



ANNUAL REPORT
2018-19

TOGETHER
WE GROW





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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The last year has been a challenging one for our industry, with drought and politically-motivated attacks significantly impacting us all. However, despite the challenges, we have united and strengthened our collective resolve.

I want to acknowledge that while many have struggled over the last year, it is because of our resilience, innovation and adaptability that we have grown a crop in the face of drought, albeit significantly reduced in size compared to previous seasons.

I am pleased to report Cotton Australia has recorded many successes this year which align with our Strategic Plan pillars of ensuring our industry is valued, viable and advanced.

In the water policy space, our advocacy contributed to key amendments to the Murray-Darling Basin Plan being finalised. The passing of these amendments were crucial in order for the Plan to achieve its triple bottom line goals and not induce negative social, environmental, and economic impacts.

There was good news for growers regarding telecommunications this year, with our collaborative approach to advocacy across agricultural industries securing many key achievements. The acknowledgement from federal politicians that more needed to be done to boost rural connectivity was a positive step forward, and we will continue to work with parliamentarians to ensure their promised action on the issue is meaningful and effective.

This year Cotton Australia also secured wins for our growers regarding energy, particularly around advocating for a fairer deal for growers when it comes to electricity costs and tariffs. This work will continue, as will our advocacy around the diesel fuel rebate.

A key area of work for Cotton Australia this year was around securing an important Memorandum of Understanding with the cattle industry for gin trash supplied from approved gins to be used as stock feed. This was an important win for both our industry and livestock farmers, especially during times of drought when feed is reduced.

Our commitment to building the capacity of our growers through training and leadership programs saw exciting goals achieved this year. In particular, our new Cotton20

Leadership Program commenced and will strengthen our industry by fostering a passionate and dedicated group of advocates.

Our Cotton to Market team continued to deliver value for our growers through its work connecting with a record number of brands and assisting them on their journey of using Australian cotton in their products. These connections mean increasing numbers of consumers are being provided the opportunity to wear our world-leading fibre.

Cotton Australia's work would not be possible without the support of our levy payers. Thank you to all those who contributed to the funding of Cotton Australia this past year; without your contribution, the organisation would not have been able to achieve all it has for our industry.

I would also like to thank those growers who, as member representatives of their CGAs, took the time to attend Cotton Australia's general meetings, provided feedback on the organisation's activities, and helped shape the industry's research direction.

Our organisation's financial statement can be found at the end of this Annual Report. With our financial position being strong, the Board decided to retain the voluntary levy fee at \$1.50 per bale for the coming season – unchanged on last year.

I would like to thank my fellow Board members, CEO Adam Kay, and staff for their efforts during what has been a testing year for our industry. Without drought-breaking rain, significant challenges lie ahead; but I am confident the organisation and industry will get through this period stronger than ever.

I wish you all the best for the next season, and I look forward to working with you over the coming year to continue building a stronger Australian cotton industry.



Hamish McIntyre
Chairman, Cotton Australia



CEO'S REPORT

I am proud to report that your organisation has achieved significant results this year, despite what has been a challenging period for our industry.

Our team worked tirelessly across all our key areas, including policy, communications, education, stewardship, myBMP, Cotton to Market, and workforce, to ensure your voice was heard and meaningful results were achieved for our industry.

Our work to achieve our key strategic goals also involved collaborating with our industry's allies, including the National Farmers' Federation, the National Irrigators' Council and the NSW Irrigators' Council, to guarantee our industry was well positioned and decision makers were educated about what we do and why we do it.

I'm pleased to report the numbers of growers now engaged in myBMP has risen to 80%, which is a wonderful achievement for our industry, and demonstrates our collective commitment to best practice and operating at a high level.

In the face of a heated national debate, our communications team worked hard to meet with key political and media stakeholders and proactively defended our industry and shared our story across digital platforms and the media. While the debate was robust, our industry's voice was prominently heard at a national level, and our team will continue to publicly advocate for our growers where appropriate.

The 2018 Australian Cotton Conference was a particular highlight of the year, with a record number of delegates attending. The calibre of the speakers was high and the conference provided a valuable opportunity for thought-provoking conversations about how our industry can continue to adapt, grow and strengthen over the coming years.

I would like to thank all those growers who attended Cotton Australia's general meetings this year as representatives of our member organisations. Receiving input from our growers, particularly in guiding our industry's research and development priorities, is essential in ensuring the voices of those on the land are properly heard.

Detailed in this Annual Report are Cotton Australia's key achievements from the past year. Our team worked hard to advocate for our industry, and I thank them for their work this last year to ensure your voice was heard. After a year where we have battled through crippling drought and defended ourselves from countless political attacks, there is still much work to be done to ensure our industry is understood and valued by all Australians.

All the best for the coming season, and I look forward to working with you all to ensure our industry remains strong now and into the future.



Adam Kay
Chief Executive Officer

ABOUT COTTON AUSTRALIA

Cotton Australia is the peak body for Australia's cotton growers, supporting up to 1,400 cotton farming families in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria. The organisation strives to foster a world-class agricultural industry that's sustainable, valued for its economic and social contributions, and produces very high quality cotton in demand around the world.

Cotton Australia exists for its growers. Its resources, human and financial, are directed to initiatives and programs that benefit cotton producers directly and indirectly.

For more than 40 years, Cotton Australia has grown alongside an industry that demands the highest standards, and during that time has delivered a series of sustained wins for its growers.

Cotton Australia was established in 1972 (as the Australian Cotton Foundation) and in 2009 merged with the Australian

Cotton Growers Research Association (also established in 1972). Led by a Board of up to 10 mostly cotton growers, the organisation is funded by a voluntary levy paid by growers on each bale of cotton produced.

Cotton Australia provides a united voice for cotton growers across research and development, stewardship, natural resource management, biosecurity, and cotton production issues such as water. This is achieved through policy and advocacy, education, communication and grower services.

Cotton Australia has offices in Sydney, Narrabri, Toowoomba and Brisbane, and part-time field staff based in most cotton production regions. The activities of the Board and staff are directed by an Annual Operating Plan, underpinned by the organisation's 2018-23 Strategic Plan that sets out priorities and core areas of business.

THANK YOU TO OUR LEVY PAYERS

Cotton Australia's success and effectiveness is only possible with the support of our levy payers.

To those growers that contributed the full Cotton Australia levy for the 2017-18 year, we thank you for your continued support.

To view a full list of Cotton Australia levy payers, please visit: www.cottonaustralia.com.au/about/our-levy-payers

2018-19

A SNAPSHOT OF COTTON AUSTRALIA'S
ACHIEVEMENTS OVER THIS PAST YEAR



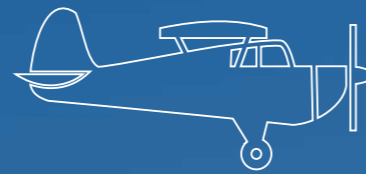
DEFENCE OF INDUSTRY CAMPAIGN

Strongly and robustly defended our industry from politically-motivated attacks.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Increased our Facebook following by 52%, and our Twitter following by 17%.



SPRAY DRIFT

Led a targeted, multi-industry awareness campaign, which saw reduced spray drift incidents reported.



EDUCATION

Effectively engaged with teachers and students about Australian cotton through events, curriculum resources and scholarships.



R&D

Helped guide the investment of \$24.3 million in RD&E funding across 300 research and development projects.



TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Secured results for growers through united advocacy with other agricultural groups.



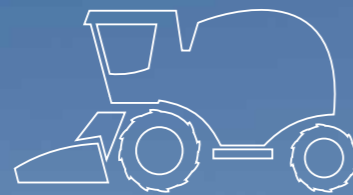
WORKFORCE

Boosted workforce capacity through the provision of training initiatives and targeted advocacy.



ENERGY

Secured fairer deals for growers around electricity costs and tariffs.



BETTER COTTON INITIATIVE

Worked to secure additional returns for growers producing BCI cotton.



COTTON TO MARKET

Strengthened relationships with key brands and retailers, and raised the profile of Australian cotton internationally.



COTTON CONFERENCE

Convened the largest ever Australian Cotton Conference.



GROWTH IN MYBMP ENGAGEMENT

Grew participation rates in myBMP to 80% of all Australian cotton growers.



Grower: Andrew Dickson – Warren

WATER SECURITY

DEFENDING OUR INDUSTRY FROM ATTACKS AROUND WATER MANAGEMENT

In the face of challenges such as drought and public attacks on our industry, Cotton Australia continued to achieve for its growers in the water policy space.

- Crop significantly reduced in 2018-19 due to drought.
- Industry defends itself from attacks over water use.
- Key adjustments to the Murray-Darling Basin Plan become law.

The last year saw our industry endure one of the most difficult periods in its history.

But despite the challenges, Cotton Australia has worked hard to defend our industry from public attacks and ensure we are well positioned to manage the crippling effects of drought.

NATIONAL DEBATE ERUPTS OVER WATER MANAGEMENT

In January 2019, the combination of extreme drought, high temperatures and a deoxygenating algal bloom led to a major fish death event at Menindee in far west New South Wales.

The sight of hundreds of thousands of dead fish was devastating and sparked a heated national debate around who was to blame for the ecological disaster. Across social and traditional media, our industry was unfairly the focus of many people's anger for allegedly causing the fish deaths because of our water use. The vitriolic debate was exacerbated by the politicising of the issue in the lead-up to the NSW and federal elections.

One federal senator from South Australia, a state where no cotton is grown, launched a dangerous political attack on our industry, growers and rural communities by introducing legislation to ban the export of cotton from Australia. We strongly condemned this move and passionately advocated for our industry in the face of such hostility.

Cotton Australia proactively and strongly defended our industry through traditional media appearances, producing captivating social media content, and engaging with key stakeholders and decision makers.

The pressure on our industry in the months following the fish deaths was relentless, and our efforts to educate about our industry, how water allocations work, and how cotton can be produced during a drought will continue.

