2022-23:

285,324 bales (estimate)



Regional Manager Robyn Lehmann.

COTTON AUSTRALIA ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

- + Growers achieved record yields despite minimal water allocation and less than desirable growing conditions.
- + Celebrated 50 Years of the Fairbairn Dam – The Central Highlands' Irrigation Water Supply (1972-2022).
- + Supported growers' efforts to independently invest into the exploration of different/alternative farming practices to work with issues including 'Grown-On/Long Season Cotton'.
- + This exploration of alternative farming practices was taken onboard by Industry and has had support from CSD, CottonInfo and DAF etc this year with funded trials currently taking place focussed on 'Long Season Cotton in CQ'.
- + People Re-Investment' – Graduates from both the Future Cotton Leaders program and the Australian Rural Leadership Program have come from the Central Highlands region.

- + Continued improvement of engagement with Community through providing mentors and on-farm experiences for students of the 'LEAD Ag' Program, annual Teach the Teacher program, partnering with the Rabo Truck at the local show, various 'School to Farm' experiences for school students, participation at 'Ag Careers' days etc.

- + After Covid restrictions eased, the local industry was able to successfully hold the Cotton Awards dinner with fantastic support by growers and industry people – with 2 years of awards being presented on the night.

"My first few months as the new RM for Cotton Australia in the Central Highlands region have been a wonderful challenge so far. Getting to know and work with the local growing community has been a highlight. With modest inflows into the Fairbairn Dam over the summer period, growers have had an increase in water security allowing them to finalise this year's cotton crop and plan for next year's crop."

Robyn Lehmann

DARLING DOWNS, QUEENSLAND

REGIONAL MANAGER:

Janet Barker

HECTARES GROWN IN 2022-23:

71,624 ha total
(46,141 ha irrigated; 25,483 ha dryland)

BALES PRODUCED IN 2022-23:

626,550 bales (estimate)



Grower Johannes Roellgen with Regional Manager Janet Barker.

COTTON AUSTRALIA ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

- + Achieved record large area of cotton planted despite trying seasonal conditions with a late pick and a wet plant.
- + Two Darling Downs Growers were finalists in the National Cotton Grower of the Year awards; The Hayllor Family, Graincott Farms, Dalby and The Porter Family, Cecil Plains.
- + Initiated and participated in significant engagement activities with local schools and the UQ Agribusiness/Agricultural Science faculties. This included a number of farm and cotton gin tours, a presence at Moo Baa Munch and The National Agricultural Educators Conference at the University of Southern Queensland.
- + Assisted in delivering three Sustainable Spray Workshops in Murgon, Dalby and Pittsworth.

- + Two Workplace Health and Safety workshops were delivered in Dalby and Brookstead in conjunction with a webinar series.
- + One Farm Biosecurity workshop delivered for participants in myBMP.
- + A total of 20 enterprises and 100 farms myBMP accredited on the Darling Downs, with two new enterprises gaining certification in the past year.

"2022 saw a long, drawn-out picking season for the Darling Downs due to a wet autumn and winter. Eventually a large amount was delivered to the gin and the 2022/23 season was planted in a fast turnaround. A remarkably dry summer followed which has meant the dryland struggled even though it had a wet start. Irrigated cotton yields are variable due to a cooler summer, but picking has been smooth sailing by comparison."

Janet Barker

DAWSON AND CALLIDE VALLEYS, QUEENSLAND

REGIONAL MANAGER:

Kelly Becker

HECTARES GROWN IN 2022-23:

7,800 ha total
(6,800 ha irrigated; 1,000 ha dryland)

BALES PRODUCED IN 2022-23:

79,478 bales (estimate)



Kelly Becker with grower Andrew French and Mick Bange from CSD.

COTTON AUSTRALIA ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

- + Supported the uptake of myBMP Re-Accreditations, with 4 businesses due for their renewal. Assisted growers with all the documentation for the process and on farm with fuel tanks, chemical sheds and other infrastructure looking good.
- + Liaised with our newest myBMP accreditator, Bron Christenson, as she gained on the ground training.
- + Actively pursuing the accreditation of new growers and providing advice to ensure growers understand the requirements are not so daunting.
- + Accompanied Andrew French on a visit to the Theodore High School to discuss all things cotton, from growing the crop, to efficiencies made with water and nutrient application. The children seemed genuinely interested with many questions for us to answer.
- + Facilitated and assisted the Cotton Australian Team with training around Work Place Health & Safety protocols.

