



MEDIA STATEMENT

***** EMBARGOED UNTIL 10am 16th June 2021 *****

Ground Breaking Trial Returning Cotton Textile Waste to Cotton Fields Launched in Goondiwindi, Queensland

A cotton farm just outside the rural town of Goondiwindi Queensland is the site of a ground breaking trial to test whether shredded cotton products could offer benefits to cotton soil health, and a scalable solution to textile waste.

The project, under the guidance of circular economy specialists Coreo, is a partnership between the Queensland Government, Goondiwindi Cotton, Sheridan, Cotton Australia, Worn Up and Cotton Research and Development Corporation-supported soil scientist Dr Oliver Knox of UNE.

Around two tonnes of cotton textiles, garments and end-of-life State Emergency Service coveralls have been processed at Worn Up in Sydney, transported to “Alcheringa” farm, and spread onto a cotton field by local farmer, Sam Coulton.

It is hoped the fabrics will break down in the soil, increase microbial activity, lock in carbon and provide cover to improve soil moisture. Projections show [2,250kg of Carbon Dioxide equivalents \(CO₂e\)](#) into the atmosphere will be mitigated through the breakdown of these garments in soil, rather than going to landfill.

“Returning cotton garments to the farms on which they began would completely close the loop on a cotton product, providing a win for brands, retailers and consumers looking for circular solutions, and a possible benefit to our farmers, their soils and the planet. It’s very exciting,” said Brooke Summers from Cotton Australia.

The trial will be completed by cotton harvest in early 2022, with initial results expected shortly after.

“We need to get smarter about how we reduce and manage waste. The potential to divert clothing from landfill, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and potentially feed our soils could help deliver more sustainable practices in multiple sectors,” said Dr Oliver Knox.

Textile waste is a major problem for communities and supply chains globally, with the latest Australian estimate showing approximately 85% of apparel is sent to landfill at end of life.

Farmer Sam Coulton said being part of the solution is very positive.

“We grow it here and we should be able to bury it here with positive environmental and economic impact on the local community.”

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GOONDIWINDI
Cotton



WORN UP



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EST. 1967