



Media Release

29/01/19

2019 Australian Cotton Industry Awards to celebrate resilience and innovation

Nominations have opened for the 2019 Australian Cotton Industry Awards, which recognise excellence and high achievement throughout the cotton supply chain.

The Awards are an annual event and recognise the hard work of the industry's high achievers.

Cotton Australia CEO Adam Kay says the Awards highlight the industry's strength.

"The Australian Cotton Industry Awards celebrate our industry's achievements and acknowledge the tremendous commitment, hard work and innovation of people throughout the cotton supply chain," Mr Kay says.

"The Awards provide a great opportunity for us all to learn from our industry's leaders, both in good times and bad. With the ongoing drought, I know many of us are keen to see how others in the industry have responded to the challenging conditions."

"The cotton industry has continued to prove itself to be an adaptable and resilient sector. Through the Awards program we can learn how growers, product suppliers, agronomists and others have adapted, innovated and improved what they do. Learning that knowledge is beneficial for us all."

"I encourage everyone in our industry to go online and nominate those they believe deserve recognition."

Chairman of the Australian Cotton Industry Awards Taskforce Geoff McIntyre says the Awards are a highlight of the year for the industry.

"The Awards night is a terrific opportunity to come together and celebrate excellence, reconnect with friends from across the industry and share knowledge and innovative ideas," he says.

"That sharing of knowledge will see all of us come out of this drought stronger and even more resilient than before."

The categories for the 2019 Australian Cotton Industry Awards are:

- **Bayer** *Grower of the Year*
- **AgriRisk** *High Achiever of the Year*
- **ADAMA** *Chris Lehmann Trust Young Cotton Achiever of the Year*
- **Cotton Seed Distributors** *Researcher of the Year*
- **IPF** *Service to Industry Award*

The 2019 Australian Cotton Industry Awards will be held in Griffith, NSW on July 24th 2019, in conjunction with the Australian Cotton Collective.

Adam Kay says the support of the Awards program's sponsors has been invaluable.

"We are grateful for the ongoing support and sponsorship of the Awards from ADAMA, AgriRisk, Bayer, Cotton Australia, Cotton Seed Distributors, Incitec Pivot Fertilisers (IPF)," Mr Kay says.

"This event is a great way for the industry to celebrate its successes and learn for the future, and our sponsors play such a big role in making that a reality."

Individuals and teams can nominate others, or themselves, for the 2019 Australian Cotton Industry Awards through the online nomination form at www.australiancottonawards.com. Nominations close at 5pm on March 31st 2019.

The 2018 Australian Cotton Industry Awards recipients were:

- **Bayer Grower of the Year:** Grower of the Year: Brett Corish, Corish Management Pty Ltd, 'Mundine'. Goondiwindi, QLD
- **AgriRisk High Achiever of the Year:** Bernie Bierhoff, Farm Manager at Avondale Ag, Rowena, NSW
- **ADAMA Chris Lehmann Trust Young Cotton Achiever of the Year:** William Back, Auscott Ltd, Narrabri, NSW
- **Cotton Seed Distributors Researcher of the Year:** Dr Joseph Foley, Dr Malcolm Gillies and Dr Alison McCarthy, University of Southern QLD, Toowoomba, QLD
- **IPF Service to Industry Award:** David Montgomery, Moree, NSW

The 2018 Grower of the Year Field Day will be held in the Macintyre Valley on March 20th, 2019.

Note: biographies of the 2018 Grower of the Year Award recipients follow. High-resolution images are available upon request.

Cotton Australia is the peak representative body for Australia's cotton growing industry.

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SHORT BIOGRAPHIES - 2018 AUSTRALIAN COTTON INDUSTRY AWARDS RECIPIENTS

2018 Monsanto Grower of the Year

Brett Corish, Corish Management Pty Ltd, 'Mundine', Goondiwindi, QLD

Brett grew up on a farm in Queensland, which he today farms. The property is approximately 10,000 hectares in size, comprised of 2000 hectares of developed country, 2500 hectares of dry-land farming and the balance grazing and bushland. Brett planted 800 hectares of fully irrigated cotton for the 2016-2017 season, seeing an average yield of 12.8 bales to the hectare. Mundine's water allocation comes solely from the nearby Macintyre River, and it implements several different types of irrigation systems. Brett is passionate about ensuring that the business is sustainable moving forward, so that it may be able to be passed on to future generations.

2018 AgriRisk High Achiever of the Year

Bernie Bierhoff, Farm Manager at Avondale Ag, Rowena, NSW

Having managed Avondale Ag for more than a decade, Bernie Bierhoff knows his way around a cotton farm. A family owned and run business, Avondale Ag is fully irrigated with flood irrigation on its irrigation country. The procedures that Bernie has put into place on the property ensures that water can be moved around cost effectively and efficiently, which in turn helps the business achieve consistent yields. Bernie is actively involved in his local community, in the thick of fundraising efforts for the local school through Avondale Ag as well as working closely with the Walgett Cotton Growers Association. Bernie is committed to farming for the future, looking after the soils for the next generation.

2018 Chris Lehmann Trust Young Cotton Achiever of the Year, sponsored by Bayer CropScience

William Back, Auscott Ltd, Narrabri, NSW

William is an experienced agronomist who has recently taken on the role as manager of Auscott Ltd Narrabri's significant farming operation. He is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the 9,000 hectare cotton farm, enjoying the support of Auscott Ltd to pursue his desire to be at the forefront of cotton development. William has been involved in various on-farm programs that are making important contributions to the constant improvement and management of cotton, such as running trials in cooperation with other researchers and organisations.

2018 Cotton Seed Distributors Researcher of the Year

Dr Joseph Foley, Dr Malcolm Gillies and Dr Alison McCarthy, University of Southern QLD, Toowoomba, QLD

The University of Southern Queensland's National Centre for Engineering in Agriculture smart automated irrigation team is made up of Dr Joseph Foley, Dr Allison McCarthy and Dr Malcolm Gillies. The team's most recent work has drawn upon many technological developments in irrigation management, measurement, and control for application in cotton irrigation systems. The team has brought engineering expertise and knowledge to the cotton industry in a number of areas, such as in-field irrigation and water management skills, as well as software and instrumentation development for irrigation improvement.

2018 IPF Service to Industry Award

David Montgomery, Moree, NSW

Leaving Ireland at just 19, David Montgomery drove his war-time Jeep from London to Calcutta in his pursuit building a life in Australia. Arriving in Darwin in 1962, he found a job that same day. With dreams and a vision for the future, David hitchhiked to Moree where he has lived ever since. This stamina, determination and courage have been the secrets of David's success as a cotton grower, marketer and industry visionary who has dedicated more than 30 years to advancing the Australian cotton industry.

Planting his first crop of cotton in 1979, David went on to grow cotton in Emerald, the Darling Downs, Gwydir and Murrumbidgee regions. Having amassed a wealth of experience, knowledge

and perspective about the industry, David was instrumental in establishing the Dunavant Australia ginning and marketing business here in 1984, steering its development as Chief Executive Officer until 2002. It was David's foresight that saw the introduction of marketing options such as forward contracts for growers, something that went on to become standard practice in the cotton industry.

Founding and contributing to a number of cotton industry organisations, David was a Board Member and Chairman of the Australian Cotton Shippers Association, Director of Cotton Australia and played a key role at the Australian Cotton Industry Council, firstly as Deputy Chairman, then Chairman.