



Summary of the Members' Memo: Cotton Australia General Meeting Tuesday 18 November 2025 – Coogee

The Members' Memo provides a record of the General Meeting for Cotton Grower Associations (CGAs) and individual growers, summarising Cotton Australia activities, policy initiatives, and regional input from growers.

COTTON AUSTRALIA UPDATES – Adam Kay, CEO

Adam Kay provided an overview of the latest Current & Future Activities document, highlighting a number of initiatives including:

- Dinner with NSW opposition and ongoing engagement with state and federal politicians.
- Discontinuation of Cotton Collective; the biennial Cotton Conference and Australian Cotton Industry Awards will continue. Grower of the Year field day will be the major event in alternate years.

ROADMAP UPDATE – Brooke Summers & Liz Stott

Feedback from the Roadshow:

- Value proposition and messaging need to be clear and simple; initiatives should reduce duplication and effort. Define ROI for growers, including market access, social licence, and potential premiums. Explore external funding and data monetisation.
- myBMP: valued for compliance and best practice, needs updating and market alignment.
- Traceability: strong grower interest; costs and implementation need careful planning.
- CRDC Data Platform: concerns about data privacy and paperwork.
- Human Rights: initial scepticism shifted to recognition of industry opportunity.

CGA REGIONAL UPDATES

Northern Growers – Whitney Dollemore

- **Area:** 5,000–6,000 ha
- **Challenges:** Irrigation efficiency, financial analysis not reflecting true costs, lack of technical expertise locally, distance from services.
- **Policy/Advocacy Needs:** Promote cotton in northern Australia; broader community engagement.

Dawson Valley – Renee Surawski for Andrew French

- **Area:** Irrigated 8,500 ha, Dryland 500 ha
- **Challenges:** P&D sheet values not favouring growers, low seedling vigour, soil-borne pests.

Southern Valleys – Sam Ryan

- **Area:** 10,000 ha Lachlan, 25,000 ha Murrumbidgee/Murray



- **Challenges:** Water availability reduced production area; seed quality and establishment concerns; Black Root Rot persists.
- **Policy/Advocacy Needs:** More corporate governance training for CGA executives; water advocacy.

Macquarie Valley – Mel Swift for Richie Quigley

- **Area:** 28,600 ha irrigated, 741 ha dryland
- **Challenges:** Water access and buybacks; spray drift.
- **Policy/Advocacy Needs:** Spray drift, paraquat/access issues.

Lower Namoi – Nathan Hamblin

- **Area:** Irrigated 35,000 ha, Dryland 20,000 ha
- **Challenges:** Low commodity prices, seedling vigour.
- **Policy/Advocacy Needs:** Water buybacks.

Walgett – Lachie Holz

- **Area:** Walgett 14,600 ha irrigated, 2,000 ha dryland; Bourke 9,000 ha irrigated
- **Challenges:** Rising Verticillium, low cool germ seed, high input costs, seed and chemical availability.
- **Policy/Advocacy Needs:** Seed supply competition.

St George – Scott Balsillie

- **Area:** 20,000 ha irrigated
- **Challenges:** Operating without a CA Regional Manager, low cotton prices.
- **Policy/Advocacy Needs:** Appointment of a Regional Manager.

Darling Downs – Tyson Armitage

- **Area:** 35,000 ha irrigated, 7,500 ha dryland
- **Challenges:** Replanting due to rain/herbicide damage; staffing; technology adoption cost.
- **Policy/Advocacy Needs:** Overland flow regulation, electricity tariffs, SunWater pricing.

Central Highlands – Matt Anning

- **Area:** Irrigated 9,853 ha, Dryland 4,800–6,500 ha
- **Challenges:** Water security, staffing, crop planning.
- **Policy/Advocacy Needs:** Forward selling impact study, chemical regulation updates, natural fibre promotion.



Dirranbandi – Scott Balsillie

- **Area:** 11,940 ha irrigated (<40% capacity)
- **Challenges:** pig control.
- **Policy/Advocacy Needs:** Regional Manager support.

Mungindi – Ben Warby

- **Area:** 15,000 ha irrigated, 10,000 ha dryland
- **Recent Wins:** Mungindi golf day raised \$30,000 for community, fingerling release funded.
- **Challenges:** Seed-focused agronomy needed for improved planting stock.
- **Policy/Advocacy Needs:** Local support for a new Regional Manager.

Macintyre Valley – Grace Griffiths

- **Area:** 30,000 ha irrigated, 6–8,000 ha dryland (weather dependent)
- **Challenges:** Poor communication on sustainability/data initiatives from CA and CRDC; advocacy gaps (fuel, fertiliser, childcare, water).
- **Policy/Advocacy Needs:** Industry campaigns promoting natural fibres needs consideration.

Gwydir – Peter Winter

- **Area:** 47,000 ha irrigated, 26,000 ha dryland (limited planting)
- **Challenges:** Root diseases, thrips, windy conditions.
- **Policy/Advocacy Needs:** IPART pricing, APVMA processes, technology adoption.

Upper Namoi – Duncan Hill

- **Area:** 17,000 ha irrigated, 7,500 ha dryland (up to 14,000 green)
- **Challenges:** Low-density seed germination, variable thrip pressure.
- **Policy/Advocacy Needs:** Telecommunications infrastructure; corporate governance training.

TRAINING AND SKILLS – Paul Stoman, Policy Officer

- **Future Cotton Leaders** applications closing Friday 28 November.
- **SmartAg Qld** widely adopted; **AgSkilled NSW** uptake only 2% despite \$5M funding.
- Training needs: accredited picker training, audiometric testing compliance, forklift, corporate governance, chemical application, ChemCert, first aid, drone pilot, truck licenses, telehandlers.



COTTON 2 MARKET – Ashley Hollis

- 95% increase in Australian Cotton Mark applications; 34 million items this year, aiming for 75 million by year end. New brand partners have come on board.
- Camp Cotton 2026 planned with 25 local and 25 international brand representatives.
- Brand survey: value placed on quality, Australian grown, sustainability; price remains biggest barrier; traceability, environment, and human rights important.

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE – Desley Sheedy

- World Cotton Day 2026 reached 30% more people than 2025, strong engagement on traditional media, brand posts, TikTok.
- Trust in Australian Cotton research (conducted every two years) currently underway.

General Meeting Next Steps:

- Follow-up on CGA-raised issues through the year and at the next General Meeting.
- Continue CGA engagement on traceability, sustainability, research, water, and training.

Read the [Full Members Memo from the November 2025 General Meeting](#).