- + Hosted Theodore High School out at Nandina with a focus on plant growth, the steps growers take to provide optimum growth and the technologies used to implement these strategies.

- + Celebrated the CGA Christmas party at the start of December at the Theodore Golf Club.

- + Assisted in the staging of a dryland field day, with the help of AgnVet and CottonInfo.

- + First Aid Training was recently held at the Moura Gin. Another good turnout thanks to all that attended. That's another great life skill to have ticked off.

"For me, it was notable when the November General Meeting was cancelled with all the growers being so busy. We did make the best of our time however with a full staff meeting providing opportunities for learning and engagement."

Kelly Becker

MACINTYRE VALLEY, QUEENSLAND AND NEW SOUTH WALES

REGIONAL MANAGER:

Cate Wild

HECTARES GROWN IN 2022-23:

51,500 ha total
(44,000 ha irrigated; 7,500 ha dryland)

BALES PRODUCED IN 2022-23:

555,468 bales (estimate)



Grower Thomas Popp with Regional Manager Cate Wild.

COTTON AUSTRALIA ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

- + Supported the additional certification of local farms into the myBMP program with many farms indicating a strong commitment to gain their myBMP certification over the coming months.
- + Provided local management and support of CA's Teach the Teacher activities including one of our most successful events to date with 45 local teachers attending. Very positive feedback was received from all involved.
- + Enabled school tours to cotton farms and local gins.
- + Participated in the extension of the cotton circularity trial for another year at Alcheringa.
- + Facilitated workshops over the off season to provide growers with training and help with grants.
- + Acted as a conduit for information on spray drift issues throughout the valley with most cotton having a small amount of drift at some stage.

- + Provided a contact and liaison role between CA and CGA for the discussion of spray drift issues and options paper with local feedback incorporated into the CA position document.
- + Assisted with the activation and functional requirements of the annual Macintyre Valley Cotton Field Day and Awards dinner.
- + Represented the cotton industry on the EKKA stand in Brisbane.
- + Worked with CA and on the Cotton Conference Committee at the 2022 Cotton Conference.

"After a cool and wet start to the season, the 22/23 irrigated cotton crop for the Mac Valley is looking good! With water available the dry, warm summer suited the growing season, although the dryland crop could have used some more rain over the summer! We are looking forward to getting the crop off and going again next year!!"

Cate Wild

VALLEY REPORTS

ST GEORGE, DIRRANBANDI AND MUNGINDI, QUEENSLAND AND NEW SOUTH WALES

REGIONAL MANAGER:

Sally Rigney

HECTARES GROWN IN 2022-23:

St George:
27,100 ha; Bales Produced 350,000 (est)

Dirranbandi:
26,400 ha; Bales Produced 330,000 (est)

Mungindi:
22,600 ha; Bales produced 230,000 (est)



St George CGA secretary and Nuffield Scholar Tessa Dimond with Regional Manager Sally Rigney (R).

COTTON AUSTRALIA ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

- + Hosted Cotton Australia General Manager Michael Murry at CGA meetings in Mungindi, Dirranbandi & St George on the issue of spray drift reduction. St George growers are working on a collaborative temporary Area Wide Management Plan that aims to reduce the local use of 2,4-D during the critical cotton growing period.
- + Actively represented growers on water recovery issues. Michael Murray and I attended the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment 'Water Recovery Options Workshops', which discussed ways to recover 14 gigalitres from our region. There was recognition the Commonwealth hasn't adequately compensated our region for the value of the water taken. I worked with the community and the Balonne Shire Council, to compile a list of possible projects the Commonwealth could invest in to help secure the viability of our region.
- + Through concerted lobbying, the Balonne Shire was added to the list for the \$75,000 grant funding for primary producers impacted by flooding in mid-May.
- + Sharing our local stories on social media was a priority with a focus on education and career opportunities, generating a good response to stories featuring our local Women in Ag.
- + Supported the 2022 Mungindi Cotton Growers Association Charity Golf Day which injected \$27,000 into the surrounding communities. Donations went to 19 groups, supporting local schools, medical and aged services, sporting clubs and the churches.
- + Brought growers to a meeting with Australian company Golden Warp who are working with the Queensland Government's State Development department to consider commercial/value-add opportunities such as a spinning mill in the region.
- + The focus was firmly on education with the Mungindi CGA putting a massive effort into staging an extremely successful School Excursion Day with 80 children visiting the South Bunarba Ag property "Yarralumbi" before touring Mungindi Ginning. The day showcasing diverse aspects of local production received rave reviews from all the schools.
- + Teach The Teacher events were held at St George and Dirranbandi giving the participants a 'lived' cotton experience and providing ways for the teachers to take our cotton story into the classroom.
- + 12 growers attended the St George Farm Business Resilience Workshop organised by Cotton Australia and QFF. The funding available focusses on climate resilience activities, so is being utilised for improving water use efficiency for growers looking to convert to bankless irrigation, extend storages or build new levy banks.