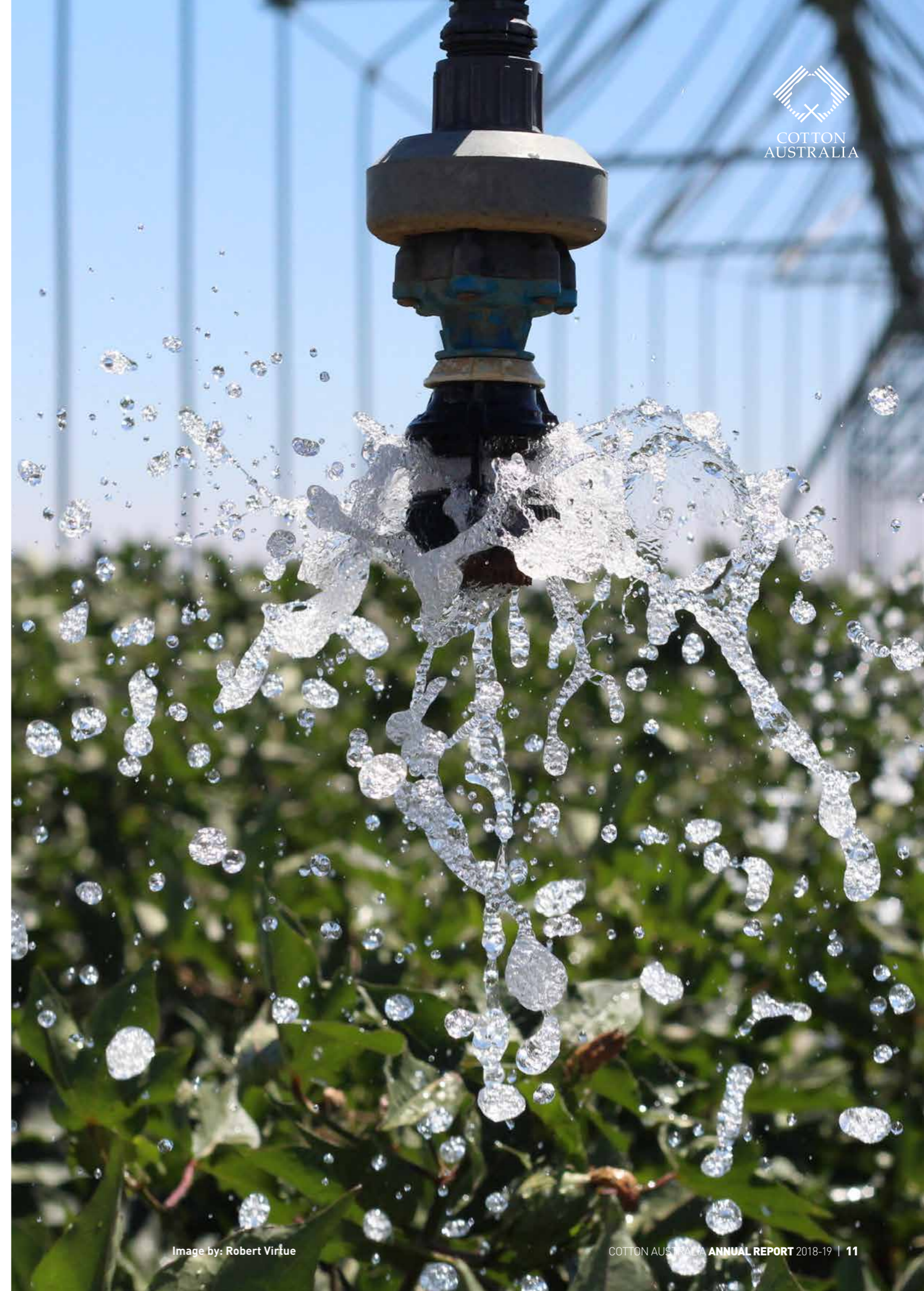
...despite the challenges, Cotton Australia has worked hard to defend our industry...

DROUGHT

Over the past year, the devastating effects of drought were increasingly felt by our industry. The 2017-18 period saw either no new, or very limited, surface water allocations across most valleys.

However, with water reserves then mostly expended, the 2018-19 crop was reduced by more than 50%. In 2017/18, 371,000 hectares of irrigated cotton and 154,000 hectares of dryland cotton was grown. In 2018/19, only 200,000 hectares of irrigated cotton and 180,000 hectares of dryland cotton was grown.

At the time of publication, the situation was such that if there was no significant rainfall over the mid-to-late months of 2019, our growers would face the harsh reality of a further reduced crop next season.





MURRAY-DARLING BASIN PLAN DEVELOPMENTS

Throughout the year, Cotton Australia helped to secure many key achievements in the water policy space.

Our advocacy around the key amendments to the Murray-Darling Basin Plan brought wins for our growers.

- In May 2018, the 605GL Sustainable Adjustment Mechanism passed Federal Parliament, allowing for a potential 605GL reduction in water recovery under the Basin Plan, provided that a number of projects deliver the equivalent in environmental outcomes.
- In September 2018, the 70GL reduction in water recovery for the Northern Basin was finalised.
- Cotton Australia actively advocated the industry's position that the Basin Plan be implemented in full, as it was written in 2012 and agreed to at the December 2018 Ministerial Council Meeting. That is, recovery targets should be adjusted in accordance with the Sustainable Adjustment Mechanism, the Northern Review and the 450GL of 'upwater', with any additional required water recovery achieved in a manner that minimises social and economic impacts.
- Cotton Australia will continue to push for increased government action in the funding of complementary recovery measures, which will help optimise environmental outcomes from the available water pool.
- Cotton Australia, along with the Queensland Farmers' Federation and Central Downs Irrigators Limited, actively worked with the Federal and Queensland governments to ensure the Central Downs Condamine Alluvium Murray-Darling Basin Plan water recovery targets were met in a manner that minimised impacts on third-parties.



WATER COMPLIANCE REFORMS WELCOMED

Reform around water compliance was an important step forward in improving the operations of irrigation industries, and in building trust among the public that irrigators are abiding by the law.

Cotton Australia overwhelmingly supported the majority of the water reform initiatives undertaken by the NSW Government to ensure greater transparency and compliance, and actively encourages a similar approach be taken in Queensland.

Cotton Australia, and cotton growers, have a zero-tolerance approach to water theft, and we will continue to advocate for effective and cost-effective water compliance reforms.



ADVOCATING IN NATIONAL DEBATES

While our industry faced sustained pressure this year, Cotton Australia steadfastly defended and advocated for our growers in key studies and policy activities.

Some of the formal submissions we made over the last year around water included to the South Australian Royal Commission into the management of the Murray-Darling Basin, the Vertessy Report into the Menindee fish deaths, the politically-motivated Export Control Amendment (Banning Cotton Exports to Ensure Water Security) Bill 2019, and the NSW water reform process.

TRANSITIONS TO LOCAL WATER MANAGEMENT A WIN FOR INDUSTRY

Cotton Australia congratulated Mallowa Water (the former Sunwater St George Channel Scheme) on becoming the first Queensland scheme to transition to local management and ownership in July 2018.

Theodore Water followed a similar track in October 2018, and it was expected that Fairbairn Irrigation would transition to local management in mid-2019.

Cotton Australia congratulated the schemes, their members and local boards for driving the change.



CHANGES TO TEMPORARY WATER ACCESS IN QUEENSLAND WELCOMED

In late 2018, the Queensland Government announced changes to the Water Act to allow irrigators to temporarily access water set aside in the state's Strategic Infrastructure Water Reserves.

That water was largely set aside for dam projects that may be built in the future.

The move was a positive development for irrigators and was welcomed by Cotton Australia.

OUR THANKS

Cotton Australia works closely with a range of other irrigation groups to affect positive change. This year we were active members of the National Irrigators' Council, the National Farmers' Federation's Water Taskforce, Queensland Farmers' Federation, and NSW Irrigators' Council, and we also worked closely with a large number of valley-based irrigation groups across our growing regions.

We thank all of the above groups, along with the individuals, local governments and community groups that recognise the importance of irrigated agriculture, and who advocate on behalf of their industry and communities.



Grower: Tony Quigley – Trangie

SPRAY DRIFT

BOOSTING AWARENESS OF SPRAYING BEST PRACTICE, FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL GROWERS AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS.

This year saw a reduced number of spray drift incidents, but there is more to be done to control the issue.

CHALLENGES FOR THE COMING YEAR

- Continue to encourage growers to report spray drift incidents, to inform regulators and researchers of the issue.
- Provide support to growers in reporting incidents and provide best practice information.
- Ensure the focus of responsible spray application is not limited to 2,4D and covers all spray applications.
- Ensure the introduction of the XtendFlex Crop System from Bayer has a robust stewardship package and mitigation of potential spray drift as a key priority.
- Invest in expanding CottonMap to include all other crops – a valuable tool across agriculture.
- Support local grower groups in tackling spray drift in their valley.
- Work on a more coordinated approach to spray drift policy by engaging with allied organisations.
- Engage the re-seller community in stewardship and chemical application.

- **More than 5,700ha of cotton impacted by off-target spray drift in 2018-19.**
- **Strategic education and communications activities underway to address the issue.**
- **Training provided to boost spraying skills.**

While the 2018-19 cotton crop was significantly reduced, so too was the percentage of the crop damaged by off-target spray drift incidents.

This season, 5,760ha of cotton was reported to Cotton Australia as being impacted by spray drift. That figure represents 1.9% of the total crop, compared to the 9.5% of the 2017-18 crop that was damaged. The incidents this season occurred across all cotton growing valleys in New South Wales and Queensland.

Being inflicted with spray drift damage can be devastating for growers. In some cases, spray drift can mean a whole crop is wiped out, and in other cases it can mean the difference between making a profit or not. All cropping farmers, no matter the commodity, have a legal responsibility not to cause spray drift damage. Also, it is a legal responsibility not to drift. Cotton Australia has continued to invest considerable time and funds into tackling the issue, not only to ensure our growers are not

impacted by spray drift, but are also not contributing to the problem.

ACTIVATING A STRATEGIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

Over this past year, Cotton Australia's policy and communications teams worked to devise and implement a strategic awareness campaign around spray drift and best practice for spraying.

The campaign included:

- Working collaboratively with stakeholders within the cotton industry and other agricultural sectors to understand and navigate the challenges faced by growers when planning their spraying activities.
- Distributing targeted media releases to local journalists in cotton growing valleys. These releases led to media coverage that raised awareness of the best conditions to apply chemicals, and reiterated the devastating impact spray drift incidents have on crops and farming businesses.
- Producing engaging radio advertisements targeted at all cropping farmers. These announcements were



Image by: John Nott

played on major radio stations in all cotton growing valleys, and emphasised the risk of spraying at night and the best timing of spray activities after rain. The announcements emphasised the dangers of spraying during a surface temperature inversion and educated about being aware of sensitive crops nearby.

- Cotton Australia led the promotion of CottonMap (in joint collaboration with the Cotton Research and Development Corporation, the Grains Research and Development Corporation and Nufarm), and supported users in the mapping of their fields each season. A total of 90% of the 2018-19 cotton crop was mapped, which raised awareness of the location of cotton fields to reduce the incidence of spray drift.

