



COTTON
AUSTRALIA



ADVANCING THE AUSTRALIAN COTTON INDUSTRY

*Cotton Australia – working for growers since 1972,
Powered by grower's levies*



A MESSAGE FROM COTTON AUSTRALIA CHAIR

NIGEL BURNETT



As someone who is heavily invested in the Australian cotton industry, and as a grower who enjoys an excellent relationship with our local ginners, I am acutely aware of the vital role that ginners play in the supply chain.

Without the ginning industry, growers would produce a valuable fibre in its rawest form, but they would not be able to maximise their own returns by investing in the people who know best how to turn the cotton module from the farm into the valuable and highly sought after bale, ready for export.

It's that same understanding of the value that ginning adds to every bale that drives 77% of growers to contribute their voluntary levy in full each year to Cotton Australia.

Our levy per bale of ginned cotton stands at \$1.50 (plus GST) per bale. That levy has not increased in over a decade, yet our costs have increased significantly. Our Board has been, and remains, reluctant to increase that levy, mindful of the increasing input costs for all growers.

It is our aim to deliver a \$7 to \$10 return on every levy dollar paid, and we are on track to demonstrate that through tangible and intangible benefits.

The reason we exist is to help the industry and every grower to have the best conditions for success. In that way we can realise our Strategic Plan for a thriving, trusted and in demand Australian cotton industry, with a strong reputation for reliability and quality.

It's our objective to give our best efforts every day to help growers in:

- **Advocacy** – Making sure growers voices are heard in formulating policy that impacts on agriculture, engaging with politicians and policy makers, driving demand and influencing the global landscape.
- **Trust** – Rebuilding trust in the cotton industry through capturing relevant, quality data, showcasing responsible practices, and demonstrating accountability.
- **Sustainability** – Promoting uptake of certification of sustainable practices, invest in industry training, awareness and engagement to accelerate uptake, become sustainability

thought leaders and achieving global recognition for our efforts.

- **Leadership** – Play a leading role in industry research and initiatives, celebrating industry achievements, thereby sharing success stories, fostering leadership and grassroots participation in advancing the industry, educate and train our workforce, and enhance biosecurity and stewardship.
- **Governance** – Optimise levy payments by demonstrating value and fairness, build funding resilience, align Board, management and CGA strategies to achieve structured outcomes, while proactively managing risks.

If Cotton Australia succeeds in every one of our key priorities, then the Australian cotton industry succeeds as a whole; every grower (levy payer or not), every ginner, every service provider and contractor, and every input supplier. More importantly, every community where cotton has an impact, more than 250 of them Australia-wide, benefits from that success.

I want to thank you for your efforts in helping to keep the Australian cotton industry strong and I look forward to communicating the wins that the levy enables Cotton Australia to pursue.

Kind regards

Nigel Burnett, Chair Cotton Australia

TOP ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2024

1. **Advocated for Growers:** Collaborated with the NFF to defeat the proposed biosecurity levy of 70c per bale.
2. **Water Policy Engagement:** Represented growers on critical water policy issues, including the National Water Agreement, Murray-Darling Basin Plan, Northern Connectivity Review, water metering, and water pricing.
3. **myBMP Milestone:** 45% of the Australian cotton crop for the 2023/24 season is now myBMP certified, with a growing number of growers actively participating.
4. **Cotton Demand Growth:** Boosted demand for Australian cotton, with over 25 million items now licensed to use the Australian Cotton Mark, up from 23 million in 2023.
5. **Record-breaking Conference:** Organised the most attended Australian Cotton Conference to date.
6. **Launched the 2023-2028 Strategic plan.**
7. **Leadership Development:** Delivered the 2024 Australian Future Cotton Leaders Program, graduating a record number of participants.
8. **Industry Awards:** Celebrated the recipients of the 2024 Australian Cotton Industry Awards, recognising excellence in categories such as Bayer Grower of the Year and AgriRisk High Achiever of the Year.
9. **Cotton Data Dashboard:** Launched the world-first Cotton Data Dashboard, offering transparent reporting on production, yield, quality, and sustainability metrics.
10. **Spray Drift Reporting:** Introduced the Snap.Send.Solve app, enabling growers to efficiently report spray drift incidents and facilitating timely responses.

