Our RD&E investment priorities & measures of success

The Clever Cotton Strategic RD&E Plan targets are outlined in this table. Achievement against the objectives and targets will be monitored, evaluated and reported annually in the CRDC Annual Report and Performance Report.

	Objective	Measure/s	2025-26 target	2028 target
PILLAR 1: **Paddock**	The Paddock pillar focuses on the on-farm cotton system, uniting data and insights to support thriving cotton farms producing a premium product being demanded by the market.	CRDC will measure its success in this pillar by the economic value the three themes add to the industry.	An economic assessment of key drivers of profitability for Australian cotton is undertaken to demonstrate a production increase of $0.2 billion.	CRDC's 2028 target for added value is $1 billion.
Data-driven decisions	Improve productivity, profitability, and sustainability by accurately monitoring and measuring every field on every cotton farm.	+ Yield per hectare. + The value of data analysis and insights created from the management and production data captured in the industry data platform.	+ Yield improvement is maintained at three per cent year on year. + Develop and deploy the cotton industry data platform.	In 2028, a transparent and trusted data platform will deliver increased profitability and productivity through better decision-making, facilitating innovative research, and building trusted engagement.

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Adaptive systems	Grow the profitability and resilience of Australian cotton-farming systems through innovative solutions, technologies, and practices.	+ The value of the systems solutions created to address the challenges of disease, sustainable industry expansion, adaptation to climate change, biosecurity threats and reduced availability of inputs.	+ Research is commenced to identify innovative solutions to address crop protection and biosecurity challenges. + Research is commenced to improve resilience and profitability of dryland and limited water systems.	In 2028, Australian cotton-farming systems are resilient, biosecure, and able to thrive in an increasingly variable climate with enhanced resource efficiency.
Connected market intelligence	Enhance the sustainability, market access and diversity, and value of Australian cotton.	+ Percentage of Australian cotton sold as more sustainable (as defined by the market).	+ A process for regular review of value chain needs is established and implemented. + Participation in three partnerships and/or initiatives focused on sustainability through the value chain.	In 2028, Australian cotton growers are globally preferred suppliers of sustainable cotton.

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PILLAR 2: **People**	The 'People' pillar aims to ensure that in developing our world-class research capability, we are providing practical RD&E solutions and increasing the reach and impact of adoption.	CRDC will measure its success in this pillar by the level of satisfaction in CRDC by growers and research partners.	Surveys demonstrate growers and research partners are satisfied with CRDC's performance.	In 2028, growers and research partners are satisfied with CRDC. CRDC is nationally recognised for developing world-leading RD&E talent.
Design and innovation	Embed collaboration in RD&E prioritisation, design, development, and adoption.	+ Growers acknowledge the utility of solutions and technologies developed through CRDC investment. + Progression of innovations through Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) tracked.	+ Innovations are delivered through clear pathways to impact. + At least 10 per cent of growers are contributing data to industry research and development.	In 2028, growers can see RD&E addressing their problems and creating practical solutions to be adapted and adopted into their production systems.
Leadership and capacity	Develop people and skills to support industry RD&E.	+ Research capacity is assessed and integrated into CRDC's new research programs. + Industry capacity to lead change and contribute to the future of cotton and Australia's rural industries.	+ Capacity audit and leadership program reviews are complete with recommendations for industry action, and a framework developed to inform capacity planning.	In 2028, the development of world-class research capability supports industry goals.
Adoption and impact	Adopt knowledge and technology through dedicated development and delivery pathways.	+ Percentage of growers actively contributing to RD&E adaptation through regional trials and data collection. + Percentage of growers actively engaged with RD&E programs. + Percentage of growers recognising that CRDC and CottonInfo have contributed to improving their productivity and sustainability.	+ Ten per cent of growers are involved in increasing utility and adaptation of research outcomes through trials and data collection.	In 2028, adoption has increased its rate, reach and effectiveness.

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PILLAR 3: **Planet**	The 'Planet' pillar aims to ensure that the cotton industry contributes positively to the environment, meeting community, government and market expectations.	CRDC will measure its success in this pillar by the level of trust the industry has from the community, the market and government about how it manages and reports on its environmental and social impacts.	Surveys demonstrate trust from community, the market and government about cotton's management and reporting of environmental and social impacts.	The community, market and government demonstrate trust in cotton's management and reporting of environmental and social impacts.
Natural capital	Implement resilient natural capital practices that support productivity, help maintain biodiverse ecosystems, strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, and progressively improve regional water, land and soil quality.	+ Condition and value of natural capital on cotton farms as measured by sustainability framework metrics. + Higher community and stakeholder trust in the cotton industry as a responsible steward of natural capital.	+ Tools and technology are implemented to enable farms to quantify natural capital changes.	In 2028, cotton farms have maintained and enhanced natural capital and are more resilient to shocks.
Carbon	Establish a sustainable low-carbon cotton production system for a changing future.	+ Development of a clear pathway to carbon neutrality available to support industry targets. + Improvement in nitrogen (N)-use efficiency, with N inputs matching plant demand across the rotation cycle. + Development of regionally specific guidelines for on-farm carbon sequestration in soils or native vegetation.	+ Low emissions intensity farming systems are defined and demonstrated through collaboration across broadacre industries. + Two demonstration sites of a low carbon production system are established and an extension plan developed to support the industry initiatives.	In 2028, the cotton industry meets market, community and government expectations for carbon.
Circular economy	Develop the circular economy for Australian cotton.	+ The 'added value' developed through interventions to create a circular economy for cotton.	+ Two new technologies or products developed from the textile waste stream.	In 2028, the cotton industry can participate in the circular economy, providing lasting end-of-life solutions for cotton textiles.