

# Final Report

Capacity &amp; Community | Produced by CRDC

*If you are participating in the presentations this year, please provide a written report and a copy of your final report presentation by 31 October.  
If not, please provide a written report by 30 September.*

## Part 1 - Summary Details

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

CRDC Project Number: FP0902

**Project Title: PILOT OF FARMPLUS PORTAL**

Project Commencement Date: 30 April 2009  
Completion Date: 30 November 2009  
CRDC Program: 3 Human Capacity

Project

## Part 2 – Contact Details

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## ***Part 3 – Final Report Guide (due 31 October 2008)***

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### ***Background***

#### **1. Outline the background to the project.**

FarmPlus was approached in early 2007 to build a website for the Australian Cotton Conference to be held in August 2007 with additional functionality to enable the site to progress into a whole of industry knowledge portal for the cotton industry post conference. The site was progressively built and ongoing communications were delivered to delegates and the wider cotton community about the impending launch of the industry's first 'paperless conference' and the evolution of an aggregated knowledge system of relevance to all industry stakeholders.

This research project was based around the development of this knowledge system and the associated understanding of the information and knowledge needs of the industry and the way in which previously held beliefs, mechanisms and organisational arrangements had forged the landscape of knowledge transfer in the Cotton industry.

Prior to the commencement of this project seasonal impacts and water restrictions had given the industry an opportunity to take stock of its position and the chance to consolidate the abundance of research amassed by several key organisations over many years. Many recognised the need to focus the cutting edge technologies in the areas of water use, soil management and environmental management emanating from this research into more highly tuned formats to ensure their adoption on farm. The larger impacts on all the RDCs coincided with this need to sharpen the extension end of R,D&E to prove the return on investment of both taxpayer and levypayer dollars.

Hence a collaborative framework where the bulk of research and technologies could be aggregated into one point of reference was seen by the CRDC as a worthy embellishment to its broader communications strategy.

### ***Objectives***

#### **2. List the project objectives and the extent to which these have been achieved.**

The 'myBMP' site was designed to host a number of content collections linked to the modules and subsequent worksheets. The additional information and knowledge assets desirable for completing the BMP accreditation were designed to be accessed through a link to a purpose built FarmPlus page found through the 'Resources' panel, accessible from and linked to worksheets and requiring a unique ID. This webpage holds minimal content at the moment. This page would initially hold minimal functionality so as to enable wide research of module specific or general cotton based information. As the myBMP system evolves and after further action research with users the added functionality currently available in the stand alone FarmPlus system could be integrated.

Importantly, the functionality present on the myBMP site such as 'ask an expert', or discussion between researchers and producers would not be replicated so as to avoid confusing users.

It was agreed that prior to system testing with producers the construction of content into categories headed under BMP Modules would be;

- Water Management
- Greenhouse and Carbon
- Soil Health
- Quality
- Natural Assets

- Technology
- Biosecurity
- IPM
- Pesticide Management
- Petrochemicals

It was proposed this content be researched, and linked to the FarmPlus knowledge finding resource specifically for the use of myBMP users. FarmPlus content managers would determine information relevance on growing cotton in Australian conditions while being mindful of the mixed operations growers often manage. It would be sourced from as wide a pool of online content as possible including international sites with further enhancements, both in quantity and diversity, expected to be volunteered by project stakeholders and end users over time.

The system was planned to be tested and critiqued once integrated into the 'myBMP' site with internal project stakeholders including CRDC's Rohan Boehm, QDPI's Mark Hickman, 'myBMP' web administrator and other interested parties as deemed necessary by project sponsors. Withstanding any changes to the system resulting from this testing, the FarmPlus /myBMP knowledge system would then be 'roadtested' with a small and representative group of growers prior to full industry launch. This would focus on usability, relevance and flexibility to suit BMP accreditation and the key communities of practice within the industry who's knowledge requirements are accessible through 'myBMP'.

FarmPlus project implementation was put on hold while Cotton Australia finalised and validated all content to be contained in the my BMP portal. Therefore FarmPlus' system has been effectively 'parked' until such time as the whole system is made live and tested with the myBMP reference group of growers. **The FarmPlus /my BMP project cannot progress until this is enacted.**

At time of writing, it is exactly 12 months since this group initially met to appraise the myBMP prototype website. The myBMP manager has resigned citing the conflicting three committee system running BMP and overseeing my BMP, the hesitance of industry thinking to be challenged and the politics of the institutional arrangements running BMP as the reasons.

