



# CRDC INVESTMENTS

2025-26



# CRDC 2025-26 Projects List

2025-26 marks the third year under CRDC's Strategic RD&E Plan: Clever Cotton. During this year, CRDC will invest \$33.2 million into RD&E projects across the Plan's three pillars (Paddock, People, Planet) and nine themes, in collaboration with research partners and on behalf of Australia's cotton growers and the Australian Government. This table outlines the confirmed and planned projects that CRDC will invest in during this year. For further information about Clever Cotton or any of the projects listed, please visit the CRDC website: [www.crdc.com.au/research-development](http://www.crdc.com.au/research-development).

Theme	Sub-theme	Project title	Project code	Researcher	Organisation	Commenced in:	To be completed
<b>Pillar 1: Paddock</b>							
1.1 Data-driven decisions	Data-driven decisions	<b>Confirmed projects:</b>					
		Cotton industry database management	ARML10554	Lee Armson	Lee Armson	Jul-23	Jun-26
		CRDC 2025 partnership relationship review	INTS11642	Michael Sparks	Intuitive Solutions	Apr-25	Sep-25
		CRDC cotton grower survey 2023-25	INTS10342	Michael Sparks	Intuitive Solutions	Jan-23	Nov-25
		CRDC data platform communication support	HOUC11489	Bernadette Murray	House of Communications	Oct-24	Sep-25
		Data governance and management group support	CRDC11355	Meredith Conaty	CRDC	Jul-24	Jun-28
		Earth observation-based water use efficiency benchmarking – Demonstrating how earth observation technologies can be used to calculate cotton water productivity and sustainability indices.	WTHY11600	Brian Jackson	WT Hydro	Apr-25	Apr-26
		Project Management Committee meetings and activities: Data-driven decisions	CRDC10670	Meredith Conaty	CRDC	Jul-23	Jun-28
		Rural Safety & Health Alliance (RSHA) ag safety data net	RIRDC11098	Ulicia Raufers	AgriFutures	Jun-24	Jun-27
		Rural Safety and Health Alliance (RSHA) collaboration 2025-28	RIRDC11670	Ulicia Raufers	AgriFutures	Jul-25	Jun-28
		<b>Plus planned investments in:</b>					
		Agribusiness digital solutions grant scheme (Traceability grant)					
		Data Platform build					
		Refining and collecting data for social metrics to inform cotton's sustainability framework					
1.2 Adaptive systems	Solving farming systems constraints	<b>Confirmed projects:</b>					
		Climate proof cotton: Phase 2	WSU11009	Demi Sargent	WSU	Jul-24	Jun-28
		Climate-smart agriculture program – Advancing the adoption of climate-smart, innovative irrigation control technology for the cotton and dairy industries		Cathy Phelps	CRDC	Jan-25	Jun-28
		Digital irrigation advisory systems: Enabling extension and advisory services for agriculture's digital irrigation transition	OBCRC	Margaret Ayre	One Basin CRC	Oct-24	Dec-27
		Optimising irrigation performance in bankless channel cotton layouts to improve water management and nitrogen use efficiency	DU2301	Wendy Quayle	Deakin University	Jul-22	Jun-26
		Optimising plant growth regulator management for cotton production	CSIRO11427	Katie Broughton	CSIRO	Oct-24	Sep-27
		Seeking regionally specific guidelines for cover crops through cotton-farmer-led best-practice and soil security	US2301	Thomas O'Donoghue	USYD	Feb-23	Jan-26
		Supporting southern cotton production systems: Southern cotton agronomy and fibre quality	DAN2306	Beth Shakeshaft	NSW DPIRD	Jul-22	Sep-25

Note: CRDC's list of projects is current as of May 2025 and may be subject to change.