ENGAGING ACROSS INDUSTRY TO PREVENT SPRAY DRIFT

This year, Cotton Australia worked closely with other key organisations across the cotton industry as part of our efforts tackling spray drift. The Cotton Spray Drift Taskforce included representatives from Cotton Australia, CSD and CRDC, and it met regularly to strategize ways to reduce the incidence of the issue.

Cotton Australia has supported the establishment of local grower groups aimed at bringing all stakeholders together within a region to tackle the issue at a grass roots level. Established local groups, such as the Macquarie SOS, have shown to be effective in reducing the incidence of spray drift in the local area. Other regions, including southern NSW and St George/Mungindi, are investigating ways similar groups may be beneficial in tackling spray drift within their local regions.

Cotton Australia also regularly liaised with the NSW Environment Protection Authority, Biosecurity Queensland and the APVMA to discuss awareness campaigns in the media, audits and investigations.

As a result of combined advocacy with other agricultural groups, our industry saw the APVMA implement essential changes to the labelling of 2,4D. At the time of publication, Cotton Australia was in the process of responding to the APVMA's proposed approach to spray drift management.

In some cases, spray drift can mean a whole crop is wiped out...

RESEARCH AND EDUCATION CRUCIAL

After extensive consultation with Cotton Australia's grower advisory panels, research into spray drift has been a priority for the industry. As such, research into the issue continued this year with projects supported as part of the CRDC's investment portfolio. Research projects into spray drift that are underway focus on the effectiveness of inversion warning towers and motivational factors for improved spray application on farms.

Coupled with investment into spray drift research, education and training around spray application was a key focus for Cotton Australia this year. Through the highly successful AgSkilled program, training was offered to NSW growers around advanced chemical application. Our organisation also supported a number of other spray application workshops conducted by other groups.



Grower: Billy Browning – Narromine

RESEARCH DIRECTION AND STEWARDSHIP

STRENGTHENING OUR INDUSTRY THROUGH INVESTMENT IN IMPORTANT RESEARCH, AND DEVELOPING COMPREHENSIVE BIOSECURITY PROVISIONS.

This last year saw continued investment in research and development projects and work on biosecurity issues progress.

CHALLENGES FOR THE COMING YEAR

- Continue to refine the process for addressing grower feedback through the CGA research priority process.
- Tackle weed management issues around increasing rates of herbicide resistance.
- Continue work raising awareness of spraying best practice, to reduce incidence of off-target spray damage.
- Provide input into the crop management plan for Xtend Flex cotton (with dicamba and glufosinate tolerance genes added to the glyphosate tolerance genes).

- **Engaging with growers to direct the industry’s research investment.**
- **Ensuring our industry is protected from biosecurity risks through comprehensive strategies.**
- **Developing thorough biosecurity plans for new northern Australian growing regions.**

The Australian cotton industry is renowned for its commitment to innovation and best practice, and this past year saw those efforts continue.

RESEARCH LED BY GROWERS, FOR GROWERS

Over the last 12 months, Cotton Australia continued to ensure the views of our cotton growers were reflected in research investment decisions. Cotton Australia once again engaged with our grower panel representatives this year to collate their priorities for research and development investment, which guided the Cotton Research and Development Corporation’s (CRDC) allocations of project funding.

This process involved growers having their say on research direction by completing the annual Grower Research Priority Survey. Cotton Australia staff actively worked with cotton grower associations (CGAs) to refine and further develop their priorities, which then informed CRDC.

Over the last year, a major research priority identified by growers was around the incidence of disease being a significant limiting factor for cotton productivity. Of note, a lack of registered fungicide options for the control of cotton diseases was a concern. This led Cotton Australia, in conjunction with CRDC and some agri-chemical companies, to apply for minor use permits to address the issue.

In the 2018-19 funding round, CRDC invested \$24.3 million in RD&E, including 300 research and development projects, in collaboration with more than 100 research partners.

BIOSECURITY

The potential impact of pest incursions on cotton crops is significant, which is why Cotton Australia continued working to ensure our industry’s biosecurity plans are strong.

Our organisation continued to play key roles in the management of biosecurity issues in the cotton industry, through:

- Involvement in the Consultative Committee for Emergency Plant Pests, which decides the technical feasibility of post-border biosecurity incursions.
- Representation on the National Management Group,



Image by: Tim Bateup

which manages the relative funding for pest eradication cost management.

- Facilitation of the Cotton Biosecurity Reference Group (BRG), to ensure the industry’s responsibilities are met under the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed each year, and to provide a forum for discussing and addressing emerging biosecurity issues.

With our industry expanding into northern Australia, the Cotton BRG has developed a stringent biosecurity plan for the region, particularly to mitigate the risk of the pink bollworm spreading to other cotton regions.

In the 2018-19 funding round, CRDC invested \$24.3 million in RD&E, including 300 research and development projects...

TIMS COMMITTEE

Over the last year, the Cotton Australia-facilitated Transgenic and Insect Management Strategies (TIMS) Committee continued its work developing and reviewing our industry’s resistance management plans for insecticides, Bt crops and herbicides. This work included:

- The annual review of the Bollgard 3 Resistance

Management Plan, to improve the robustness and practicality of the strategy.

- Monitoring insecticide resistance, assessing the resistance risk of new products, and responding to emerging issues in the Insecticide Resistance Management Strategy to proactively manage resistance issues. This included working with CGAs to continue the implementation of the pyriproxyfen window to reduce the risk of Silver Leaf Whitefly continuing to develop resistance and leading to potential product failure.
- Working with regulators and CropLife to develop a new framework to regulate the use of over-the-top products in herbicide-tolerant cotton.
- Assuring availability of pesticides, fungicides and herbicides where growers are limited in treatment options.



Central Highlands grower Nigel Burnett is myBMP-certified.

myBMP AND BCI

ENSURING OUR INDUSTRY IS OPERATING AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL.

Increasing numbers of growers are involved in the industry's best management practice program and the Better Cotton Initiative.

- myBMP program improves on-farm practices and is heavily promoted by Cotton Australia.
- Majority of cotton growers are engaged with myBMP.
- Number of myBMP-accredited farms increasing.

Participation rates in the myBMP program increased over the last year, with Cotton Australia working to assist growers in engaging with the initiative and improving their on-farm practices. Since June 2018, 104 new growers have joined myBMP, and 80% of all Australian cotton growers are now participating in the program.



myBMP is the Australian cotton industry's best management practice program. The program empowers growers to improve their on-farm practices by reducing risk, boosting their business management procedures and ensuring they are meeting regulatory requirements.

The program began in 1997 and has developed into a comprehensive online program covering 10 modules, including: Water Management, Biosecurity, Pesticide Management, and HR and WHS. Cotton Australia staff, along with CottonInfo's Regional Extension Officers, provide personalised support and technical assistance to myBMP participants.

The last year has been particularly successful for the myBMP initiative, with 104 new growers joining the program. A total of 80% of all cotton growers are now participating in myBMP, and the program is keeping pace with the expansion of the industry.

The number of myBMP-accredited farms reached a record

high of 234 – a 12% increase over the year. With thanks to the myBMP Express workshops that were held over the year, many more growers are well on their way towards attaining certification.



The Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) is an international non-profit organisation that promotes the sustainable, responsible production of cotton worldwide. Cotton Australia actively works with BCI on behalf of our industry. Growers can negotiate a premium for BCI cotton, with some growers achieving \$2-3 per bale for their Better Cotton Claim Units.

A total of 67 businesses and 157 farms opted-in to the BCI system in the 2018-19 season. Due to seasonal conditions, Better Cotton production was estimated to be 450,000 bales for 2018-19, down by half. Better Cotton represented about 20% of Australia's total cotton production this season.



MYBMP ATTRACTS INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

myBMP continued to draw attention on the world stage this past year, with it recognised by a number of international initiatives. myBMP was verified and published on the International Trade Centre Sustainability Map, and was also recognised by six international cotton sustainability standards.

ON-FARM MYBMP PROJECTS SUPPORT GROWERS

Our industry's commitment to improving its practices was highlighted through a successful grants program run this year. A total of 27 cotton growers from Queensland's Central Highlands and the Dawson-Callide Valley received grants of up to \$10,000 to implement myBMP practices and boost water and nutrient use efficiency on farm. The grant program was managed by Cotton Australia, with support from the Fitzroy Basin Association, and funded by the Federal Government's Reef Trust.



INCENTIVES OFFERED TO MYBMP AND BCI GROWERS

This year, Bayer continued its support of our industry and the improvement of farming practices by offering two grants to myBMP growers. Under the Bayer myBMP Certification Grant, growers who conducted an audit and achieved myBMP certification by the end of the calendar year were reimbursed \$2,000. In conjunction with this, the Bayer myBMP Bale Grant provided cotton growers a cash incentive of \$1/bale for cotton grown on their myBMP-certified farms. Cotton Australia will continue to encourage growers to participate in myBMP and take up the valuable opportunities provided by the Bayer grants.

TOGETHER
WE GROW

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

WORKING TO OPTIMISE THE COTTON INDUSTRY'S DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY.

While innovation in the agricultural sector is booming, many farmers are struggling with poor digital connectivity and telecommunications services.

CHALLENGES FOR THE COMING YEAR

- Continue to push for improvements in connectivity for cotton farm businesses to enable precision agriculture and improved social, safety, and business outcomes.
- Ensure the key recommendations of the 2018 Regional Telecommunications Review are delivered.
- Have our industry's say on how new initiatives are designed and implemented, so they benefit our businesses.
- Ensure consumer reforms led by the Federal Government are completed.
- Continue working with telecommunications providers to ensure the voices of cotton growers are heard.

- **United advocacy with other agriculture groups has brought results.**
- **Many growers are still languishing with poor telecommunications coverage.**
- **Pressure is now on politicians to deliver on their telecommunications election promises.**

A modern farming operation needs strong connectivity to the internet and reliable mobile coverage in order to thrive. While much work has been done in this space, our efforts this year focussed on continuing to advocate for reliable and effective mobile phone and internet connectivity for all in our cotton communities.

Australian cotton growers are the biggest adopters of digital technologies that improve productivity. To ensure our farms can realise their full potential in the digital revolution, they need strong mobile phone and internet connectivity with adequate speeds and data allowances. However, according to the CSIRO survey undertaken as part of the 2017 Accelerating Precision to Decision Agriculture project, our growers are the least satisfied with current options for connecting and analysing digital information.

