



COTTON  
AUSTRALIA



# CURRENT AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

**November 2024**



# DELIVERING OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

Our vision for 2028, is a thriving Australian Cotton Industry, trusted and in demand, with a strong reputation for reliability and quality. Growers and their industry partners will have confidence to continue investing for future returns, while meeting global sustainability standards for every bale of cotton produced.

This is how we will realise this vision.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



### ADVOCACY

Champion the industry's advocacy, positively influencing outcomes

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#### 1.1 PROGRESS POLICY AGENDA

- Made a submission to Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority's (APVMA) review into the use of paraquat and diquat.
- Attended the National Farmers' Federation (NFF) Members Council to discuss cross agriculture issues like paraquat, water, and labour with other agricultural bodies.
- Attended the National Irrigators Council (NIC) AGM and General Meetings where the focus was NIC's election priorities, which include reinforcing property rights and advocating for significant investment into complementary measures.
- Attended the NSW Irrigators' Council (NSWIC) Annual General Meeting where Michael Murray, CA's General Manager, was appointed as an Honorary Delegate in recognition of his years of work representing cotton growers and irrigators.
- Cotton Australia Board visited the NSW Riverina area meeting with growers and meeting with the Griffith and Murrumbidgee councils.
- Partnered with Queensland Farmers Federation to lobby around the issue of Biosecurity funding ahead of the Queensland state election.
- Worked with the NFF to defeated the proposed biosecurity levy of 70c per bale.

#### 1.2 PARTNER FOR IMPACT

- Became a member of Seamless, Australia's first product clothing stewardship scheme.

#### 1.3 ENGAGE POLICY MAKERS

- Cotton Australia accompanied the NSW Shadow Minister for Water and her advisor on a tour of the Macquarie Valley to hear more about the cotton industry and familiarise her with key water issues.
- Began engaging directly with the new Queensland Government, including with Water Minister Anne Leahy and Minister of Primary Industries Tony Perett.
- Held dinner with NSW shadow government ministers.

#### 1.4 DRIVE DEMAND

- Continued strong demand and growth in applications to use the Australian Cotton mark, as well as Kmart becoming a licensed partner.
- The number of items licensed to use the Australian Cotton Mark exceeded 25 million for 2024 with 49 licensed brand partners (up from 39 in 2023).

#### 1.5 INFLUENCE GLOBAL LANDSCAPE

- Operationalisation of the Strategic Roadmap for Australian Cotton has begun with Cotton Australia and the CRDC committing to a range of projects .
- Grower and CA Board member Daniel Kahl, alongside members of the Cotton to Market team, were funded by the Textile Exchange to attend their California conference.
- The Australian cotton traceability research project funded by the Queensland Government has entered its second phase.
- Participated in the invite-only Global Nature Positive Summit in Sydney, representing the interests of growers and broader Australian agriculture as experts from around the world met to discuss how to drive investments in natural restoration.

# TRUST

Credibly enhance the industry's reputation among all stakeholders



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## 2.1 CAPTURE RELEVANT DATA

- Data Dashboard updated with annual relevant industry data.

## 2.3 SHOWCASE RESPONSIBILITY

- Generated positive media coverage about topics discussed at the Australian Cotton Conference.
- Celebrated National Agriculture Day with Cotton Australia and QFF's 'Can't Live Without' Campaign to connect urban consumers with growers.
- Showcased 'field to fashion' with growers fronting brand spotlights for Elk, Hard Yakka and Typo.
- Published the final episode of 'A Season at Tyunga' on how data is captured and used on farm. The video series has been viewed over 30K times.
- Represented the cotton industry at the Moo Baa Munch education event.
- Showcased our industry on social media on World Cotton Day.
- Attended the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW Farm Days Excursions. The fortnight long event, held at the Sydney Showgrounds, enabled Cotton Australia to educate hundreds of urban school students on the Australian cotton industry.