Theme	Sub-theme	Project title	Project code	Researcher	Organisation	Commenced in:	To be completed
		<b>Plus planned investments in:</b>					
		Curbing compaction					
		Future cotton: innovation and impact for sustainability, biosecurity & growth					
		Information resources siphonless systems & irrigation automation technologies					
		Innovation for limited water and dryland systems					
		Understanding and reducing evaporation losses in the northern Murray Darling Basin (MDB)					
	<b>Disease</b>	<b>Confirmed projects:</b>					
		Disease management in cotton farming systems – a participatory action research approach to deliver solutions	CSD2303	Michael Bange	CSD	Oct-22	Sep-26
		Project Management Committee meetings and activities: Adaptive systems	CRDC10671	Nicola Cottee	CRDC	Jul-23	Jun-28
		The Australian Cotton Disease Collaboration (ACDC)	USQ11135	Sambasivam Periyannan	UniSQ	May-24	Jun-28
	<b>Biosecure</b>	<b>Confirmed projects:</b>					
		Advanced field sensing for improved cotton management	USQ2303	Alison McCarthy	UniSQ	Jul-22	Jun-26
		Australian Research Council (ARC) Research Hub for Sustainable Crop Protection	UQ2001	Neena Mitter	HIA/UQ	Jul-19	Dec-25
		Herbicide resistance status of grain and cotton cropping regions	GRDC11140	Sarah Morran	GRDC	Jul-24	Jun-27
		Improving efficacy of biopesticides through understanding mode of action	CRDC11352	Nicola Cottee	CRDC	Jul-24	Jun-26
		Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative (PBRI) Phase 3	HIA10549	Jo Luck	HIA	Jul-23	Jun-28
		Spray drift hazard alert and warning systems – WAND (Weather and Networked Data)	DISA2201	Gaurav Jalota	Discovery Ag	Jan-22	Jun-28
		WeedSmart Phase 6	UWA10548	Jessica Strauss	UWA	Jul-23	Jun-26
		<b>Plus planned investments in:</b>					
		Future cotton: innovation and impact for sustainability, biosecurity & growth					
		Innovation biosecure solutions					
		Insecticide resistance monitoring to support biosecure cotton systems in an increasingly variable climate					
		Regional surveillance research, development and extension for enhanced pest management and biosecurity					
	<b>Northern Australia</b>	<b>Confirmed projects:</b>					
		Extension and adoption of drought resilient tropical farming systems through best management practice (BMP)	NTF10747	Hannah Leu	NTF	Jul-23	Sep-25
		NT commercial cotton growing partnership (Douglas Daly Research Station)	DANT10811	Michelle Uniacke	NT TBAR	Sep-23	Oct-26
		Residue risks in cotton stubble for northern Australia	CA11326	Doug McCollum	Cotton Australia	Jul-24	Jun-26
		Supporting a sustainable northern Australia cotton, grain & cattle system (northern program)	CRCNA2301	Ian Biggs	CRCNA	Jul-22	Oct-26
		<b>Plus planned investments in:</b>					
		Northern Australia farming system					
		Risk profile for Bt resistance in the North					
<b>1.3 Connected market intelligence</b>	<b>Connected market intelligence</b>	<b>Confirmed projects:</b>					
		A critique of the life cycle assessment-based methodologies used in garment labelling	CSIRO11673	Maartje Sevenster	CSIRO	May-25	Jun-26
		Better sustainability reporting: better information and better decisions. A proof of concept for Australian agriculture	SUSA10782	Chris Cosgrove	Sustenance Asia	Jul-23	Jul-25
		Cotton sustainability website	TBONE11364	Andrew Cush	Tbone Productions	Sep-24	Jun-27
		Human rights risk assessment for the Australian cotton industry	ERGA11716	Alastair Usher	Ergon Associates	Apr-25	Aug-25
		Membership: Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) 2023-26	BCI10724	Vinay Kumar	Better Cotton Initiative	Sep-23	Oct-26
		Membership: Cascale (SAC) 2024-27	CASC11134	Glenn Robinson	Cascale Inc	Jul-24	Jun-27
		Membership: Cascale (formerly Sustainable Apparel Coalition, SAC) policy hub	SUAC10902	Mackenzie Roach	Cascale Inc	Jan-24	Dec-26
		Project Management Committee meetings and activities: Connected market intelligence	CRDC10672	Meredith Conaty	CRDC	Jul-23	Jun-28
		Support for the sustainability working group, industry sustainability reporting and integration of research into myBMP	SUSA11185	Chris Cosgrove	Sustenance Asia	Jul-24	Jun-27
		Sustainability communication support	CRDC11513	Ruth Redfern	CRDC	Jul-24	Jun-26