"This season was a huge relief after the wet weather and flooding pressures of the year before. We had good hectares, good yields, good quality and good prices. Mild conditions, low insect pressure, early in-crop rain and a text book perfect defoliation and picking window saw many growers saying it was the best crop they had ever grown."

Sally Rigney

GWYDIR VALLEY, NEW SOUTH WALES

REGIONAL MANAGER:

Alec Macintosh

HECTARES GROWN IN 2022-23:

111,448 ha total
(68,000 ha irrigated; 43,448 ha dryland)

BALES PRODUCED IN 2022-23:

1,056,120 bales (estimate)



Alec MacIntosh with Scott Carrigan.

COTTON AUSTRALIA ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

- + Worked to drive myBMP uptake in the Gwydir Valley with an additional 15 farms now achieving certification over the past year.
- + Promoted Satamap use and application to growers and agronomists.
- + Attended Area Wide Management Meetings and field days and updated growers on CA Activities.
- + Promoted Agskilled courses across the region.
- + Attended the Grower of the Year Field Day at Keytah.
- + Facilitated Teach the Teacher event in Moree.
- + Attended Moree Careers Day.
- + Represented Cotton Australia and presented on the industry at Yetman School.

"With a very tough start, including major flooding with subsequent damage to fields and irrigation infrastructure, growers across the region did an amazing job between rain events in being able to plant the hectares that they did. Throw in the cooler weather as well, the season got off to a rough start. Fortunately, the weather changed in the new year allowing the crop to reach its potential, with some very reasonable yields being picked from the irrigated crops. The dry weather in the New Year though did not benefit the dryland growers so unfortunately their yields have not been as good as hoped for. The cool, wet start and rain interruptions causing several different plant dates on most farms and drift damage has impacted overall yield"

Alec Macintosh

NAMOI VALLEY, NEW SOUTH WALES

REGIONAL MANAGER:

Alec Macintosh

HECTARES GROWN IN 2022-23:

96,180 ha total
54,500ha irrigated; 41,680 ha dryland)

BALES PRODUCED IN 2022-23:

856,479 bales (estimate)



Northern NSW Regional manager Alec MacIntosh with the Tudgey Family.

COTTON AUSTRALIA ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

- + Worked to drive myBMP uptake in the Namoi Valley with an additional 13 farms now achieving certification over the past year.
- + Promoted Satamap use and application to growers and agronomists.
- + Presented at field days across the Namoi, updating growers on CA's activities.
- + Promoted Agskilled course across the region.
- + Contacted Growers and visited farms regarding the Country Road/Landcare project.
- + Liaised with Education Manager to stage Teach the Teacher events in Narrabri and Gunnedah.
- + Attended Narrabri Careers Day.
- + Attended Tamworth Careers Day.
- + Assisted on the ground with logistics and set-up for Camp Cotton.

- + Participated in Federation Farm Schools Day.
- + Contributed to Essential Energy Meetings.

"The Namoi Valley too suffered from a very tough start and growers should be congratulated for being able to plant as much as they did. Fortunately, the weather changed in the new year allowing the crop to reach its potential, with some very reasonable yields being picked from the irrigated crops. Dryland growers were not so lucky due to the dry start to the calendar year."

Alec Macintosh

VALLEY REPORTS

MACQUARIE VALLEY, NEW SOUTH WALES

REGIONAL MANAGER:

Craig Chandler

HECTARES GROWN IN 2022-23:

25,700 ha total
(25,000 ha irrigated; 700 ha dryland)
(Planting reduced by approx. 1/3 previous estimates due to wet season and reduced window for planting during late 2022)

BALES PRODUCED IN 2022-23:

266,000 bales (estimate)
Yield average 10.5 bales/ha



Craig Chandler joined Cotton Australia in 2021 and worked to support growers.