## 2.4 DEMONSTRATE RESPONSIVENESS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Phase 2 of the Queensland Government funded traceability project has begun piloting different technology.
- An updated version of the pocket guide to Australian Cotton booklet was released. Hard copies of the booklet will be provided to Visitor Information Centres in key cotton-growing regions.
- Engaged with the media to showcase the myBMP program achieving new levels of success with 45% of the Australian crop certified in the 2023/24 season with a significant uptick in growers participating.
- Delivered a series of myBMP video case studies to raise awareness about the program and drive grower uptake in the certification.

## 2.5 PURSUE "HERE FOR GOOD" PROJECTS

- Launched a range of educational resources for schools with 'George the Farmer'
- The Biodiversity Project partnership between Country Road, Landcare Australia and the Australian cotton industry announced a fifth project site in the Namoi Valley on the Schwager family farm.

Kym and Prue Byrnes of Moree featured in our International Rural Women's Day content showcasing our industry.





## SUSTAINABILITY

Enable 100% of Australia's cotton farms to be sustainability-certified

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### 3.1 UNDERSTAND BARRIERS AND ENABLERS TO ADOPTING CERTIFIED PRACTICES

- 543 certified farms (up from 400 last season) farms fully myBMP certified.

### 3.2 RESTRUCTURE SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM

- Cotton Australia and the CRDC have appointed a consultant to review the myBMP program to recommend ways to keep it future-fit.

### 3.3 ACHIEVE GLOBALLY RECOGNISED IMPACT

- Released the 2023 Sustainability Update report
- 4th Environmental Assessment Report released with coordinated key messaging with CRDC.

### 3.4 ACCELERATE GROWER UPTAKE

- A series of new myBMP case studies have been developed and promoted to growers to drive uptake.
- myBMP masterclasses held at the Australian Cotton Conference to assist growers to achieve certification.

### 3.5 BE A SUSTAINABILITY THOUGHT LEADER

- The data framework behind PLANET. PEOPLE. Paddock. is currently being revamped in an ambitious Australian proof of concept to cotton and other agriculture industries to collect better sustainability data and use it for more purposes.



## LEADERSHIP

Foster Industry Capacity, Collaboration and Resilience

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### 4.1 GUIDE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Cotton Australian/CRDC Research Forum was held in November to provide direct feedback from growers and CGA's to CRDC on research priorities.

### 4.2 CELEBRATE INDUSTRY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Successfully delivered the 2024 Australian Cotton Conference, with 2,900 people in attendance.
- Announced the 2024 Australian Cotton Industry Awards recipients for the Bayer Grower of the Year; AgriRisk High Achiever of the Year; Chris Lehmann CRDC Young Cotton Achiever of the Year; and Cotton Seed Distributors Researcher of the Year.
- Celebrated the 2024 Australian Cotton Industry Awards recipients through a series of video case studies.
- Engaged media to celebrate the first shipment of NT cotton to be shipped from the port of Darwin.

### 4.3 FOSTER INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP & GRASSROOTS PARTICIPATION

- A record number of participants graduated from the 2024 Future Cotton Leaders program.
- Moree-based agronomist Kate Lumber was announced as the 2025 Nuffield Farming Scholarship recipient.
- CA Policy Officer Jennifer Brown participated in the 2024 NFF Diversity in Agriculture leadership program.
- The Women in Cotton (Wincott) AGM was held at the Australian Cotton Conference.
- Tom Mannes, Cotton Australia's Regional Manager for Southern NSW, attended the Better Cotton Large Farm Week 2024 in Türkiye.

### 4.4 DEVELOP WORKFORCE EDUCATION & TRAINING

- Attended the University of New England (UNE) Farming Futures Careers Fair attracted around 1,300 students and guests.
- Attended the Charles Sturt University (CSU) Approaching Ag careers fair in Wagga Wagga.
- Since the launch of SmartAg Queensland over 390 people from the cotton industry. Popular sessions included training on working at heights, confined spaces, first aid, and forklift operation.



The Ball kids from Moree with Typo Australian cotton socks. Typo, who have outlets in 15 countries worldwide, became a licenced brand in 2024.