## ***Methods***

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

**Development of the ACC website and** the development of the first whole-of –industry knowledge portal

A 'Knowledge Central' stand was established at the 2007 Australian Cotton Conference.

This stand (see Attachment 1) was co- branded as FarmPlus and Landmark (being a key collaborator with FarmPlus as the initial agribusiness partner for national rollout of the system)

The 'Knowledge Central' stand at the Cotton Conference had three functions

1. To house the central knowledge point for all conference activity and to preview the whole of industry knowledge portal which 'Knowledge Central' would be converted into post conference
2. To promote the FarmPlus product,



3. To promote Landmarks engagement and endorsement of the FarmPlus system and its delivery through agronomists and farm advisors.

The decision was made following the ACC that this knowledge portal that had been proposed was to in fact be part of the BMP system or more accurately, the newly developed 'myBMP' portal. FarmPlus understood that the key Cotton industry players had concurrently agreed to focus the entire information and knowledge needs of the industry into the 'myBMP' system. This system was designed to house information pertinent to the whole cotton value chain and to also be an intersection of agribusiness and R&D.

The Landmark team were based in and around the 'Knowledge Central' stand speaking to clients and other delegates. The feedback from Landmark cotton agronomists was positive (see video link [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DKdR0fktS\\_s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DKdR0fktS_s))

The general FarmPlus site was active throughout the conference and on several occasions users undertook research to find specific information on cotton or crop husbandry topics of interest. One senior Landmark agronomist manager found a specific piece of information on the debate surrounding the Diuron chemical he had heard a lot about but had been unable to find through other industry and web channels.

#### **Visitors to the stand**

FarmPlus constructed the conference website for the ACC committee. This site was designed to enable access to all preconference material including conference schedules, key speakers, venue information and sponsors. The site also enabled delegates to login to the site at the conference, register their details and then nominate to have updates sent to them in the form of e-newsletters post conference. This was designed to form a relationship to the site and to encourage regular visits to keep up to date with developments in the industry and initiate some reliance on the site to be a central point of reference for R&D and knowledge sharing across industry .

The site also enabled delegates to upload all or a selection of conference papers and presentations onto a USB drive distributed as part of their delegate pack to become their ongoing reference device after the conference conclusion.

The Knowledge Central stand was visited by over one hundred delegates. These visitors were enquiring about the whole initiative and the forthcoming industry portal, and in many cases self registering their delegate number into the website to enable the download of conference papers and presentations. The

#### **Delegate response**

Delegates found the concept of a paperless conference acceptable and once assured of the ability to access the site content after the conference conclusion they were satisfied. It was important to delegates to be able to access conference papers and many were content to download only those presentations they nominated rather than the entire collection. Few delegates expressed the need for videos, photographs or other multi media content from the conference though this had been stipulated in the development brief given to FarmPlus by the ACC committee. Videos, Powerpoint presentations and conference images were nonetheless made available on the site during and after the conference.



Delegates also responded very favourably to the concept of having a USB drive to load up conference presentations rather than have to carry documentation away from each day's proceedings. Comments indicated that this represented convenience as well as saving on printing, paper and admin costs.

All conference papers and presentations provided to the conference committee were uploaded on to the ACC site as soon as they became available. These have been available for free access since the conference to the time of writing this report. Some were not provided and could not be supplied on the website.

## **CRDC**

FarmPlus was invited to attend a meeting of the BMP Operations Group on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May at CRDC offices in Narrabri by Louise Adcock, BMP manager. This meeting was attended with a group comprising Louise Adcock BMP, Letitia Cross CRC, Kym Armytage, Bruce Pyke CRDC, Rohan Boehm CRDC, Helen Dugdale CRDC, Kate Lightfoot, and James Houlahan CA.

A version of a fully optioned and populated FarmPlus was demonstrated live showing the key functionality of the FarmPlus system developed (and exhaustively tested) with Landmark Operations including search function, the e-newsletter facility, events collections, 'expert' search and news alerts. The background to the system, supporting research and development was explained and discussed at this meeting. The meeting participants expressed unanimous interest and approval with the demonstrated system and the proposal for a FarmPlus application for the myBMP portal.