Poor telecommunications, including unacceptable coverage, speed, reliability and high cost, remains a significant barrier for our growers in harnessing the full potential of technology adoption, improved productivity and profitability.

COORDINATED ADVOCACY ESSENTIAL IN BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Cotton Australia is a founding member of the Regional, Rural and Remote Communications Coalition (RRRCC), a highly effective and well-recognised group advocating for better bush telecommunications. The group works alongside the National Farmers' Federation in a co-ordinated approach to advocacy.

Formed in late 2016, the RRRCC continues to mobilise 21 agriculture and community organisations in a focused push to deliver #betterbushcomms. The group has worked hard to connect with a broad range of stakeholders in government and telecommunications companies to ensure our industry's needs are accounted for in national policy decisions.

This last year, Cotton Australia coordinated with the NFF and its members to collect valuable, up-to-date data on grower telecommunications and connectivity issues via a national survey.

The information collected through this process, along with our direct grower feedback and findings from the CRDC-led Precision to Decision project, funded by the Department of Agriculture's Rural R&D for Profit program, was used in our advocacy work to strengthen our calls for better connectivity.



Image by: Cobie Park

ADVOCACY AT MANY LEVELS

Cotton Australia has made a concerted effort across platforms to have our voice on the telecommunications issue heard.

Over the past year we took part in consultation opportunities offered by state and federal governments to address concerns around telecommunications, including as part of the Mobile Blackspot program and connectivity program planning and investment.

We engaged with the triennial federal Regional Telecommunications Review by providing a comprehensive submission about the challenges faced by our industry. Similarly, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) commenced important work around telecommunications and coverage in regional areas, and our representations ensured the organisation understood how our growers struggle with poor connectivity.

Meeting with key politicians and their advisors is an essential way for the views of cotton growers to be heard, which was why we regularly met with key decision makers this year to present them with the challenges our industry faces regarding communications.

Similarly, Cotton Australia regularly met with telecommunications companies, such as Telstra, to advocate the needs of our growers directly to the providers. A positive for growers has been the telco market developing with more alternative internet providers and offerings servicing cotton growing regions, which could further improve connectivity. The past year has seen increased private investment, interest and uptake of IoT networks across cotton growing areas, bringing low-cost connectivity to enable uptake of sensors and other smart agriculture tools.



POSITIVE RESULTS FOR GROWERS

As a result of our consistent, collaborative advocacy effort over the last year, we saw a number of developments and achievements delivered to help address the industry's issues around telecommunications:

- The Federal Government acknowledged the key issues exposed in the 2018 Regional Telecommunications Review report, which delivered strong recommendations for boosting connectivity in the bush. The Coalition government's formal response saw it announce a number of positive programs and investments to help tackle the issue.
- A number of federal politicians expressed their vision to see mobile blackspots eliminated, including Prime Minister Scott Morrison, who announced a Coalition government would eliminate mobile blackspots across one million square kilometres by 2025.
- The Liberal/National New South Wales Government promised to make the state 'mobile blackspot-free' as part of its re-election campaign. Cotton Australia will continue to push for this promise to be kept.



Grower: John Durham – Coleambally

ENERGY, MINING & CSG

PROVIDING A VOICE FOR GROWERS ON NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY ISSUES.

This last year saw us advocate for growers to improve their access to affordable energy and reduce the impacts of the resources industry on cotton production.

CHALLENGES FOR THE COMING YEAR – MINING AND CSG

- Continue to track the progression of mining projects impacting our growers.
- Continue to monitor legislative changes that would impact the land and water rights of our growers.
- Work with other agricultural organisations and landholders to advocate for mining projects to only be considered for approval once it has been proven the development will not impact on the productive capacity of the land.

CHALLENGES FOR THE COMING YEAR – ENERGY

- Continue working with the Queensland Government and Ergon Energy to ensure there are suitable replacement tariffs in 2020.
- Continue encouraging growers to regularly review the tariffs they are using, to ensure cost effectiveness.
- Advocate for the sensible location of large solar installations.

- **Progress made on improving growers’ access to affordable energy.**
- **Mining project developments a continuing concern for some growers.**
- **New energy tariffs on the way in Queensland.**

ENERGY

Cotton Australia’s work on energy remained a priority this year, particularly with the lack of access to affordable energy continuing to be a financially inhibitive factor for growers.

Our key activities and achievements in this space over the last year included:

- Advocating for improved electricity tariffs via government submissions and supporting CRDC and CottonInfo’s energy efficiency initiatives.

- Continuing our membership of Essential Energy’s Customer Advisory group. The company is the electricity supplier for 60% of our members, and having direct engagement on their NSW 2019-2024 tariff proposal was invaluable.
- Advocating policies during the NSW and Federal elections to assist the industry’s transition to affordable energy options.
- Working with our allies, including the National Farmers’ Federation, Queensland Farmers’ Federation and NSW Irrigators’ Council, to explore the challenges around regionally-embedded energy generation.
- Advocating for prospective large-scale solar farms to not be developed on prime agricultural land.
- Encouraged cotton growers in Queensland to be involved in the state government’s Energy Savers



Plus Program, which saw audits held on-farm to identify cost-saving energy efficiencies. At the time of publication, nine cotton growers had taken up the opportunity.

MINING

This year we continued our work to ensure the voices of our growers were heard in relation to mining projects proposed for development in cotton growing valleys.

The Shenhua Watermark coal mine on the Liverpool Plains of NSW has been a long-standing issue, and Cotton Australia, along with many community groups and individuals, continued to advocate on behalf of growers located near the mine. In July 2018, the NSW Government renewed the mine’s five-year exploration licence for a third time; and in late December, the government made an administrative change which meant pre-construction works at the site could begin despite no mining licence being granted.

Cotton Australia continued to keep abreast of the situation and regularly informed affected growers of developments. This work will continue as, at the time of publication, Shenhua was yet to satisfy the Federal Government’s requirements about protecting the associated water resource.

Over the past 12 months, Cotton Australia also provided direct support to growers potentially affected by proposed development creep and water quality concerns relating

to the Vicary Mine extension, which is located between Gunnedah and Boggabri in NSW. We also provided submissions to the state planning department and presented to the Independent Planning Assessment Commission to ensure our industry’s voice on the issue was heard.

CSG

The Coal Seam Gas (CSG) industry continued to expand across many agricultural regions in Queensland this year. Expansions of gas exploration areas in the Surat and Bowen Basins were announced by the Queensland Government, and additional petroleum leases between Dalby and Chinchilla were approved. Cotton Australia worked with the GasFields Commission and provided advice to The Land Court of Queensland’s Resource User Group on the assistance landholders in gas exploration areas could access, and ensured all affected landholders were aware of their rights and responsibilities.

Cotton Australia, along with Central Downs Irrigators Association, also managed a project looking at the policy framework that would be required to substitute treated CSG water for Condamine Alluvium water use, as a possible way of enhancing the sustainability of the aquifer.

Cotton Australia will continue discussions with the relevant CSG company over the coming year.



Grower: Sam Coulton – Boggabilla

WORKFORCE AND CAPACITY BUILDING

ENHANCING OUR INDUSTRY BY PROVIDING VALUABLE OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP SKILLS AND BOOST LEADERSHIP CAPACITY.

This last year saw the industry's training and leadership programs continue to flourish.

CHALLENGES FOR THE COMING YEAR

- Work closely with the new Federal Government to shape and deliver effective workforce policies and programs.
- Continue advocacy for a dedicated agricultural visa.
- Ensure growers are aware of and meeting workplace best practice obligations, and providing a valued work environment so we can continue to attract the people we need.

- **AgSkilled continues to successfully provide essential training to NSW growers.**
- **Cotton Australia launches new Cotton20 Leadership Program.**
- **Policy improvements made after co-ordinated industry advocacy.**

Over the past year, Cotton Australia continued its work addressing the challenges our industry faces in attracting and retaining an appropriate workforce. Alongside our industry allies, we advocated for policy improvements to strengthen Australian cotton's workforce capacity, and continued to build the skills of our growers through strategic training initiatives.

AGSKILLED CONTINUES TO BOOST GROWER SKILLS

The success of the AgSkilled initiative continued this year, with more growers in New South Wales provided essential training. AgSkilled works to upskill cotton and grains growers in NSW, and is a program from the NSW Government and led by industry partners Cotton Australia and the GRDC. The program is now more than halfway through its three-year project term, which, at conclusion, will have invested \$14.7 million into training within the NSW cotton and grains industries.

The program has to date seen about 3,000 people

participate in training courses, which have been held at more than 110 locations across the state.

Courses specifically developed for the cotton industry and delivered this past year included Tocal's Cotton Pest Management course, which was provided in close partnership with CottonInfo, and TAFE NSW's Cotton Picker Operation and Maintenance course. Other courses provided to growers focussed on precision agronomy, soil health, effective spraying, drone use, corporate governance, professional development and WHS. Across the program this past year, more than 1,500 people enrolled across 270 courses in 80 locations.

While participation in the AgSkilled program is only eligible to NSW growers, Cotton Australia worked to ensure growers in Queensland also had opportunities to boost their skills. Through the Queensland Agriculture Workforce Network, Queensland growers participated in HR and safety-focussed Workplace Essentials workshops, an initiative Cotton Australia is a sponsor of. Through our sponsorship, we helped fund workshops in the cotton growing regions of Goodiwindi, St George and Roma.

KEY ADVOCACY WINS

Boosting the capacity of our industry's workforce remained a priority for Cotton Australia this last year. We advocated for effective and sustainable policies and programs that boosted access to labour and helped address the



challenges faced by agriculture in attracting and retaining a suitable workforce. We also worked closely with the National Farmers' Federation to address workforce-related policy issues, including advocating for a dedicated agricultural visa, and we remained an active participant in NFF's Workforce Committee. This last year we achieved:

- Acknowledgement from the Federal Government that agriculture faces significant challenges around workforce, and that action is required.
 - A commitment from the Federal Coalition Government to work towards the development of a dedicated agricultural visa.
 - The development of a renewed focus on getting Australian jobseekers into vacant agricultural roles through government programs.
 - Reform of existing workforce programs, including the Working Holidaymaker Visa and Seasonal Worker Programme.
 - New regional visas and policies to incentivise migrants to live and work in regional Australia, and in a wider range of eligible occupations.
- In addition to our policy achievements, Cotton Australia's workforce activities this past year included:
- The continuation of the Cotton Gap program, which, despite the challenging drought, saw four school-leavers secure work on a cotton farm for up to 12 months.
 - Cotton Australia continued its membership of the Queensland Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance, which worked to ensure the development, review and maintenance of national training packages relevant to Queensland agriculture.