COTTON AUSTRALIA'S VALUE PROPOSITION

Without voluntary levies the Cotton Australian could not continue to deliver the following initiatives to our industry.

POLICY AND ADVOCACY

Cotton Australia's advocacy team works to turn growers' concerns into formal industry positions. Through proactive engagement with policymakers and regulators at all levels of government, the team addresses priority issues such as water, chemical access, energy, connectivity, and workforce needs.

MYBMP

The myBMP program provides growers with a voluntary farm and environmental management framework, ensuring Australian cotton is produced using best practices. Participation in the program supports growers in accessing premium markets through Better Cotton.

COTTON TO MARKET

Cotton to Market is Cotton Australia's supply chain engagement program. It builds demand for Australian cotton by promoting its quality, sustainability, and traceability credentials to brand and retail customers through the Cotton Mark licensing program.

WORKFORCE AND TRAINING

Cotton Australia secures funding to coordinate free or subsidised training opportunities for growers and their teams through programs like AgSkilled in NSW and SmartAg in Queensland

EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Through initiatives such as the Sydney Royal Easter Show and 'Teach the Teacher' events, Cotton Australia raises awareness of the industry. The organisation also develops curriculum-aligned resources and engages with school students from grades 1–12.

AUSTRALIAN COTTON CONFERENCE

Cotton Australia leads the coordination of the biennial Australian Cotton Conference and Cotton Collective events, bringing the industry together to share knowledge and insights.

STEWARDSHIP AND BIOSECURITY

Cotton Australia facilitates the Transgenic and Insect Management Strategies (TIMS) Committee, works with the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) to secure emergency and minor use permits, and represents the industry's biosecurity interests through its partnership with Plant Health Australia.

GROWER FEEDBACK INTO RESEARCH

Through biannual research forums, Cotton Australia ensures grower input helps guide research priorities with the Cotton Research and Development Corporation (CRDC).

JOINT PROGRAMS

Cotton Australia also contributes the delivery of:

- The CottonInfo program
- The Australian Cotton Sustainability Program
- Leadership opportunities such as the Australian Future Cotton Leaders program, Nuffield Scholarships, Australian Rural Leadership Program, Peter Cullen Trust, and TRAIL Emerging Leaders Program.

TOP ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2024

11. Sustainability Reporting: Published the 2023 Australian Cotton Sustainability Update and Fourth Independent Environmental Assessment report, showcasing significant sustainability achievements.
12. Photo Competition: Ran the Click 24 photo competition, gaining positive attention from rural and urban media and sharing industry stories with the broader community.
13. Workforce Training: Secured funding for the SmartAgQld program, providing free or subsidised training to over 390 industry participants. Continued to ensure no-cost and subsidised training in NSW through AgSkilled.
14. Field Day Support: Supported the Bayer Grower of the Year field day on the Darling Downs.
15. Community Engagement: Connected with hundreds of thousands of visitors at the Sydney Royal Easter Show and Brisbane Ekka.
16. Education Outreach: Attended over a dozen career expos and education events, facilitating 10 'Teach the Teacher' sessions for more than 125 educators to learn about the industry.
17. Made submissions on behalf of growers addressing key issues, including water pricing, Paraquat regulation, industrial relations and workplace challenges, CSG subsidence, water reform and buybacks, electricity pricing, and connectivity.
18. Secured funding from the Qld Government for a traceability research project to scope possible solutions to better trace Australian cotton through the supply chain.
19. Delivered the Camp Cotton event with 60 representatives from local and international brands and textile/sustainability NGOs attending funded by a federal government ATMAC grant.
20. Advocated for safe, reliable and affordable energy and tariffs for our industry.
21. Met with telco providers to share the experiences of our growers and voiced disappointment with the level of service, following the 3G shutdown.
22. Filmed education content with 'George the Farmer' at the Kahl family Wee Waa property.
23. Delivered the Cotton Guardians Biosecurity with Plant Health Australia to build biosecurity capacity in the cotton industry.
24. Continued to build relationship and advocate for more tariff free quota under the India free trade agreement.



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