### Outcomes from this meeting included the following:

- Legislative and regulatory requirements need to be available and easily accessible for cotton farmers (complete)
- The need for a helpdesk system to help users find what they are looking for (complete)
- The content needs to be cotton industry based and very practical information (complete)
- A rapid feedback system would be preferable to enable real time evaluation of the user experience and their use of various knowledge assets and packages accessible through FarmPlus/myBMP (awaiting CA's validation of myBMP)
- The functionality needs to be thought about and Louise Adcock needs to do the scoping of this (complete)
- The screen layout of the opening page was discussed and the view that users would see when they open the system
- The functionality of the system would be largely determined by the amount of testing that could be achieved in the time frame of the myBMP project development (awaiting CA's validation of myBMP)
- A suggestion tabled was that a basic myBMP could be offered initially to users and then a myBMP with FarmPlus as an added offering (this was later decided against).

The next step for this project was determined as a meeting of FarmPlus project Manager and the myBMP development team to consider what part of the system to test, the evaluation questions to be fielded to a reference test group of users, most likely to be made up of the original 40 people who tested myBMP prototype in February 2008. The reasoning for this was to ensure the priority user needs and preferences of this test group aligned with the layout, look & feel and added functionality of FarmPlus.





## BMP development team

A meeting was held in May 2009 between FarmPlus, Dan Hickey (BMP site developer) and Louise Adcock (BMP Manager). It was agreed that the role of integrating a FarmPlus application into the BMP portal was to deliver a knowledge resource far broader than the information contained within the myBMP site. The intention was for accreditation candidates to access broad topical information associated with a particular module. The FarmPlus stand alone site was discussed and the custom FarmPlus Landmark system was demonstrated with the following functionalities;

- aggregated research/find capability
- default search across all agribusiness topics and segments
- specified search – information can be searched from the world wide web on content related to agricultural production or a specific industry or topic
- Online forums – a two way exchange of knowledge, ideas and experience. This is a research based discussion centre where;
  1. agribusinesses, advisors and growers can interact with researchers to provide feedback, field questions, create and sustain communities of interest/practice; and
  2. Researchers can announce, update or present research initiatives, plans projects or people to these industry audiences.
- Expert seeking page – a central point of reference for people working in the industry. This is currently built to aggregate people from the whole of agriculture wide but can be easily fine-tuned to people associated in some way with the cotton/irrigated agriculture. Users can search by topic, name, organisation, location – virtually any descriptor that will assist in finding exactly the person needed to be contacted
- Events finder – similar in structure to the above, events can be searched by area, date, topic, industry segment etc. The events system has not been categorised, it relies on one or more inquiry criteria
- Custom user knowledge centre - a collection of links, contacts and discussions can be constructed and self managed for a grower or advisor. Pages or sites can be saved for future reference by FarmPlus users and accessed upon each login. This allows content to be quickly checked for updates or revisited without searching again
- Automated updates – e-newsletter system that alerts users of new R&D or predetermined agribusiness technologies. Topics can be nominated by the user to include content from sites or knowledge repositories of interest and the frequency of these updates can also be managed by the user.

The 'myBMP' site was designed to host a number of content collections linked to the modules and subsequent worksheets. The additional information and knowledge assets desirable for completing the BMP accreditation were designed to be accessed through a link to a purpose built FarmPlus page found through the 'Resources' panel, accessible from and linked to worksheets and requiring a unique ID. This webpage holds minimal content at the moment. This page would initially hold minimal functionality so as to enable wide research of module specific or general cotton based information. As the myBMP system evolves and after further action research with users the added functionality currently available in the stand alone FarmPlus system could be integrated. Importantly, the functionality present on the myBMP site such as 'ask an expert', or discussion between researchers and producers would not be replicated so as to avoid confusing users.

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During this meeting the need for the forums or social networking functionality of FarmPlus would be required was discussed. It was concluded that the 'technical assistance' option in myBMP which enables industry people to help users would be relied upon initially. An enquiry would be sent, the site administrator would then send this on to one or more people deemed appropriate from a specific list of technical people. This person would then receive an email linked to the myBMP website and a reply prompt/button. After one week from question lodgement there would be prompt to the site administrator showing whether an answer had been logged. This would alert the site administrator to resend the question or contact the technical person.

