



COTTON
AUSTRALIA



CURRENT AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

DECEMBER 2023



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

- Strong advocacy on Murray-Darling Basin Plan Act. Cotton Australia will continue to advocate in the best interests of our rural communities to guard against any economic impact.
- Advocacy in Coal Seam Gas space, particularly in the area of managing the risk of subsidence.

1.2 PARTNER FOR IMPACT

- Working closely with National Farmers Federation, National Irrigators Council and NSW Irrigators' Council and other groups in advocating on the Basin Plan amendments
- A group of cotton sustainability certifications established to provide a united voice on common issues and challenges, met in London in October. The group includes Better Cotton, the US Trust Protocol, Fairtrade, Organic Cotton Accelerator, Cotton Connect, Supima and myBMP.
- Queensland government dinner to advocate to key cabinet members.
- Delivered a series of Australia-India Cotton Collaboration webinars and dialogue.

1.3 ENGAGE POLICY MAKERS

- Lobbying Government policy makers on CA's members current and future energy needs, plus the importance of protecting high value agricultural land in the following policy forums:
 - NSW Energy Infrastructure Roadmap Consumer Reference Group –access to affordable energy, being part of the energy solution and protecting high value agricultural land in the Renewable Energy Zones.
 - NSW Hydrogen Map implementation team, making connections and introducing them to Uni of Southern Queensland's Centre for Agricultural Engineering.
 - Gasfields Commission Qld regarding CSG in the Surat Basin and sustainable coexistence of landholders; attending Community Leaders Forum and membership of Stakeholders Forum

1.4 DRIVE DEMAND

- A ten-fold increase in the number of [products carrying the Australian cotton mark](#) compared to 2022.
- \$200,000 traceability grant secured from Qld Government to investigate and test options.

1.5 INFLUENCE GLOBAL LANDSCAPE

- [Export Market Development trip to Turkey](#) (with ACSA), and [attendance at Textile Exchange Conference in London](#) to advocate for Australian cotton and farmers (ATMAC funded).

2.1 CAPTURE RELEVANT DATA

- Data Dashboard tested and ready to launch with relevant industry data

2.3 SHOWCASE RESPONSIBILITY

- EKKA: Nine days of building awareness and trust with the public and officials who attended one of the best attended EKKA's ever.
- Delivered a campaign for World Cotton Day to engage with brands and consumers.
- Worked to support NT growers by generating positive media coverage about the opening of the Katherine Cotton Gin and the growing NT cotton industry.

2.5 PURSUE "HERE FOR GOOD" PROJECTS

- The Landcare Australia and Country Road [Biodiversity Project](#) reached the three year mark and announced an extension for a further three years project funding.



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

- 4th Environmental Assessment Report received from GHD and whole-of industry-response drafted for review by Cotton Australia and CRDC Boards.

3.2 RESTRUCTURE SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM

- Consulting with the 11 CGAs in traditional cotton growing areas about a draft approach to the Biodiversity indicator of the sustainability framework PLANET. PEOPLE. PADDOCK and tabling the feedback from 96 growers at the November General meeting.

3.3 ACHIEVE GLOBALLY RECOGNISED IMPACT

- [2022 Sustainability Report Annual Update released](#)

3.4 ACCELERATE GROWER UPTAKE

- Cotton Australia received funding from Better Cotton (Growth and Innovation Fund) to employ Mel Swift as myBMP implementation officer to drive uptake of the myBMP accreditation.

3.5 BE A SUSTAINABILITY THOUGHT LEADER

- Cotton industry represented in the Australian Agriculture Sustainability Framework (AASF) Community of Practice and invited as an industry leader to showcase Natural and Social Capital reporting concept and share with CSIRO myBMP's data tracking



LEADERSHIP

Foster Industry Capacity, Collaboration and Resilience

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4.1 GUIDE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Cotton Australian General Meeting (in November) provided direct feedback from growers and CGA to CRDC on research priorities.

4.2 CELEBRATE INDUSTRY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Cotton Industry Award winners announced at the Cotton Collective event in Toowoomba. The 2023 Bayer Cotton Growers of the year are Johannes and Scarlett Roellgen from Tyunga Farms, Brookstead on the Darling Downs with Daniel Skerman, representing Skerman Farms at Dalby, taking out the AgriRisk High Achiever award.

4.3 FOSTER INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP & GRASSROOTS PARTICIPATION

- Applications open for Future Cotton Leaders 2024 program.
- Nominations received for the Australian Rural Leadership Program (ARLP) and Nuffield Fellowships.