**Pillar 2: People**

<b>2.1 Design and innovation</b>	<b>Design and innovation</b>	<b>Confirmed projects:</b>				
		CRDC Innovation Advisor	WATC11576	Warwick Waters	Waters Consulting	Jan-25 Dec-26
		Project Management Committee meetings and activities: Design and innovation	CRDC10673	Meredith Conaty	CRDC	Jul-23 Jun-28
		<b>Plus planned investments in:</b>				
		Grower RD&E advisory panels				
<b>2.2 Leadership and capacity</b>	<b>Leadership</b>	<b>Confirmed projects:</b>				
		Australian Rural Leadership Program (ARLP): Course 29, 30 & 31 and TRAIL 2022, 2023 & 2024	RIR2201	Tristan Richmond	ARLF	Jul-21 Dec-25
		Community trust in rural industries 2022-25	RIRDC10461	Ulicia Raufers	AgriFutures	Jun-23 Dec-25
		Nuffield Australia farming scholarship 2025: Kate Lumber	NUFA11457	Jodie Redcliffe	Nuffield Australia	Jul-24 Sep-26
		Upskilling early career agriculturists	GRDC10696	Sally Dickinson	GRDC	Jul-23 Jun-26
		<b>Plus planned investments in:</b>				
		Australian Rural Leadership Foundation: ARLP Course 32 and TRAIL				
		Cotton Australia and CRDC Australian Future Cotton Leaders program				
		Leadership program review				
		Proof of concept to extend and deliver the SHIFT information guides through a pilot coaching program				
	<b>Capacity</b>	<b>Confirmed projects:</b>				
		AgriFutures Rural Women's Award Gala – Dinner 2023-28	RIRDC10692	Abbey O'Callaghan	AgriFutures	Jul-23 Jun-28
		AgriFutures Rural Women's Award Gala – Travel Scholarships 2023-28	CRDC10693	Ruth Redfern	CRDC	Jul-23 Jun-28
		Australian cotton industry awards sponsorship: CRDC Chris Lehmann Young Cotton Achiever of the Year Award 2024 and 2025	CA10951	Paul Sloman	CA	Oct-23 Sep-25
		CRDC Workforce and Capacity Specialist	HOLR11591	Rachel Holloway	Rachel Holloway	Nov-24 Jun-27
		Horizon Scholarship 2024-25: Julian Craven	RIRDC11114	Annabelle Day	AgriFutures	Apr-24 Dec-25
		Horizon Scholarship 2025-26: Emma Holmes	RIRDC11619	Annabelle Day	AgriFutures	Apr-25 Dec-26
		PhD: Drought resilient cotton: Combining synthetic biology solutions to improve cotton productivity under future water limited and heatwave conditions	UWS2202	Garima Dubey	WSU	Mar-22 Dec-25
		PhD: Employing specific peptides and receptors to improve nitrogen uptake and its utilisation to enhance cotton yield	WSU10579	Bhagya Samarasinghe	WSU	Jan-24 Jan-27
		PhD: Exploring smart farming technologies: impact on youth perspectives towards the agri-food sector	UM10799	Yuchen Miao	UM	Oct-23 Oct-26
		PhD: How to face the agricultural labor challenges: Applying the concept of job quality to the agricultural industry	UM10810	Xinyue Tang	UM	Oct-23 Oct-26
		PhD: Micronutrient requirements of modern cotton cultivars. Crop rotation as a tool to ameliorate soil compaction in modern cotton farming systems.	DAN10920	Blake Palmer	NSW DPIRD	Jul-23 Jun-28
		PhD: Quantifying the temporary climate mitigation benefit of biogenic carbon in cotton apparel and home textiles globally	NCSU2301	Stephen Pires	NCSU	Aug-22 Aug-25
		PhD: Resilient Cotton: Determining the impact of light, heat and nutrition on boll shredding	WSU11003	Mishal Bano	WSU	Apr-24 Apr-27
		Project Management Committee meetings and activities: Leadership and capacity	CRDC10674	Rachel Holloway	CRDC	Jul-23 Jun-28
		Sponsorship: Association of Australian Cotton Scientists (AACS) 2025 Australian cotton research conference	AACS 11344	Dr Warren Conaty	AACS	Dec-24 Sep-25
		Sponsorship: evokeAG 2024 Perth, 2025 Brisbane, R&D Hub	RIRDC 10614	Clancy Pattinson	AgriFutures	Jul-24 Jun-26
		<b>Plus planned investments in:</b>				
		Developing the CRDC research capacity framework				
		Research capacity building: Awards, scholarships, sponsorships				
		Research capacity building: Support for PhD students				
		Research capacity building: Travel scholarships and international exchanges				
<b>2.3 Adoption and impact</b>	<b>Adoption</b>	<b>Confirmed projects:</b>				
		CottonInfo Climate and Carbon Technical Lead	AE11412	Jon Welsh	Ag Econ Australia	Jul-24 Jun-26
		CottonInfo Fibre Quality Technical Lead	VANM10023	Rene van der Sluijs	TTS	Jul-23 Jun-26
		CottonInfo multimedia content development	DAQ2202	Tonia Grundy	QDPI	Jul-21 Aug-25
		CottonInfo Natural Resource Management Technical Lead	VOGS10071	Stacey Vogel	Stacey Vogel Consulting	Jul-23 Jun-26
		Research for impact	HIA10594	Matt Reynolds	HIA/UQ	Jun-23 Jun-26