Integration of FarmPlus was seen as very simple operation with Dan Hickey (as website administrator) simply appending a URL to the drop down menu under the 'resources' link.

This enables the enquiry to be processed once a user has identified a need for further information to that provided within the myBMP site.



## System Development

The system was built to specifications. This was based on a 'myBMP' registered user using the FarmPlus site to find additional content and information to that housed within the myBMP site. Once registered, a user would embark upon the steps necessary to completing certification requirements pertaining to one or more Modules. In many cases this requires the user to read or complete lists of tasks contained in worksheets accessible from t within the individual Module pages in myBMP. If the user needs to find supplementary or additional information they could click on the 'resources' link on the right hand side of the BMP page and this would take them to the FarmPlus/BMP page (see Attachment 2). This enables the enquiry to be processed once a user has identified a need for further information to that provided within the myBMP site as indicated in the schematic in Attachment 2.

### Process of content building

FarmPlus is based around aggregation of industry specific information by experts with industry know-how and knowledge. It presents an opportunity to consolidate both national and international research findings to better inform primary producers, regional communities, policy makers and researchers. This supports CRDC's and the wider Cotton Industry's overall objective of developing and sustaining a;

*"globally competitive and responsible cotton industry. The Corporation provides leadership and investment in research, innovation, knowledge creation and transfer."*

### Determination of content relevance

As previously stated, FarmPlus is based around industry expertise determining the knowledge assets appropriate to producers and their advisors from public and private information sources. It relies on the notion that agribusiness seeks know how and products and services to make innovation work on farm. This concept is itself based on a weighty body of substantiating research, mainly conducted by the very institutions from which FarmPlus aggregates its technical and production based content.

Integration of FarmPlus was seen as very simple operation with Dan Hickey as website administrator simply appending a URL to the drop down menu under the 'resources' link. A meeting was held in May 2009 between FarmPlus, Dan Hickey(BMP site developer) and Louise Adcock (BMP Manager). It was agreed that the role of integrating a FarmPlus application into the BMP portal was to deliver a knowledge resource far broader than the information contained within the myBMP site. The intention was for accreditation candidates to access broad topical information associated with a particular module.

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6. researchers can announce, update or present research initiatives, plans projects or people to these industry audiences.
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10. automated updates – e-newsletter system that alerts users of new R&D or predetermined agribusiness technologies. Topics can be nominated by the user to include content from sites or knowledge repositories of interest and the frequency of these updates can also be managed by the user.

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### **Cotton E-learning**

A presentation on FarmPlus and the myBMP application was given as part of a meeting in Sydney on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2009 to discuss the way forward for the Cotton E-learning project funded by the NSW Government's Flexible e-learning organisation. Attendees were;

- Ross Murray (AACC)
- Louise Adcock & Adam Kay (Cotton Australia)
- Brendan Fox, & Adrian Davis (FarmPlus)
- Rohan Boehm (CRDC)
- Paula Jones (Cotton CRC)
- Jo Hathway & Jamy Somerville (NSW DPI)
- Charlie Bell & Darren Bayley (Tocal College)
- Michelle McCosker & Melanie Doriean ( Australian Flexible E learning Framework)
- Mike Beeston, Ben Stephens & Stuart Higgins (Cotton Industry representatives) and
- Mark Hickman (QPI&F \_DEEDI).

This meeting convened to discuss how the industry could go about introducing and supporting e-Learning and online training for industry-wide skills development by providing online access to an array of future educational courses that could be specially developed to appeal to all sectors of the industry. CRDC has scoped this new approach and secured new partnerships with experienced registered training organisation, coupled with direct support from the Australian Government e-Learning initiative, the Australian Flexible Learning Framework and its Queensland and NSW offices. The Sydney meeting was attended by representatives of CRDC, the Cotton Catchment Communities CRC, Cotton Australia, e-Learning Australia and registered training organisations, Industry & Investment NSW, the Australian Agricultural Colleges Corporation and NSW's Tocal College. The cotton industry has not had any inbuilt capability or a web-based platform that could be used to deliver professional development in an online environment.

