



**Australian Government**

**Cotton Research and  
Development Corporation**

# FINAL REPORT 2013/2014

## *Part 1 - Summary Details*

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Please use your TAB key to complete Parts 1 & 2.

**CRDC Project Number:** CGA1201

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**Project Title:** Capacity Building via small projects for SGE Members and Community

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**Project Commencement Date:** 1.8.11      **Project Completion Date:** 30.6.12

## *Part 2 – Contact Details*

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## *Part 3 – Final Report*

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(The points below are to be used as a guideline when completing your final report.)

### *Background*

Building growers capacity to adopt and adapt innovation ensures the outputs of research have the greatest impact. Interest and motivation from growers to engage more actively in industry extension can be greatly enhanced when it is driven by growers and at the regional scale. This project aims to help growers respond to current and future challenges through a wide range of targeted innovation forums and other extension activities promoted and facilitated through the local St George Cotton Growers Association Inc. the project supports a more direct influence by growers on determining both the nature and type of research and extension that they consider best meets their current and future needs. To that extent it will encourage the interest and increase the capacity of the local grower association and individual growers to help industry determine future needs and the translation of research outputs to improve farming practices and profitability of farming enterprises.

### *Objectives*

The project seeks to achieve increased capacity for each of the St George CGA members through them being better informed by accessing and delivering information on the latest research knowledge. Through Risk Management workshops, the members will be better equipped to respond to the ever changing and

challenging climatic and economic conditions and better control the impact of these on farming practices. Marketing workshops will increase understanding of marketing and strategies that can be employed on farm to increase profitability in the market place.

It is hoped that increased awareness of Industry will also lead to more Industry involvement and industry representation at a higher level from CGA members.

Improved perception of the cotton industry will be achieved through increasing awareness of the local school children and hence the wider community will be better informed of careers and opportunities available in the cotton industry.

The cotton industry will benefit from better community knowledge of the Industry.

### ***Methods***

1. Detail the methodology and justify the methodology used. Include any discoveries in methods that may benefit other related projects.

### ***Outcomes***

2. Describe how the project's outputs will contribute to the planned outcomes identified in the project application. Describe the planned outcomes achieved to date.

The marketing forum and educational information day hosted by Queensland Cotton and facilitated by the St George CGA, gave growers the opportunity to increase their skill level with marketing cotton. The information provided, increased growers capacity to understand complex and construed marketing signals when making pricing decision criteria. Key learnings included understanding the role that speculators have in the market place and the role and extent that the Chinese storage situation is effecting the market.

Further to the local marketing education day, 5 local ladies attended a regional marketing day operated by Queensland Cotton and held in Toowoomba which was not dissimilar to the abovementioned information day held in St George. The ladies who attended believed they gained significant insight into the pricing mechanisms that establish price in the cotton market either spot or futures.

On Monday the 22<sup>nd</sup> April we took 3 classes (Snr Ag, Ag & Hort, Year 9) of students from the State High School on farm during cotton picking. We visited Glen Rogan's property, were students got to see a cotton picker in action whilst listening to Glen speak about his 'Australian Super Cotton' brand. They also heard from Jamie Street a local agronomist who showed them different seed types, pest and beneficial bugs and an up close cotton plant. Jones Air also attended the day sending one of their pilots, students were able to have an up close look at a plane and hear about how planes play a huge role during the cotton season. Following the farm tour students then travelled to the local gin where they got to see firsthand the ginning process, they were able to view the cotton before and after it was ginned.

Last year students had their own little cotton plot planted at the school. We believe it is extremely important to keep assisting and encouraging the school with educational material, farm tours and advice in regards to the cotton industry, It is particularly vital to the community to encourage local students to choose a career in agriculture/cotton and remain locally.

On May 25<sup>th</sup> 4 growers participated in the Burdekin Agricultural District Tour. The project was enabled to allow growers to visit the Burdekin Irrigation area and observe cropping practices and innovations that may not have been available to them locally. The tour was very popular and it was interesting to see that probably the greatest restriction to a viable cotton industry in the North was the availability of ginning capacity. Despite this setback, growers in the area were positive albeit subdued confidence as the previous crops grown had suffered from record weather patterns. It was felt that the long term industry may be better situated further from the coast to alay weather hindrances.

### ***Budget***

3. The total allocated funding for this project has been spent within each application, notwithstanding the complexities of allocating a proposed expenditure plan. Consequently some applications had more money spent on them than originally proposed and others less. Generally we found that area's where the project was over funded, the value of in kind donation was undervalued and hence a reasonably similar value of contribution was made against the original budgeted figure. An example of such was the trip to the Burdekin where the all up cost of the Agricultural District Tour was significantly more than the proposed budget. Consequently, growers contributed more in kind and were very happy to do so as the trip was considered a huge benefit. Also the vagaries of agriculture meant that as the 2012 "Big Day Out" was locally held, funding for this application was spent on lunch and refreshments in lieu of bus hire.

### ***4. Conclusion***

The impact of the activities are relatively difficult to value. However, the value of education of both student and their teachers should not be discounted, as the industry in this area should benefit considerably over time if as a CGA we repeat the school education days. This benefit might include keeping students in agriculture and making a proactive approach to employment opportunities in our area.

Secondary to this result is that growers should always be looking out for opportunities in the industry and be aware of what other regions are experiencing as grower to grower information exchange is particularly powerful and can avoid costly overruns in a monetary sense.

### ***Extension Opportunities***

5. The education days should continue and with the help of our local CA rep, the St George CGA will aim to make these days a regular part of our community process. Unfortunately the education department has very strict rules and regulations for student participation so the CGA will aim to make these requirements more palatable for future operations of this nature.