Theme	Sub-theme	Project title	Project code	Researcher	Organisation	Commenced in:	To be completed
		<b>Plus planned investments in:</b>					
		Commercialisation management tasks					
		CottonInfo Technical Leads: Soil Health, Irrigation, Nutrition, myBMP support					
		QDPI strategic partnership project					
	Impact	<b>Confirmed projects:</b>					
		Grassroots Grant: Darling Downs Cotton Grower Inc weather station upgrade	DDCGI11657	Daniel Skerman	DDCGI	May-25	Dec-25
		Project Management Committee meetings and activities: Adoption and impact	CRDC10676	Warwick Waters	CRDC	Jul-23	Jun-28
		<b>Plus planned investments in:</b>					
		Grassroots Grants					
		Ten year impact assessment: RD&E investment					

Pillar 3: Planet							
3.1 Natural capital	Biodiversity and soils	<b>Confirmed projects:</b>					
		Carbon and biodiversity benchmarking in native vegetation on cotton farms	UNE2301	Rhiannon Smith	UNE	Jan-23	Dec-25
		Evaluating the economic and environmental return on investment of modern fish screens	DAN2308	Fiona Scott	NSW DPIRD	Jul-22	Jun-26
		Impacts of landscape connectivity on bat and bird activity in cotton and value of acoustic monitoring technology: benefits for natural pest suppression	USC10494	Stuart Parsons	USC	Jul-23	Jun-26
		Macquarie Valley landscape impact program	REGF11614	Andrew Ward	Regen Farmers Mutual (RFM)	Mar-25	Nov-25
		Project Management Committee meetings and activities: Natural capital	CRDC10677	Stacey Vogel	CRDC	Jul-23	Jun-28
		Riparian exotic weed management prioritisation framework	GU11317	Sam Capon	Griffith Uni	Oct-24	Oct-27
		Soil health framework collaboration for Australian agriculture	GRDC11611	Nicola Cottee	CRDC	Mar-25	Jul-19
		Water R&D support	PHEC10735	Cathy Phelps	C&J Phelps Consulting	Sep-23	Sep-25
		<b>Plus planned investments in:</b>					
		Enabling nationally coordinated climate-smart system change (SYNC)					
		Ground truthing for ecosystem service mapping					
		Natural capital RD&E priority forum					
		Northern Territory landscape biodiversity monitoring and management case studies					
	Pesticides and nitrogen	<b>Confirmed projects:</b>					
		Pilot spray drift extension activities	CRDC11705	Janelle Montgomery	CRDC	May-25	Jun-26
		Pre-scoping SENTRI for Ag (Sensor-based environmental sense-making network for threat response and information)	CRDC11692	Susan Maas	CRDC	May-25	Sep-25
		<b>Plus planned investments in:</b>					
		Managing pesticide and nitrogen movement in cotton catchments					
	Water	<b>Confirmed projects:</b>					
		Optimising floating solar covers for evaporation mitigation	USQ11136	Michael Scobie	UniSQ	Sep-23	Aug-26
		Smart system for evaporation polymer deployment	USQ10698	Michael Scobie	UniSQ	Jun-24	May-28
3.2 Carbon	Carbon	<b>Confirmed projects:</b>					
		Benchmarking soil carbon, soil properties and management between long term experimental sites and on-farm cotton industry sites	DAN2305	Guna Nachimuthu	NSW DPIRD	Jul-22	Sep-25
		Carbon farming outreach program – Integrated approaches to building on-farm emissions knowledge – gap analysis opportunity	SUSA 11675	Chris Cosgrove	Sustenance Asia	May-25	Jan-26
		Climate-smart agriculture program: Major capital investment – nitrous oxide analysers	QUT 11478	Peter Grace	QUT	Nov-24	Oct-25
		Climate-smart agriculture program: Reducing nitrous oxide emissions with enhanced efficiency fertilisers	QUT 11399	Peter Grace	QUT	Nov-24	Jun-28
		De-risking nitrogen (N) decision making: Insuring against yield loss through N fertiliser reduction	CSIRO10999	Peter Thorburn	CSIRO	Apr-24	Feb-27

