

# Cotton Innovation Network

## Meeting Communique - 15 November 2018

The Cotton Innovation Network coordinates the cotton industry's RD&E activity and ensures a collaborative and cohesive approach to achieving our industry's long term goals.

Attendees: B Grey (Chair), B Finney & Ian Taylor (CRDC), L Copeland (ACDA), M Peoples & F Pettolino (CSIRO), P Steel (CSD), G Fullelove (QDAF), A Kay & S Ceeney (CA)

### Key outcomes:

#### 1. Information Sharing

Members shared industry and organisational information including:

- CSIRO: i) AgCatalyst- created positive media interest in cotton R&D, focus upon renewable & biodegradable fibre ii) Ag & Food cotton program successfully underwent external review & commended across 3 criteria – impact, excellence, & innovation iii) Dr John Manners, Director CSIRO Agriculture, stepping down Feb 2019.
- ACDA: i) early-stage student enrolment numbers 2019 on par with prior year ii) unease within universities re Minister's decision to knock back ARC grant applications.
- CA: i) Strategic Plan 2018-23, underpinned by vision - viable, valued & advanced Australian cotton industry ii) key areas of advocacy - protecting water security; improving telecommunication services; resolving issues with red meat industry for access to gin trash iii) Forecast 2018-19 crop size 2.2M bales.
- CRDC: i) 2018-23 Strategic Plan commenced 1st July 2018 ii) With RDC colleagues, submitted applications for \$16M+ in new Rural R&D for Profit Grant (digital ag, smarter irrigation, extension etc) iii) planning to reduce total R&D investment by 10-20% in 2019/20, in response to lower revenue, & this will impact new investment capacity.
- QDAF: i) Significant capital investment in R&D infrastructure for cropping/cotton. DAF facilities at Tor St & Leslie undergoing upgrade; GRDC + USQ joint development at USQ (glass houses etc); GRDC + DAF co-funding new research farm on the Darling Downs
- CSD: i) pure seed program for 2018-19 set, contracted out, & crops planted ii) 137 field trials planned for 2018-19 across R&D, variety, & agronomic. Will be 5th year of Ambassador Network, with preliminary data yielding worthwhile information iii) In August, proudly continued as Foundation Sponsor of Australian Cotton Conference.

#### 2. Strategic Discussion:

- Innovation: Carolynne James, Manager, Investment & Business Development NSW DPI: 'Global Ag-Tech Ecosystem' - The GATE – one-stop-shop offering innovator, incubation, & accelerator streams, and business support, to start-ups. Blends DPI & external participants, capturing private sector capital for R&D investment. DPI goal: to increase productivity & grow total primary industries output to \$20B by 2020, by innovation, commercialisation, & integrated technology.
- Strategy: Member's discussed the potential focus of a revised Cotton Sector RD&E Strategy and direction of Network's role to grow the Network's impact through strategies to i) collectively solve big strategic issues ii) lead for whole of system performance iii) create exceptional R&D capability. Further discussion is planned.
- Communication: Reviewed & endorsed a 6-monthly progress report to Research & Innovation Committee.
- Members thanked Bruce Finney for his considerable contribution to the Cotton Innovation Network & wished him well in his new role with NSW DPI

#### 3. Upcoming Events

- Cotton Innovation Meetings: February, Sydney; 22 May, Brisbane

Further Cotton Innovation Network information is available at: [www.crdc.com.au/cotton-innovation-network](http://www.crdc.com.au/cotton-innovation-network).

*Vision for Cotton RD&E Capability: Exceptional research capability – integral to the future of Australian cotton and society. This summary is for use within Network member organisations, please include any information of interest to stakeholders.*