COTTON AUSTRALIA ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

- + Continued working with growers to overcome challenges posed by post Covid hangover and a record rainfall season in 2022 which saw almost double our annual rainfall throughout the Valley and surrounds.
- + Supported CA divisions such as AgSkilled agricultural industry related topics & courses eg: First aid, Forklift licences, Truck licencing additional course accreditations such as Drones in agriculture though colleges like Tocal ag College, TAFE and NSW Farmers so I help AgSkilled to organise various courses throughout the year in my region.
- + Supported the Drones in Agriculture course conducted by AgSkilled, Tocal College & NSW Farmers Association Wednesday February 9th on Billy & Jodie Browning's property at Narromine.
- + The MacIntyre Valley Cotton Field Day was the venue for the announcement of the Bayer Cotton Grower of the Year (2021) Quigley Farms. Quigley Farms at Trangie in the Macquarie Valley was crowned the Bayer Cotton Grower of the Year for 2021 at the Field Day which attracted 130 industry peers at the Turkey Lagoon site.
- + Assisted to promote and stage the Quigley Farms Field Day, the BAYER Australian Cotton grower of the year at Trangie 15th March 2023 on their property "Muntham" with the support of Macquarie Valley Cotton Growers Association and major sponsors BAYER, Cotton Australia and Three River Machinery Case IH. Approximately 280 people attended the day in fine sunshine, with the theme of "Come and see what we do!" CEO Adam Kay joined me representing Cotton Australia at the event.

- + Assisted the myBMP program to help growers achieve best management practice in their journey to certification and BCI recognition.
- + Uptake was limited due to Covid however 8 growers achieved certification and BCI accreditation in 2023. The plan is to increase uptake and have several growers almost ready for audit process around mid-year.
- + MVCGA has 130 registered growers on myBMP program and 12 growers with 60% or better completion in levels 1 and 2.
- + Contributed as a committee member to the SOS Macquarie group to help mitigate off-target spray drift, and extensively promoted SataCrop to growers.
- + Increased support for the new WAND network and check for temperature inversion times and weather conditions in the area.

"My role is to act as a conduit of information to all 168 growers within the Macquarie Valley Cotton grower association which could be anything from distribution of emails, news within agriculture or industry policy from various Government depts. to field days, industry related issues & anything related to agriculture. My role also involves strong involvement with local Cotton Growers Association as CA's industry representative, I sit on the general committee & help with field days or industry specialist field walks & courses, social events CGA Cotton grower Awards & and golf day."

Craig Chandler

WALGETT AND BOURKE, NEW SOUTH WALES

REGIONAL MANAGER:

Alec Macintosh

HECTARES GROWN IN 2022-23:

31,036 ha total
(24,900 ha irrigated; 6136 ha dryland)

BALES PRODUCED IN 2022-23:

330,643 bales (estimate)



Regional Manager Alec Macintosh worked with growers in the Walgett and Bourke areas throughout 2022-23.

COTTON AUSTRALIA ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

- + Promoted Agskilled courses across the region.
- + Promoted Satamap use and application to growers and agronomists.
- + Worked to drive myBMP uptake.
- + Presented at CSD Information Evening.
- + Attended Walgett Careers Day.

"Walgett and Bourke, like other nearby regions, had to deal with major flooding but the resilience of our growers shone through, and the hectares planted exceeded early expectations. Unfortunately widespread and severe spray drift damage, in an otherwise near perfect growing season, has impacted heavily on potential yields."

Alec Macintosh

SOUTHERN VALLEYS (LACHLAN, MURRUMBIDGEE, MURRAY), NEW SOUTH WALES

REGIONAL MANAGER:

Tom Mannes

HECTARES GROWN IN 2022-23:

50,000 ha total
Murrumbidgee Valley: 42,000 ha
Murray Valley: 4,000 ha
Lachlan Valley: 4,000 ha

BALES PRODUCED IN 2022-23:

420,000 (TBC) bales (estimate)



Regional Manager Tom Mannes with Jenna Davie.