COTTON20 LEADERSHIP PROGRAM AN EXCITING NEW INITIATIVE

Cotton Australia was this year proud to launch the latest addition to its suite of leadership programs – Cotton20.

The initiative was a mid-high level leadership program and was funded by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources' Leadership in Agricultural Industries Fund.

The key goal of the program was to support Australian cotton growers in further developing their leadership skills, and to empower them to communicate effectively and influence change across industry.

A total of 20 cotton growers from all major cotton growing regions were involved in this year's program. In early 2019, the group met in Sydney to discuss salient issues affecting the industry and to expand their leadership skillset.

The Cotton20 participants are set to host a forum on irrigation in late-2019, and will go on to link with two other growers in their valleys to mentor and build the leadership skills of, thereby developing 60 advocates for the industry.

FUTURE COTTON LEADERS CONTINUE TO SHINE

The Australian Future Cotton Leaders program continued to strengthen this year. The program has been run six times, has about 100 alumni, and is a joint initiative of Cotton Australia and the Cotton Research and Development Corporation. The program identifies potential industry leaders and provides participants with training around: leadership skill development, individual skill application and attaining project goals, leading change, and contributing to industry.

The 2018 Future Cotton Leaders cohort included 16 people from across the industry. During the program, the group gathered for two face-to-face meetings and developed valuable connections across Australian cotton by attending industry events.

Through the running of programs like Future Cotton Leaders, we build strong advocates who will lead our industry for decades to come.



Grower: Sally Quigley – Trangie

ESSENTIAL SERVICES FOR GROWERS

DELIVERING ESSENTIAL SERVICES AND RESOURCES FOR OUR INDUSTRY.

The Australian cotton industry's commitment to compliance, safety, and best practice was enhanced through the provision of beneficial services and resources to growers.

TRANSPORT

Over this past year, Cotton Australia worked with regulators at a state and federal level to navigate transport issues faced by our industry. Much of this work centred on the movement of heavy machinery used by the industry, such as cotton pickers.

In April 2019, the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) introduced the new National Class 1 Agricultural Vehicle and Combination Mass and Dimension Exemption Notice.

The National Notice replaced state-based notices, such as Queensland's Form 14 and New South Wales' Class 1 Agricultural Vehicles (Notice) 2015 (No. 1). The new National Notice offered agricultural producers increased dimensions for the movement of agricultural machinery by road, without the need for a specific permit.

While it is a National Notice, requirements will vary from state to state. Generally, in Queensland, primary producers can move machinery up to 6.5 metres wide in the broadacre cropping zone; while in New South Wales, equipment can be up to 7.5 metres wide.

The new National Notice took more than two years to develop, and while the process was led by the NHVR, primary producer organisations, including Cotton Australia, played a significant advocacy role, with the aim of ensuring that at least 80% of agricultural machinery could be moved without a specific permit.

Cotton Australia acknowledges the efforts of all the agricultural groups under the National Farmers' Federation's banner and leadership, the NHVR and the state jurisdictions for making this notice a reality.

COTTONSAFE: KEEPING FARM WORKERS AND VISITORS FREE FROM HARM

Safety is an important priority for every farming operation. To help growers keep everyone safe on farm, including families, staff, contractors and visitors, Cotton Australia delivered its annual CottonSafe campaign over the last year.

Safety resources and templates helped workers and contractors to identify and assess hazards on farms, and to develop and implement plans and procedures to minimise risks.

Cotton Australia's resources were linked to the industry's myBMP program, particularly its modules on human resources and WHS, pesticide management and petrochemical storage and handling. These modules provided growers with practical safety tools to implement best practice on farm.

POLICY CHANGES TO IMPROVE SAFETY

This year saw a number of other initiatives implemented to improve the safety of growers:

- Cotton Australia commissioned a thorough, expert review of the myBMP WHS and HR module, in light of legislative changes. This was an important move to ensure cotton farms continue to be safe places for workers and visitors.
- A report by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) into quad bikes made a number of recommendations to the Federal Government to improve the safety of the vehicles. The ACCC recommended information relating to a quadbike's



stability and design be made available to consumers. While it was not the five-star safety rating system the National Farmers' Federation had advocated for, it was a step in the right direction for improved safety on farms.

- Over the coming year, the Cotton Research and Development Corporation's collaboratively-funded project 'Rural Health and Safety Alliance' will deliver standard information about our safety record, as well as best practice advice and messaging. Cotton Australia looks forward to working with the project to further extend this information to growers.

PICK N MATCH CONNECTING GROWERS WITH ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Cotton Australia's annual Pick N Match campaign once again allowed growers to easily secure picking and transport contractors.

The Pick N Match service brings growers and picking contractors together, making harvest more efficient. At the beginning of each season, Cotton Australia reaches out to contractors to determine their availability, areas of operation and machinery types, and then makes this information available to growers.

FARM HYGIENE

The Come Clean – Go Clean program once again helped enable higher yields by preventing the spread of pests and diseases between fields, farms and regions. The campaign distributed information about the major principles of Come Clean – Go Clean, which include:

- inspecting machinery, including pickers, boll buggies, module builders, mulchers, laser buckets, cultivators, chain beds and headers, for contamination.
- clearly communicating the need for farm hygiene to staff, contractors and others.

The Pick N Match service brings growers and picking contractors together, making harvest more efficient.

LOOK UP AND LIVE

Over the past year, Cotton Australia liaised with energy companies in Queensland and New South Wales to help deliver critical 'look up and live' safety resources.

The campaign urged cotton growers, farm staff, contractors and visitors operating near overhead powerlines, particularly during the busy harvest period, to consider their safety.

Resources provided to growers included fact sheets, posters, brochures and videos.



Grower: Peter Winter – Moree

OTHER ADVOCACY & POLICY INITIATIVES

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR OTHER ADVOCACY
CAMPAIGNS AND POLICY WORK.

COTTON AUSTRALIA LAUNCHES NATIONAL POLICY PRIORITIES

In the lead-up to the 2019 Federal Election, Cotton Australia launched its National Policy Priorities.

The policy priorities covered:

- **Water security** – smart water policy that improves the health of our waterways, makes our farms more productive, and our regional communities more resilient.
- **Research and development** – policy to protect the assets, systems and technologies we have now and innovating for the future.
- **Essential services** – vibrant cotton communities sustained by a diverse economy with access to services and technology that foster innovation.
- **Workforce, education and training** – capable people supported by a skilled, cohesive and diverse workforce.

The Cotton Australia team distributed our policy document, which included comprehensive details on the above priorities, to key federal politicians and stakeholders during the federal election campaign.

COTTON AUSTRALIA PRESENTS AT NORTHERN AUSTRALIA AGRICULTURAL CONFERENCE

The growing optimism around the cotton industry's expansion into northern Australia was a key focus of a major conference in Darwin in July 2018.

Cotton Australia CEO Adam Kay presented at the Northern Australia Food Futures Conference about how the industry was growing in the country's north.

Last season, 350 hectares of cotton was grown at Kununurra in north-east Western Australia, with the crop trucked to Dalby in Queensland for ginning.

Mr Kay spoke about the hope that if all went well the amount of cotton grown in that region could eventually expand to thousands of hectares.

Approximately 70% of
Australia's agricultural
produce is exported...



COTTON AUSTRALIA ADVOCATES FOR CONTINUED USE OF GLYPHOSATE

In October, Cotton Australia joined with other agricultural bodies to advocate for the continued use of the herbicide glyphosate. The proactive domestic campaign was prompted by a US jury ruling that Roundup (a popular spray containing glyphosate) had contributed to a Californian school groundskeeper developing cancer. The ABC's Four Corners program subsequently aired a story that raised questions about glyphosate's safety and continued use in Australia.

Cotton growers use glyphosate to remove weeds that compete with cotton plants and reduce production. Using glyphosate provides growers with a number of environmental incentives, including: less tillage, thereby reducing soil disturbance, erosion and sediment pollution, and reduced CO2 emissions, as machinery is not used to till.

Cotton Australia advocated that the scientific evidence supporting glyphosate's safety is clear and overwhelming. More than 800 scientific studies and reviews, including numerous independent regulatory safety assessments, support that glyphosate is safe and does not cause cancer.

If the Australian cotton industry did not use glyphosate, residual herbicides and/or soil tillage would be used as alternatives. We advocated that residual herbicides pose greater environmental risks, as they persist in soils for longer.

COTTON AUSTRALIA PARTICIPATES IN NATIONAL TRACEABILITY PROJECT

With modelling showing broader traceability and biosecurity potentially increasing agricultural production by \$1 billion a year, the Federal Department of Agriculture and Water Resources embarked on a National Traceability Project over the last year, in consultation with industry.

Cotton Australia joined representatives from Australia's other agricultural industries in a workshop that was designed to give stakeholders input into the design of a national framework.

Approximately 70% of Australia's agricultural produce is exported and effective traceability systems are critical for access to these export markets. The goal of the traceability project was to enhance trust in Australian-grown products and give agricultural producers a competitive edge in an environment that is increasingly demanding further assurances on agricultural product claims.

An Action Plan for the project is being developed.

TOGETHER
WE GROW

COMMUNICATIONS

PROACTIVELY SHARING THE INDUSTRY'S STORY AND DEFENDING GROWERS FROM POLITICAL ATTACKS.

- Significant growth in social media audience.
- More than 530 media hits in the past year.
- Valuable meetings held with key stakeholders.

In the past year, Cotton Australia's Communications team proactively worked across digital and traditional media platforms to share our industry's story and defend our social license.

In January 2019, our industry faced an onslaught of criticism following mass fish deaths at Menindee, with some critics of the industry blaming cotton growers for the tragedy. This triggered a passionate national debate about the Australian cotton industry and the effectiveness of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan. Despite the hostile and vitriolic situation, Cotton Australia's Communications team actively defended our industry by calling out political attacks and bringing facts and balance to the national debate through social and traditional media engagement. Cotton Australia also supported growers in becoming advocates for the industry by providing comprehensive social media training at eight locations in Queensland and New South Wales.

Throughout the year, the Communications team actively worked with all sections of the organisation to ensure growers and the broader public received essential and accurate information about our industry.