		Low Emissions Intensity Cotton Farming Systems (LIEFS – NSW)	DAN11402	Aaron Simmons	NSW DPIRD	Nov-24	Jun-27
		Membership: Zero Net Emissions (ZNE) from Agriculture Cooperative Research Centre (CRDC) Tier 2	ZNECRC11401	Nicola Cottee	ZNE CRC	Jul-24	Jun-34
		Project Management Committee meetings and activities: Carbon	CRDC10678	Meredith Conaty	CRDC	Jul-23	Jun-28
		Understanding nitrogen (N) cycling in cotton soils, and the timing of N availability to plant roots	CSIRO10081	Diogenes Antille	CSIRO	Oct-23	Jun-27
		<b>Plus planned investments in:</b>					
		Addressing carbon knowledge gaps					
		Are cotton soils performing at maximum potential?					
		Carbon farming outreach program – Integrated approaches to building on-farm emissions knowledge: gap analysis opportunity					
		Evaluation framework for enhanced efficiency fertilisers					
		Future Cotton: Low Emissions Intensity Cotton Farming Systems (LIEFS – QLD)					
		Managing change for evolving sustainability expectations					
		Waste-derived circular fertilisers					
<b>3.3 Circular economy</b>	<b>Circular economy</b>	<b>Confirmed projects:</b>					
		An evaluation of cotton fibre waste processing and composting alternatives: Comparison of business models, greenhouse gas emissions and commercialisation opportunities	UTS 10080	Christopher Bajada	UTS	Jul-23	Jun-27
		Closing the loop: textile waste composting for improved carbon footprint and sustainability	UON2301	Thava Palanisami	UON	Jul-22	Jun-26
		Project Management Committee meetings and activities: Circular economy	CRDC 10679	Meredith Conaty	CRDC	Jul-23	Jun-28

#### Pillar 4: Enabling Strategies

		<b>Confirmed projects:</b>					
		Cotton industry media monitoring 2023-26	CA 10718	Darrin Davies	Cotton Australia	Jul-23	Jul-26
		CRDC Spotlight magazine	CRDC 11373	Ruth Redfern	CRDC	Sep-24	Jun-27
		Elevating cotton's RD&E profile – communications support	REGP 11172	Georgie Roberston	Regional PR Co Pty Ltd	Jul-24	Jun-27
		Membership: APEN 2024-27	APEN 11222	Ruth Redfern	CRDC	Jul-24	Jun-27
		Research summaries	HOUC 10573	Bernadette Murray	House of Communications	Jun-23	Jun-26
		Social media strategy	WRIS 11572	Heidi Wright	Wright Social	Feb-25	Aug-25
		Strategic plan video project	CUSM 10578	David Cussons	Cussons Media	Jun-23	Dec-25

#### Key

AgriFutures	AgriFutures Australia	PHA	Plant Health Australia
AACS	Association of Australian Cotton Scientists	QLD DPI	Queensland Department of Primary Industries
ARLF	Australian Rural Leadership Foundation	QUT	Queensland University of Technology
BCI	Better Cotton Initiative	RFM	Regen Farmers Mutual
Cascale	Cascale Inc (formerly the Sustainable Apparel Coalition)	TTS	Textile Technical Services
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation	UM	University of Melbourne
CRCNA	Cooperative Research Centre for Developing Northern Australia	UNE	University of New England
CA	Cotton Australia	UON	University of Newcastle
CRDC	Cotton Research and Development Corporation	UniSQ	University of Southern Queensland
CSD	Cotton Seed Distributors	USYD	University of Sydney
DDCGI	Darling Downs Cotton Growers Inc	UTS	University of Technology Sydney
GRDC	Grains Research and Development Corporation	USC	University of the Sunshine Coast
HIA	Hort Innovation	UWA	University of Western Australia
NCSU	North Carolina State University	WSU	Western Sydney University
NT TBAR	Northern Territory Department of Trade, Business and Asian Relations	ZNE CRC	Zero Net Emissions from Agriculture Cooperative Research Centre
NTF	Northern Territory Farmers		
NSW DPIRD	NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development		