Mark Hickman told the meeting that, effectively applied, e-Learning can impact on every sector of the industry and its reach would equally include researchers, extension services, farmers, consultants and agribusiness, plus all sectors of the post-farmgate sector. Professional development for cotton producers and their staff is often a very hard fit for day-today operations, with some businesses resorting to professional development on rainy days or when there is sufficient quiet time in the business. This is clearly not going to be enough in the future.

Following the Sydney meeting, the industry has endorsed an e-Learning pilot program to be conducted by the Australian Agricultural Colleges Corporation and Tocal College. The first projects will be short: six months of testing followed by development of a pilot system that the industry can build on. The first pilot project will assess needs in on-farm human resource management and will be followed by the development of new modules addressing the technical skills needed in future farming systems.

## **Results**

### **4. Detail and discuss the results for each objective including the statistical analysis of results.**

The brief for Farmplus was to develop a search page for the myBMP site to deliver a knowledge resource far broader than the information contained within the myBMP site. The intention was for accreditation candidates to access broad topical information associated with a particular module.

The system was built to specifications. This was based on a 'myBMP' registered user using the FarmPlus site to find additional content and information to that housed within the myBMP site. Once registered, a user would embark upon the steps necessary to completing certification requirements pertaining to one or more Modules. In many cases this requires the user to read or complete lists of tasks contained in worksheets accessible from within the individual Module pages in myBMP. If the user needs to find supplementary or additional information they could click on the 'resources' link on the right hand side of the BMP page and this would take them to the FarmPlus/BMP page.

### **Internal testing with CRDC and QDPI stakeholders**

A link to the draft FarmPlus /myBMP webpage was given to Mark Hickman and Rohan Boehm. These two people were internal sounding boards for the project development and also for FarmPlus' engagement with the Cotton Industry e-learning project. Feedback from initial testing included the following ;

- Request for more text in each answer in the 'find' sample?
- ability to retrace former searches in advanced searches – especially when nothing was found

- would a searcher be able to use the found materials, build a library of found articles, tag what is interesting?
- change the word Catalog / Catalogues to 'myBMP Modules'
- Any instructions on how to find things more easily.
- A ? with each line in the advance find section would be nice as would a 'here's how to find your myBMP stuff on FarmPlus' on the main page
- change the term 'Search' to 'Find'
- Search String' to be changed to "What do you need to find?"
- Is there anything going on for Help / FAQ / top searches etc?
- a myBMP logo rather than a Cotton Australia logo is more directly appropriate in the test mode
- the 'simple' find page to list out the BMP topic areas for clicking and include an 'ALL Modules' button also.
- whether FarmPlus is going to scan the myBMP text and associated links as well as the external websites that are nominated
- increased search of RD final reports, CRDC or CA or CRC websites first. With results posted highest in the list BEFORE a search around the world of Ag occurred. Perhaps a setting that allows industry only searches, or external Ag site searches or both area searches could be included.
- Is myBMP or the FarmPlus system hosting discussion forum pages or blog facilities for Cotton ? Could be a good spot to host Cottontales and community of practice forums and training events on topics such as Nutrition. That is, a national blog on Nutrition RDE and then regional blog page for everyone ( eg DD or CQ or Hillston growers to post thoughts on the topic), but the capacity existed within the site for certain levels of admin to extract only Qld, DD or Sth Qld thoughts etc to analysis for trends in information being sought. Webinars are another aspect to be considered for inclusion - as another venue for skills development and sharing of information.

A teleconference discussion was also conducted on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May between Mark Hickman and Brendan Fox of FarmPlus to clarify and respond to the feedback.

Where technically possible, these changes and modifications were all made by FarmPlus following this feedback. In some cases the technical specifications of the esrch software employed by FarmPlus was not able to be altered such as in the case of expanded search result text. It was also clarified that the brief from the BMP project team had been for minimal FarmPlus functionality initially but that potentially this would be added to following testing with growers and other stakeholders.

## *Outcomes*

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

FarmPlus project implementation was put on hold while Cotton Australia finalised and validated all content to be contained in the my BMP portal. Therefore FarmPlus' system has been effectively 'parked' until such time as the whole system is made live and tested with the myBMP reference group of growers. **The FarmPlus /my BMP project cannot progress until this is enacted.** At time of writing, it is exactly 12 months since this group initially met to appraise the myBMP prototype website. The myBMP manager has resigned citing the conflicting three committee system running BMP and overseeing my BMP, the hesitance of industry thinking to be challenged and the politics of the institutional arrangements running BMP as the reasons.