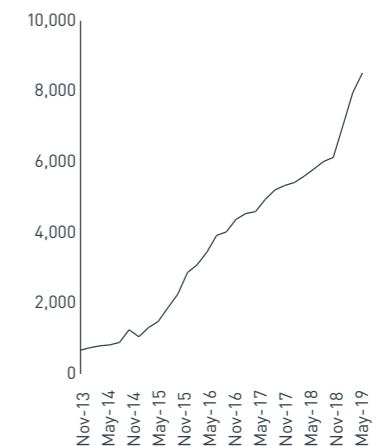
Cotton Australia's Communications team adopted a targeted digital strategy to share its messages with key stakeholders and grow its audience on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn. This strategic approach saw the team grow Cotton Australia's Facebook following by 52% over the year to 8,500 followers, while the organisation's Twitter following increased by 17% in the same period to more than 5,800 followers.

Cotton Australia's website remained a hub of information and was a valuable tool for communicating our messages. Our website attracted more than 440,000 unique page views over the last year.

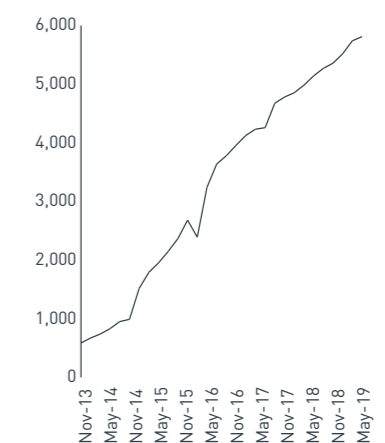
Effectively engaging with stakeholders was the other key priority for Cotton Australia's Communications team. In the lead-up to the New South Wales and Federal elections, the team advocated for our industry by meeting with key politicians and proactively engaging with the media. Despite the often aggressive debate and coverage of our industry, Cotton Australia secured more than 530 stories in the media over the year, and maintained net positive coverage of the industry.

Cotton Australia also connected directly with growers and others in the industry via the organisation's fortnightly 'Cotton Matters' e-newsletter, other e-news bulletins and editions of 'myBMP Matters'. These publications were widely read by industry standards.

COTTON AUSTRALIA
FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS



COTTON AUSTRALIA
TWITTER FOLLOWERS





Grower: Alana Brosnan – St George

EDUCATION

BOOSTING KNOWLEDGE OF THE INDUSTRY THROUGH ENGAGING PROGRAMS.

- Students and teachers provided with cutting-edge cotton knowledge.
- Scholarships boost capacity within cotton industry.
- Support of Indigenous mentoring program continued.

Education about our industry has long been a focus for Cotton Australia, and this year saw further progress made. In a year where our industry came under attack from often ill-informed people, our education program played a key role in providing balance in the public debate.

With its suite of engaging digital resources, hands-on events, and involvement in new development opportunities, Cotton Australia’s education program has delivered significant value for growers.

TEACH THE TEACHER EVENTS BRING EDUCATORS TO THE FIELD

A highlight of our education program this year was the many ‘Teach the Teacher’ events that were held in cotton-growing valleys. The events saw teachers taken on tours of cotton farms and gins to boost their understanding of our industry. The teachers then took what they learnt back to the classroom to share with their students.

Over this past year, Teach the Teacher events were held in Emerald, Goondiwindi and Griffith, and were attended by about 100 teachers. At all the tours, the teachers were shown how cotton is a sustainable, dynamic and tech-savvy industry. The event in Emerald took in the broader scope of irrigated agriculture in the Central Highlands, with tours of Fairbairn Dam and a citrus farm adding diversity to the event. In Goondiwindi, the group visited Goondiwindi Cotton’s shop to understand the retail component of the cotton supply chain.

A total of 85% of the teachers who attended the events had never been to a cotton farm before, and 97% had not been to a gin. At the conclusion of the tours, all the attending participants reported they would include cotton in their

future teaching, and not just in agriculture classes.

Cotton Australia is committed to continuing this successful program over the next year to ensure more teachers know about our industry.

COTTON KNOWLEDGE BOOSTED THROUGH EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Cotton Australia’s digital platforms continued to be a valuable knowledge source over the past year. More than 180,000 unique viewers accessed the Cotton Classroom pages of our website over the year, indicating the platform is a hub for engaging information and resources about Australian cotton.

In each cotton-growing valley, Cotton Australia’s regional managers carried out a range of educational activities over the past year. Our staff ensured knowledge about our industry was accessible by engaging directly with schools and communities, organising farm tours for students and teachers, attending school events, supporting teachers with educational resources, and participating in careers events.

This year Cotton Australia continued its membership of the Primary Industries Education Foundation Australia (PIEFA), which we worked with to optimise the reach of our educational materials. In the past year, Cotton Australia worked with PIEFA to publish cotton-specific units of work – covering science, geography and mathematics. These resources were accessed by teachers more than 25,000 times between April 2018 and April 2019.

EXCITING COTTON EDUCATION ON THE WAY FOR NSW STUDENTS

More New South Wales students will learn about the Australian cotton industry thanks to the implementation of a new curriculum module.

As part of a new requirement that agriculture be a mandatory component of the technology curriculum in



Image by: Robert Virtue

NSW, a specific module on cotton was developed by Cotton Australia this year to boost school education around the fibre.

Most of the teachers delivering this curriculum module are not trained in agriculture, meaning they will gain an in-depth understanding of Australian cotton and ensure our industry is at the forefront of the technology curriculum in New South Wales.

SCHOLARSHIPS ENHANCING INDUSTRY’S CAPACITY

Over the past 12 months, Cotton Australia provided a range of scholarships to build capacity within our industry.

The 2018 Australian Cotton Conference brought together some of the brightest minds in the industry, meaning it was valuable to have educators and students in attendance. Cotton Australia provided 24 university students and eight teachers a scholarship to attend the conference.

The university students that attended came from a range of tertiary courses – from traditional agricultural degrees to commerce, physiotherapy and design. The students attended conference sessions that suited their career pathways, and helped ensure a growth in understanding of our industry across a wide range of professions. The teachers that received scholarships came from Victoria, South Australia, Queensland and New South Wales.

Cotton Australia and the Cotton Research and Development Corporation (CRDC) continued its investment in the Nuffield Scholarship this year. The publication of 2017 scholar Daniel Kahl’s report was a particular highlight. Daniel is a cotton grower from Wee Waa, and his report looked at creating career pathways for the next generation of farm managers. Daniel is a strong grower voice on issues around workforce and attracting and retaining young talent into our industry. His recommendations will be considered and will help shape future relevant Cotton Australia and CRDC investments and programs relating to people.

Cotton Australia and CRDC will continue to invest in the Nuffield Scholarship over the next year. The newest recipient, grower and Cotton Australia staff member, Renee Anderson, has begun her research work.

Other capacity-building programs Cotton Australia supported this year were the Australian Rural Leadership Program and the Peter Cullen Trust – both valuable initiatives that upskill personnel in our industry.

SUPPORT OF THE CLONTARF FOUNDATION CONTINUES

Over the past year, Cotton Australia continued to support the work of The Clontarf Foundation. The organisation works to improve the education, self-esteem, life skills and employment prospects of Indigenous boys and men.

The Clontarf Foundation’s work is carried out in cotton-growing valleys, and Cotton Australia supported the organisation’s work by providing:

- Career linkages and pathways into our industry.
- Career guidance and pathways into jobs in agriculture.
- Structured work experience on cotton farms.
- Opportunities for Indigenous boys and men to gain employment in their own town.

COTTON TO MARKET

DEVELOPING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE AUSTRALIAN COTTON INDUSTRY AND BRANDS AND RETAILERS, TO GROW INTEREST IN OUR FIBRE AND DELIVER VALUE FOR GROWERS.

CHALLENGES FOR THE COMING YEAR

- Grow the profile of Australian cotton among key stakeholders in the world’s cotton supply chain.
- Collaborate with supply chain partners to help them meet the global sustainability challenges faced by the fashion and textiles industries.
- Deepen understanding of cotton within the not-for-profit sector that influences the textile supply chain.

- Number of partnerships with brands and retailers has grown.
- Our industry’s story reaches a larger global audience through collaborations and storytelling initiatives.

The Cotton to Market team continues to play an integral role in connecting our industry with domestic and international fashion brands and supply chain partners keen to use Australian cotton in their products. The Cotton to Market program is now in its sixth year and has connected with a record number of brands over the last year. The program’s focus in 2018-19 was to develop new connections with the textiles industry by providing assistance around sourcing Australian cotton, education, and working collaboratively towards a more sustainable textiles industry globally.

Highlights from the past year for the Cotton to Market team included:

- Hosting industry events, including the 2019 Farm and Industry Tour which attracted a record number of attendees, and the Wesfarmers cotton and gin tour in the southern valleys of New South Wales.
- The launch of the online CottonUP Guide to assist brands in sourcing sustainable cotton.
- Developing other fresh publications to aid the textiles industry, including technical fact sheets and a new ‘Australian Cotton’ brochure.
- Promoting the Australian Cotton story at conferences, including: the 2018 Australian Cotton Conference, the LEGACY Sustainability Conference, the Circular Fashion Conference, and the Global Better Cotton Conference.
- Recognition of the value of myBMP from brands via initiatives such as the Partnership for Sustainable Textiles, Textile Exchange Preferred Fibres Report and ITC Sustainability Map.
- Growth in the number of Cotton LEADS partners to 565.

RECORD NUMBER OF BRANDS NOW USING AUSTRALIAN COTTON

More fashion brands than ever are using Australian cotton in their products, giving consumers greater opportunity to wear our high-quality, sustainably-grown fibre. At the time of publication, the Cotton to Market team was working with 16 fashion brands to help them source Australian cotton and share our story as part of their marketing efforts. An essential reason for this growth in uptake has been thanks to the hard work of our growers in producing a fibre that is in demand globally, and the meaningful connections our Cotton to Market team has developed with brands and other supply chain partners.

PARTNERSHIP WITH GOOGLE BOOSTS EDUCATION OF AUSTRALIAN COTTON

Cotton Australia this year became the first agricultural group in the world to be featured on the Google Cultural Institute’s platform, an online portal for museums and art galleries to showcase their collections. In March 2019, Google Arts and Culture launched its ‘Once Upon A Try’ digital exhibition about inventions and discoveries.

Cotton Australia compiled two showcases for the exhibition titled ‘Australian Cotton and the Digital Revolution’ and ‘Breeding High Tech Cotton’. Our contributions to this platform showcased to a global audience the Australian cotton industry’s innovative work and commitment to sustainability.