4.4 DEVELOP WORKFORCE EDUCATION & TRAINING

- NSW Dept. Of Education STEM Conference: With over 600 STEM teachers in attendance, this was a perfect forum to showcase cotton as the context of STEM projects in the classroom.
- [AgCAREERSTART](#): Very successful second year of the ag gap year program with 12 placements on farm and we are calling on growers to apply for 2024.
- Through Cotton Australia's position on the QLD Workforce Strategy Round-table, we have been integral in developing the TAFE QLD Micro credentials which will deliver specific agricultural workforce training under the pillars of:
 - Work Skills e.g. tractor operation and maintenance
 - Digital Skills - Digital technologies in agriculture
 - Technology Skills – Work safely fundamentals
- Cotton Australia has secured [\\$168 K to deliver Cotton Picker Operation Essentials](#) under the QLD governments micro credential program

4.5 ENHANCE BIOSECURITY AND STEWARDSHIP

- Launch of the spray drift app for cotton growers. Spray drift campaign through traditional media and social media to raise awareness and prevent drift.



Credibly enhance the industry's reputation among all stakeholders

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2.1 CAPTURE RELEVANT DATA

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GOVERNANCE

Structure, govern and fund Cotton Australia effectively

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5.1 OPTIMISE LEVY PAYMENTS

- Over 80% of growers paid the Cotton Australia Levy last season, equating to over 70% of bales produced. The Cotton Australia Board thanks the full levy paying growers.

5.2 BUILD FUNDING RESILIENCE

- Cotton Australia has secured \$3 Million to deliver SmartAg QLD. This industry-led workforce training proposal was developed utilising the positive outcomes of AgSkilled.
- Farm Safety Education Fund – Improving Farm Safety on Cotton Farms (Federal Funding of \$156,510) to be delivered by Housepaddock Training and Consulting.
- Farm Business Resilience Programme funding \$225,000 of Federal/State Funding (Sub-contract with QFF) –
- Qld Cotton Picker Training Workshops (Qld Funding) - \$168,000 to deliver 10 Cotton Picker Essentials workshops across Qld.
- Energy Efficiency Rebates for Queensland Farms and Businesses. A QFF project we are supporting.
- Cotton Australia (in conjunction with the Australian Cotton Shippers Association) secured further funding from the Agricultural Trade and Market Access Cooperation (ATMAC)

5.3 STRUCTURE TO ADD VALUE

- Two new Board members elected at the Cotton Australia AGM - Bruce Connolly, NT and April Cavanagh < Qld.

5.4 ALIGN RESOURCES

- Launch of the Strategic Plan 2023-2028 aims to advance the Australian cotton industry, identify opportunities for improvement that drive progress and create value for all stakeholders, prioritise those and appropriately resource them to realise the opportunities.

5.5 PROACTIVELY MANAGE RISKS

- Established renewed Industry-wide Trust and Risk Management Strategies.
- Appointment of Simone Cameron, Senior Policy Adviser to manage emerging risk in Northern Australia



FUTURE ACTIVITIES AND ONGOING ISSUES

ADVOCACY

- Continue advocacy related to Coal Seam Gas, in particular in the area of managing the risk of subsidence.
- Continue to engage key Ministers to advocate for changes to the Murray-Darling Basin Plan
- Advocate to Government policy makers to support CA members current and future energy needs, plus the importance of protecting high value agricultural land.
- Deliver the Camp Cotton brand focused event in May 2024.
- Begin work investigating options for implementing a grant funded traceability solution and test options.
- Continue to promote spray drift awareness through campaigns and industry partnerships.
- Continue advocating for APVMA to make 'Neighbour notification needed' mandatory on select pesticide labels.
- Continue advocating for more tariff free quota under the India free trade agreement,

TRUST

- Begin delivery on a community focused digital trust campaign that shares the positive story of the Australian Cotton industry.
- Launch the industry Data Dashboard.
- Showcase sustainability and innovation at the Sydney Royal Easter Show.
- Ongoing indigenous engagement to foster positive relationships and develop trust in the Australian Cotton Industry, particularly in the Northern Territory.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES AND ONGOING ISSUES

SUSTAINABILITY

- Progress the proposed Roadmap and gain approval from the CA, CRDC and ACSA Boards.
- Engage media and industry around the 4th Environmental Assessment Report.
- Further engage with CGA areas about a draft approach to the Biodiversity indicator.
- Continue to collaborate with CRDC and brand partners on the [Circularity Project](#).
- Continue to showcase the Australian Cotton Industry's sustainability framework by starting work on the 3rd five-yearly PEOPLE. PLANET. PADDOCK report; and the refinement of carbon and biodiversity indicators.

LEADERSHIP

- Support the delivery of Grower of the Year Field Day in March on the Darling Downs.
- Coordinate the delivery of the 2024 Cotton Conference.
- Deliver the 2024 Future Cotton Leaders Program.
- Continue to engage with growers on biosecurity to better empower our members with training and support.
- Continue to run Teach the Teacher events in cotton growing valleys to inspire teachers to incorporate cotton into their classroom.
- Ongoing education and awareness campaigns to fight spray drift.

GOVERNANCE

- Develop a framework for engagement and risk management for the Northern Australia cotton industry



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