#### 4.5 ENHANCE BIOSECURITY AND STEWARDSHIP

- A Spray Drift awareness campaign has begun for the 2025 season.
- Launched the latest version of the Cotton Industry Biosecurity Plan (Version 4.0).
- Plant Health Australia (PHA) recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Cotton Australia to enhance the Cotton Industry Biosecurity Program.
- Biosecurity training (Industry Liaison Officer level) conducted for key CottonInfo and CA staff.
- Cotton Guardians Program workshop help in partnership with Plant Health Australia (PHA) to bolster industry biosecurity awareness and capacity.

## GOVERNANCE

Structure, govern and fund Cotton Australia effectively



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#### 5.1 OPTIMISE LEVY PAYMENTS

- Released the 2024 Annual Report highlighting the impact levy payers have on advancing the Australian cotton industry.

#### 5.3 STRUCTURE TO ADD VALUE

- Held the Annual General Meeting, reappointing three sitting directors and one new board member, Daniel Kahl.
- Appointed a new Regional Manager for Northern NSW, Bob Ford

#### 5.5 PROACTIVELY MANAGE RISKS

- Established a crisis working group of key stakeholders including representatives from Cotton Australia, Government, NT Farmers, National Farmers Federation and NT Cotton growers to manage the Four Corners 'Water Grab' story which attacked the Northern Territory cotton industry



The University of Sydney 'Llara' farm in Narrabri has achieved their myBMP certification in 2024.

## FUTURE ACTIVITIES AND ONGOING ISSUES

### ADVOCACY

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- Continue to engage key Ministers to advocate for changes to the Murray-Darling Basin Plan.
- Responses to the draft National Water Agreement, water pricing in NSW and Qld, and the Northern NSW Connectivity Review.
- Advocate to Government policy makers to support CA members current and future energy needs, plus the importance of protecting high value agricultural land.
- Continue advocating for more tariff free quota under the India free trade agreement.
- 3G closure has disadvantaged growers in rural and remote areas, Cotton Australia to work to get Telstra executive out to cotton growing areas to discuss the issue and impacts.
- Cotton Australia is exploring partnerships with brands and not-for-profits to fund projects on sustainability, circularity, women's empowerment, youth leadership, and Indigenous issues.
- Engage new key Country Liberal Party Ministers in the NT on the developments of the cotton industry and its support of all key legislative frameworks.
- Engage and strengthen relationships with Ministerial, shadow opposition and government agencies in WA in the lead up to the 2025 election.
- Continue engagement with new Queensland Ministry.
- RB Sellars, makers of workwear for rural Australians, has come on board as a partner after years of work launching their Australian Cotton range in February 2025.

# FUTURE ACTIVITIES AND ONGOING ISSUES

## TRUST

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- A social media campaign will run from late January piloting short-form video on TikTok and leveraging influencers to connect with urban consumers to build trust.
- Continue stakeholder engagement to foster positive relationships and develop trust in the Australian cotton industry, particularly in the Northern Territory.
- Develop action plan to deliver recommendations resulting from the Trust in Cotton research in partnership with CRDC.
- Showcase accountability by creating a series of videos from the Cotton Forum event to share with brand partners and the public online.
- Work with RB Sellars to launch their Australian Cotton range and capitalise on their brand loyalty to build trust in Australian cotton through campaigns and media.

## SUSTAINABILITY

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- Begin implementation on the Road map and coordinate deliverables where CRDC and ACSA are responsible.
- Pursue new and innovative ways to showcase the Australian Cotton Industry's sustainability framework
- Continue to roll out new myBMP case studies to promote the program to growers and showcase the success of the program to brand partners and stakeholders using Better Cotton funds.
- Audits for growers aspiring to become myBMP certified in 2024 are ongoing.

## LEADERSHIP

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- Support the coordination of the Grower of the Year Field Day in Dirranbandi on 5 March 2025.
- Support cotton growers in applying for industry leadership programs like the ARLP.
- Working to schedule upcoming training opportunities through SmartAg Queensland such as truck licenses, ChemCert, and advanced spray training.
- Working with Regional Managers to get a greater uptake in subsidised training from AgSkilled NSW.

## GOVERNANCE

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- Execute delivery on a framework for engagement and risk management for the Northern Australia cotton industry.
- Hold the next general meeting in Mid-2025 to discuss R&D priorities and industry issues.



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