COTTON AUSTRALIA ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS:

- + Continued myBMP support and re-certification of 5 myBMP farm businesses.
- + Continuation of local grower 'Cotton Catch Up' groups in conjunction with CottonInfo and CSD, meeting at critical times throughout the season.
- + Supported the staging of Teach the teacher event at Southern Cotton Whitton.
- + Driven the establishment of a pilot Ladies Cotton Catch Up group to upskill and drive peer learning for local women involved in the cotton industry.
- + Worked with the local CGA to judge and run the local Cotton Grower of the year awards.
- + Encouraged growers to take advantage of AgSkilled training and further develop their skills with the courses on offer.
- + Committee member of the Riverina SOS group to promote best spray management to reduce drift and encourage the use of SataCrop.

"I am enjoying my relatively new role supporting growers in the Murrumbidgee, Murray and Lachlan Valleys, having taken over the position from Harriet Brickhill who assisted me in the transition, having developed excellent relationships across the region. While my experience in the role for the reporting period was only six weeks, I look forward to working closely with all my growers to ensure they continue to receive valuable support from Cotton Australia."

Tom Mannes

COTTON AUSTRALIA BOARD



NIGEL BURNETT
Chairman
Cotton grower – Emerald, Qld



FLEUR ANDERSON
Vice Chairperson
Grower & Community relations executive – Theodore, Qld



BERNIE BIERHOFF
Director
Cotton grower – Rowena, NSW



ANGUS O'BRIEN
Cotton grower – Warren, NSW



APRIL CAVANAGH
Director, Senior Executive



ARTHUR SPELLSON
Industry Representative
– ADM Trading Australia PTY LTD



BOB DALL'ALBA
Executive Director and Country Head – Olam



ELIZABETH STOTT
Cotton grower – Leeton, NSW



MATT MCVEIGH
Cotton grower – Dalby, Qld



ROB DUGDALE
Industry representative – Lower Namoi
Cotton Growers' Association (NSW)

COTTON AUSTRALIA TEAM



ADAM KAY
Chief Executive Officer



MICHAEL MURRAY
General Manager



ALEC MACINTOSH
Northern NSW Regional
Manager



ALI KUCHEL
Content and Communications
Coordinator



ASHLEY HOLLIS
Brand Relations Manager



BROOKE SUMMERS
Supply Chain Consultant



CATE WILD
Regional Manager –
Macintyre Valley*



CLAUDIA VICARY
Project Officer –
AgSkilled^



CRAIG CHANDLER
Regional Manager –
Macquarie Valley*



DARRIN DAVIES
Communications Manager –
Stakeholder Engagement



HARRIET BRICKHILL
Regional Manager –
Southern NSW^



JANET BARKER
Regional Manager –
Darling Downs*



JENNIFER BROWN
Policy Officer*



JENNY HUGHES
Education Manager



KELLY BECKER
Regional Manager –
Dawson Valley*^



NICOLE SCOTT
myBMP Customer Service
Manager



PAUL SLOMAN
Policy Officer



RENEE ANDERSON
Regional Manager –
Central Highlands**



ROB CROTHERS
myBMP Manager



ROBERT VIRTUE
Communications Manager
– Digital Strategy^



ROBYN LEHMANN
Regional Manager –
Central Highlands*



ROCHELLE ZAKHER
Executive Assistant



SALLY CEENEY
Policy Officer**



SALLY RIGNEY
Regional Manager –
St George, Dirranbandi &
Mungindi*



THERESE WOODEN
Finance Manager



TOM MANNES
Regional Manager –
Southern NSW

* Part time
^ Left Cotton Australia during the reporting year

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

INCOME	
YEAR	INCOME
2021/2022	3,679,431
2022/2023	9,218,469
EXPENDITURE	
OPERATING EXPENDITURE	
2021/2022	4,329,954
2022/2023	8,027,427
EQUITY	
2021/2022	10,485,623
2022/2023	11,676,665
LEVY CONTRIBUTION	
2021/2022	69%
2022/2023	71%

**Cotton Australia’s full financial accounts, which were audited by Ernst & Young, have been provided to our Member Organisations.*





COTTON AUSTRALIA

COTTON AUSTRALIA LIMITED

HEAD OFFICE Suite 4.01, 247 Coward St, Mascot Nsw 2020 Australia
PHONE +61 2 9669 5222

BRISBANE Level 8, 183 North Quay, Brisbane Qld 4000
TOOWOOMBA Unit 3, 6 Rutledge St, Toowoomba Qld 4350
NARRABRI Level 2, 2 Lloyd St, Narrabri NSW 2390

www.cottonaustralia.com.au