COTTON CONVERTS TACKLING TEXTILE WASTE

Another major achievement of the Cotton to Market program over the last year was the establishment of the Cotton Converts group. The project brought together representatives from the Australian cotton industry, brands,

BRANDS CURRENTLY SOURCING AUSTRALIAN COTTON



Image by: Clare Gill



TOGETHER
WE GROW

NGOs, commercial partners and scientists to collaborate on scalable solutions to tackle textile waste in Australia, together. In March 2019, around 50 participants from across the value chain met for a roundtable to hear from leading scientists and commercial providers about emerging solutions for reducing textile waste.

More than 20% of the world's cotton now meets BCI standards...

AUSTRALIAN COTTON A VALUED MEMBER OF THE BETTER COTTON INITIATIVE

The important role of the Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) in improving the standards of global cotton continued to grow this year. More than 20% of the world's cotton now meets BCI standards, and over the last year, the Cotton to Market team maintained our strong connection with the program to the benefit of Australian cotton growers. This year, Australian cotton was profiled on BCI platforms around a number of key issues, including climate change, workforce and water use efficiency. Cotton Australia also presented at the Better Cotton Global Conference in Brussels about the power of storytelling in educating people about our industry. As a result of this advocacy, the Australian cotton story was shared with global brands and other industry representatives at an international level.

COTTON LEADS PROGRAM CONTINUES TO GROW

Cotton Australia continued to participate in the Cotton LEADS program throughout the year. The number of program participants reached 565, which means more international brands and retailers have been introduced to the benefits of using Australian cotton than ever before. This year, a new Cotton LEADS website was launched to improve how the program's key messages and objectives are communicated with brands, retailers and other stakeholders. A review of the Cotton LEADS program was conducted between Cotton Australia and Cotton Incorporated to set plans for the next two-to-three years.

COTTON CONFERENCE & INDUSTRY AWARDS

CELEBRATING OUR INDUSTRY AND LOOKING TO THE FUTURE, TOGETHER.

The Australian Cotton Conference and the Australian Cotton Industry Awards brought the sector together to celebrate its successes and engage in thought-provoking discussions about our industry's future growth.



- More than 2,400 delegates attend the Australian Cotton Conference.
- Conference unites the industry with engaging speaking program.
- Successes celebrated at the Australian Cotton Industry Awards.

The 2018 Australian Cotton Conference was held over three days in August on the Gold Coast.

The event was the biggest Cotton Conference ever, with 2,460 delegates, 150 speakers and panellists, 28 sponsors, 110 exhibitors and 12 start-ups attending.

About \$50,000 was raised for the conference's chosen charity, OzHarvest, with the money going toward providing meals to Australians in need.

Some of the highlights from the conference are detailed below.

COTTON INDUSTRY LOOKING TO PUSH BOUNDARIES

The theme for the 2018 Australian Cotton Conference was 'Pushing Boundaries', and the opening session put that topic front of mind.

Delegates heard a moving presentation from UN peacekeeper and author Matina Jewell about leadership and overcoming adversity; futurist Thomas Frey discussed his vision for agriculture and how the cotton industry could strengthen its global position moving forward; demographer Simon Kuestenmacher spoke about how the Australian cotton industry could future-proof itself in an era of disruption, by embracing RD&E and maintaining its social license.

TRADE AND SUSTAINABILITY A FOCUS

With 99% of Australian cotton exported to international markets, the global trade environment is of interest to our industry.

Rabobank's Head of Financial Markets Research Asia-Pacific, Michael Every, presented a stark message about the international trade situation. At the heart of Mr Every's presentation was the evolving dynamic and bubbling trade war between the United States and China, and the prospect of Australia having to choose which world power it aligns its trade deals with. He said Australia having to make a choice appeared unavoidable and there were trade-offs no matter which country Australia chose.

The session featuring Cotton Australia CEO Adam Kay, the Better Cotton Initiative's Corin Wood-Jones, Lucy King from Country Road Group, social entrepreneur Jon Dee, and Rick Lambell from Kmart and Target Australia discussed issues affecting the supply chain. The group shared their perspectives on the importance of sustainability and ensuring the consumer's desire for responsibly-produced products was met through strong traceability systems.

NAVIGATING SOCIAL MEDIA AND CHANGES IN TECHNOLOGY

The advent of social media and the ability for everyone to have a public voice has added a layer of complexity to social license retention among agricultural industries.

The President of the National Farmers' Federation, Fiona Simson, presented a session about her experience using social media, and how being an advocate for agriculture was critical for busting myths about industries, including cotton. Ms Simson offered her tips for engaging on social media and advice around building connections online.

The conference's closing session featured Nigel Dobson from ANZ, who presented on how technological innovations could influence agriculture and the cotton industry moving forward.

Author and speaker Rachael Robertson shared with delegates her experiences leading an Antarctic expedition and inspiring those around her to embrace challenges.

The final speakers were Clancy Overell and Errol Parker from satirical news website The Betoota Advocate. The pair presented an irreverent look at the cotton industry and topical issues dominating Australian headlines.

COTTON INDUSTRY AWARDS RECOGNISES HIGH ACHIEVERS

More than 1,000 cotton growers and industry representatives gathered on the Gold Coast in August to celebrate the recipients of the 2018 Australian Cotton Industry Awards.

The Awards program recognises excellence and achievement in Australia's cotton industry throughout the supply chain, from growers and ginners to product suppliers, consultants, agronomists and researchers.

The 2018 Australian Cotton Industry Awards recipients were:

- Monsanto Grower of the Year: Brett Corish (Goondiwindi, QLD)
- AgriRisk High Achiever of the Year: Bernie Bierhoff (Rowena, NSW)
- ADAMA Chris Lehmann Trust Young Cotton Achiever of the Year: William Back (Narrabri, NSW)
- Cotton Seed Distributors Researcher of the Year: Dr Joseph Foley, Dr Malcolm Gillies and Dr Alison McCarthy (University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba, QLD)
- IPF Service to Industry Award: David Montgomery (Moree, NSW)

The Australian Cotton Industry Awards are an important way of showcasing those in the industry achieving at a high level, and Cotton Australia CEO Adam Kay congratulated all the finalists.

Sponsors of the Awards were Monsanto, AgriRisk, ADAMA, Cotton Seed Distributors and Incitec Pivot Fertilisers (IPF).

2019 AUSTRALIAN COTTON COLLECTIVE

The biennial Australian Cotton Collective will be held in late July 2019 in Griffith, New South Wales.

The event will include farm and industry tours, a trade show and a series of engaging speaking sessions.

A highlight of the event will be a forum on water issues, with key speakers including Murray-Darling Basin Authority Chief Executive, Phillip Glyde, National Irrigators' Council CEO, Steve Whan, and Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists member, Dr James Pittock.

The Collective will also include a session on the impact of climate change, its potential effect on the Australian cotton industry, and the industry's response to the issue.

The popular New Products session will again be held at the Collective, as will a comprehensive Cotton 101 programme for new and prospective growers.

TOGETHER WE GROW



TOGETHER WE GROW



VALLEY REPORTS

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS

Regional Manager: Renee Anderson
Hectares grown in 2018-19: 12,500ha irrigated, 6,000ha dryland
Bales produced in 2018-19: 150,000 (estimate)



Cotton Australia activities:

- Assisted growers in understanding the requirements and importance of the industry's best management program through educational workshops and hands-on support during the myBMP accreditation process.
- Ensured all industry representatives were aware of current legislative requirements, including changes around workplace health and safety and human resources, through a valuable workshop.
- Showcased the industry at the 2018 Emerald Show through a cotton display and by introducing the community to some of their local cotton growers.
- Workshops for growers helped them benchmark and improve the health of their soils, and better align farming practices with the industry's best practice standards.
- Educated growers on changes to heavy vehicle guidelines and class permits via a cotton transport forum.
- Provided facts on the Australian cotton industry through the hosting of a myth-busting session for students at the Central Queensland University.
- Coordinated a 'Teach the Teacher' event for more than 60 primary and secondary teachers from across central Queensland, to discuss the cotton production process and provide valuable curriculum-aligned learning modules.

Image: Renee Anderson and Aaron Kiely from the Central Highlands Cotton Growers and Irrigators Association at the Emerald Show.

DAWSON AND CALLIDE VALLEYS

Regional Manager: Stephanie Tucker
Hectares grown in 2018-19: 4,000ha irrigated, 160ha dryland
Bales produced in 2018-19: 47,000 (estimate)



Cotton Australia activities:

- Provided direct support to growers to achieve and maintain the highest level of best practice on-farm throughout the myBMP accreditation process.
- Provided growers a voice to identify industry research priorities through a variety of grower engagement and feedback opportunities.
- Secured confirmation of Upper Dawson Infrastructure (Nathan Dam) reserves release with the passing of a new law in Queensland. Dawson Valley irrigators are now able to purchase allocations from this reserve using short-term leases that is expected to lead to increased development in the region.
- Educated high school students on irrigation systems and technologies, land development and general industry processes with a cotton farm and gin tour.
- Helped improve water use efficiency, nutrient use and water quality for growers in the region through projects funded by the Fitzroy Basin Association (FBA). Cotton Australia assisted FBA with the workshop's coordination, delivery and promotion.

Image: Stephanie Tucker is the regional manager for the Dawson and Callide valleys.

DARLING DOWNS

Regional Manager: Mary O'Brien
Hectares grown in 2018-19: 21,500ha irrigated, 32,000 dryland
Bales produced in 2018-19: 240,000 (estimate)



Cotton Australia activities:

- Advocated for the industry by hosting Queensland's Minister for Agriculture, Mark Furner, during his visit to the region. The minister toured the Queensland Cotton Gin and received a comprehensive overview of the cotton industry.
- Supported retail brands, by coordinating a cotton farm and gin tour for workwear label Ritemate, as part of the launch of its first 100% Australian-grown cotton work shirt.
- Facilitated cotton farm tours for students and joined more than 600 pupils at Moo Baa Munch, an event that educated them about where their food and fibre came from.
- Helped build career pathways for young Indigenous men involved with The Clontarf Foundation through a cotton farm tour and jobs seminar.
- Provided support to growers through myBMP express workshops and worked with them to achieve accreditation in the best management practice program.
- Supported industry organisations, such as Cotton Seed Distributors in delivering a successful cotton display at the Big Skies Festival in the Western Downs.
- Boosted cotton's social activities by promoting the pink wrap campaign in support of breast cancer support charity The McGrath Foundation.

Image: Darling Downs regional manager Mary O'Brien at the One Tree Ag event in April 2019.

ST GEORGE, DIRRANBANDI & MUNGINDI

Regional Manager: Jane Hill
Hectares grown in 2018-19: 12,250ha irrigated, 13,200ha dryland
Bales produced in 2018-19: 130,000 (estimate)



Cotton Australia activities:

- Supported growers through the coordination of transport forums in the region, to help them learn about changes to Chain of Responsibility, the pending introduction of the National Notice for Agricultural Machinery.
- Provided ongoing support to growers seeking accreditation in myBMP.
- Promoted health and safety on farm by organising first aid courses for growers and their employees.
- Helped reduce the risk of future off-target spray drift incidents by encouraging growers to attend spray drift forums.
- Assisted the Cotton Australia Communications team in providing professional development opportunities for growers around social media best practice.
- Built industry connections with the community by assisting the Mungindi Cotton Growers' Association in staging its annual charity golf day, which raised more than \$10,000 to support local community initiatives.
- Provided ongoing support to the local Cotton Growers' Association through direct engagement with committees and helping organise the St George Cotton Awards Dinner.

Image: St George, Dirranbandi & Mungindi Regional Manager, Jane Hill.

MACINTYRE VALLEY

Regional Manager: Cate Wild
Hectares grown in 2018-19: 22,000ha irrigated, 22,000ha dryland
Bales produced in 2018-19: 200,000 (estimate)



Cotton Australia activities:

- Promoted the valley's work to more than 260 industry representatives from cotton growing regions across Australia at the National Grower of the Year Field Day.
- Supported growers around changes to 2,4-D labels by encouraging them to attend an information day presented by Total Ag Services and the Cotton Growers' Association.
- Educated about our industry to the next generation with a farm tour for high school students, and a separate information session for educators as part of Cotton Australia's 'Teach the Teacher' program.
- Collaborated with the Macintyre Valley Cotton Growers' Association, Cotton Seed Distributors and CottonInfo at the annual end-of-season review to discuss relevant research and the results from local trials over the previous season.
- Coordinated area-wide management group meetings with CottonInfo throughout the season to give growers an opportunity to discuss area-specific challenges, such as crop protection and spray drift.
- Convened the annual local cotton awards dinner and charity golf day that raised funds to support a local high school bursary.

Image: Cate Wild is regional manager for the Macintyre Valley.

GWYDIR

Regional Manager: Alec Macintosh
Hectares grown in 2018-19: 16,000ha irrigated, 68,000ha dryland
Bales produced in 2018-19: 200,000 (estimate)



Cotton Australia activities:

- Assisted the Cotton Australia Communications team in delivering social media training for growers, as part of ongoing professional development to better arm the industry with the right skills to promote and defend itself.
- Promoted our industry to the next generation by hosting a scholarship recipient from the University of New England. The student spent a week visiting cotton farms, learning about research trials underway and meeting representatives from the Cotton Research Development Corporation, Cotton Seed Distributors and the Australian Cotton Research Institute.
- Promoted Integrated Pest Management practices to all growers at regular area-wide management meetings.
- Engaged directly with the local community to promote the cotton industry's achievements and discuss the challenges being faced by presenting at the annual 'Evening with Cotton' event and at field days across the Gwydir Valley.
- Coordinated a site visit of solar projects on farm for the Institute for Sustainable Futures.

Image: Alec Macintosh is regional manager for the Gwydir Valley.

NAMOI

Regional Manager: Alec Macintosh
Hectares grown in 2018-19: 30,000ha irrigated,
34,000ha dryland
Bales produced in 2018-19: 310,000 (estimate)



Cotton Australia activities:

- Provided a voice for affected growers during the Independent Planning Commission's public hearing regarding the Vickery Mine Extension Project.
- Supported growers in completing the accreditation process for myBMP by organising workshops. An additional 12 farms gained myBMP certification.
- Represented the cotton growing community at a public meeting with the newly-appointed NSW Water Minister, Melinda Pavey.
- Promoted the broad array of careers available in the cotton industry to more than 1,000 students at the Northwest Careers Expo in Tamworth.
- Supported industry-led professional development opportunities for teachers through the on-farm 'Teach the Teacher' program.
- Coordinated a site visit of solar projects on-farm for the Institute for Sustainable Futures.
- Advocated for the industry by coordinating a cotton farm tour for visitors attending the Boggabri Drivers Camp, and provided useful facts and myth-busting evidence to the group.
- Promoted the cotton industry at field days across the region and presented to students during coordinated farm tours.

Image: Alec Macintosh with Craig and Clint Charters from Gabo Pastoral Company.

WALGETT & BOURKE

Regional Manager: Alec Macintosh



Cotton Australia activities:

- Built capacity in the industry by assisting the Walgett Cotton Growers' Association in applying for a CRDC Grassroots Grant. The grant funded a trip to southern NSW so growers could learn about new ideas, technology advances, building resilience during drought, and to provide a networking opportunity with other industry representatives.
- Achieved significant progress in improving on-farm safety and compliance through week-long training opportunities for growers provided under the AgSkilled program.
- Provided a voice for the local cotton industry by meeting with the newly-appointed NSW Water Minister, Melinda Pavey, during a community meeting.
- Helped build community resilience and support through a focus group discussion in Walgett. This was a jointly-funded project between CRDC and the University of Melbourne.

Image: Alec Macintosh is regional manager for the Walgett and Bourke areas.

MACQUARIE

Regional Manager: Julie Wise
Hectares grown in 2018-19: 20,000ha irrigated,
3,000ha dryland
Bales produced in 2018-19: 213,000 (estimate)



Cotton Australia activities:

- Supported growers through the Spray Technology Field Day in Trangie, and engaged with CottonInfo to work with industry and community groups on sensitive spray issues.
- Facilitated area-wide management meetings at the beginning and in the middle of the season to discuss potential issues and hear from a guest speaker.
- Assisted the Cotton Australia Communications team in delivering valuable professional development for growers through social media training.
- Supported growers in achieving myBMP accreditation.
- Advocated around the successes of water policy by visiting the Macquarie Marshes with the head of the Natural Resource Access Regulator, Grant Barnes, to see the positive impact environmental water had on the wetland.
- Built connections with the broader supply chain through the Camp Cotton event. More than 25 brands and retailers spent two days in the Macquarie Valley learning where their fabric began and to connect them with local growers and industry representatives at the start of the supply chain.
- Hosted a farm tour aerial operator visit for young Indigenous students involved with The Clontarf Foundation.

Image: Julie Wise is regional manager for the Macquarie Valley.

RIVERINA & SOUTHERN VALLEYS

Regional Manager: Honi Anderson
Hectares grown in 2018-19: 60,000ha irrigated
Bales produced in 2018-19: 620,000 (estimate)



Cotton Australia activities:

- Supported more growers through the myBMP process, and helped prepare them for accreditation audits.
- Facilitated a networking and information sharing opportunity in Griffith for irrigators from Walgett.
- Boosted grower knowledge through the organising of three transport forums, with the assistance of the Roads and Maritime Service, to provide all heavy machinery operators with the latest transport compliance information.
- Advocated for the industry through workshops, presentations, tours and exhibits for school and university students, to promote the cotton industry and its career opportunities.
- Facilitated a professional development course for teachers to become more familiar with the agronomic components of cotton production.
- Boost knowledge of the industry through the 'Teach the Teacher' event, which was attended by more than 50 educators and included a tour of a cotton farm and gin.
- Helped tackle off-target spray issues through the establishment of the Riverina Spray Drift stakeholder group and committee. The cross-industry group meets regularly to reduce the risk of future spray drift incidents.

Image: Southern Valleys regional manager Honi Anderson (right) with grower Caroline Tuohy.

TOGETHER WE GROW



COTTON AUSTRALIA BOARD



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Chairman
Cotton Grower
St George, Qld

NIGEL BURNETT
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Cotton Grower
Emerald, Qld

FLEUR ANDERSON
Grower & Community
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Officer
Namoi Cotton

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Narromine, NSW

MATT MCVEIGH
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Dalby, Qld

PETER TUOHEY
Cotton Grower
Carrathool, NSW

COTTON AUSTRALIA STAFF



ADAM KAY
Chief Executive
Officer

MICHAEL MURRAY
General Manager

HONI ANDERSON
Regional Manager –
Riverina

RENEE ANDERSON
Regional Manager
– Central Highlands
(part time)

ANGELA BRADBURN
Policy Officer
(part time)



LUCY BRENNAN
Communications
Manager – Stakeholder
Engagement

ALI BRIGGS
Education
Coordinator

JENNIFER BROWN
Policy Officer
(part time)

SALLY CEENEY
Policy Officer
(part time)

SARAH CLARRY
Marketing &
Communications
Specialist (part time)



REBECCA FING
Workforce & Training
Coordinator
(part time)

JANE HILL
Regional Manager –
St George,
Dirranbandi &
Mungindi (part time)

RICK KOWITZ
myBMP Manager

ALEC MACINTOSH
Regional Manager –
Northern NSW

MARY O'BRIEN
Regional Manager –
Darling Downs
(part time)



NICOLE SCOTT
myBMP Customer
Service Officer
(part time)

PAUL SLOMAN
Policy Officer /
Grower Engagement

BROOKE SUMMERS
Project Lead – Cotton
To Market & Cotton
LEADS™ (part time)

STEPHANIE TUCKER
Regional Manager
– Dawson Valley
(part time)

CLAUDIA VICARY
Project Officer –
AgSkilled



ROBERT VIRTUE
Communications
Manager – Digital
Strategy

CATE WILD
Regional Manager –
Macintyre Valley
(part time)

JULIE WISE
Regional Manager
– Macquarie Valley
(part time)

THERESE WOODEN
Finance Manager

ROCHELLE ZAKHER
Executive Assistant

FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2018-19

INCOME

YEAR	LEVY	OTHER INCOME
2015/2016	2,319,332	299,891
2016/2017	2,983,310	601,211
2017/2018	4,043,991	456,804
2018/2019	4,756,991	327,543

EXPENDITURE

	OPERATING EXPENDITURE INCLUDING CAPITAL
2015/2016	3,957,444
2016/2017	3,792,619
2017/2018	3,649,186
2018/2019	3,977,620

OPERATING EXPENDITURE BY PROGRAM

	2018/2019	2017/2018
Board and Executive	615,842	540,903
Policy and Advocacy	661,360	462,503
Affiliations	152,097	148,414
Communications & Engagement	885,103	753,748
Grower Services	451,214	517,533
myBMP	237,084	283,983
Research	69,659	121,913
Education	113,303	72,905
Administration	155,219	177,182
Office Overheads	636,739	570,103
TOTAL	3,977,620	3,649,187
Levy Contribution	70%	72%



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