FarmPlus arranged a meeting with **Cotton Australia** to explain and demonstrate the system in late 2009. The decision at this time was that all the content that would appear in the myBMP site was to be viewed and assessed prior to the site going live. This flies in the face of the current thinking and usage patterns of the internet around the world whereby sites such as Wikipedia, and social networking sites such as facebook and Twitter rely and thrive on dynamic content. This means that people demand the absolute latest opinion research and commentary on issues and industries. They cannot wait for the institutional programmes to catch up (which in many cases takes months).

Feedback phase of the FarmPlus my BMP project was delayed indefinitely as a result of the above process being completed. The proposed time for completion of the above verification and scrutiny of all the content in the myBMP system and worksheets was intended to be March 2010. This effectively was some ten months after FarmPlus/BMP page became available. By the time the testing is implemented to gain feedback from growers and other cotton industry operatives there would be the need to re analyse the content aggregated under the various BMP modules to ensure that the content is contemporary and reflects up to date industry best practice. In the process of aggregating content for the construction of the knowledge assets categorised within FarmPlus /BMP that new websites, blogs, social media pages and discussions are appearing every week and that the ongoing maintenance of dynamic content is a considerable task. It is presumed to be standard practice for projects programs and collaborations to construct a new website as part of their communication and adoption checklist which announces the initiative but may do little more than this. The attraction of 'eyes' to such sites would appear to be 'hit and miss' and relies largely on linkages and search engines to draw attention to the content contained within.

The experience from FarmPlus having assembled the many links to webpages and datasets for the myBMP site is that linkages to web content is of more critical importance than the content in itself for this is where people can access the trials, data, innovations, opinion and messages contained within the plethora of RD&E tactics that continually occur in Australian agriculture and agribusiness.

Agriculture is on the whole lagging behind the rest of the community in its embrace of social online networks. There are core groups of agribusiness and farming people who increasingly turn to their social networks when seeking information, recognizing that these people are likely to lead them to results.

6. Please describe any:-

- a) technical advances achieved (eg commercially significant developments, patents applied for or granted licenses, etc.);
- b) other information developed from research (eg discoveries in methodology, equipment design, etc.); and
- c) required changes to the Intellectual Property register.

**Conclusion**

7. Provide an assessment of the likely impact of the results and conclusions of the research project for the cotton industry. What are the take home messages?

The FarmPlus /myBMP site has been developed and is parked on the FarmPlus server as a staging site until activated in myBMP and can be viewed at the following web address; [http://farmplus.net.au/bmp\\_staging/](http://farmplus.net.au/bmp_staging/). A site screen dump can be seen in Attachment 2.

**Extension Opportunities**

8. Detail a plan for the activities or other steps that may be taken:

- (a) to further develop or to exploit the project technology.
- (b) for the future presentation and dissemination of the project outcomes.
- (c) for future research.

The future

It is beyond the scope of this report and of the research project it concludes to scrutinize the nature and causal influences on the formation of the Australian Cotton industry to date.

However, the industry has thrived and developed on a largely self regulated platform by a grower base with a commonly held practical 'can-do' attitude coupled with an optimistic and practical value chain. Taking this into account, the cotton industry should internalise the findings of this research and continue with the themes of innovation diffusion it espouses.

**Future research is required to determine the following:**

The evolving needs of growers and others for content;

- regionalisation
- technical data
- tacit knowledge contributed/shared through social networks online

·The content focus for online aggregation of knowledge and information assets

- Practical
- Technical
- commercial
- events
- experts

The delivery mechanisms to be employed;

- Written content
- diagrammatic/models



- contacts
- published material/literature systems
- e-newsletters
- videos
- webcasts
- webinars
- podcasts
- blogs
- forums
- links to other social networks
- combinations of the above

The implementation of the FarmPlus system into my BMP is only the start of this research pathway. Farmplus knowledge systems are customised for particular applications from whole of industry applications to project specific tools. To date FarmPlus has effectively developed a prototype for myBMP. The testing and validation of this system has not taken place at the time of completion of this report and so there are a number of research pathways yet to be investigated.

Over time the audience of the FarmPlus BMP system will broaden and knowledge assets aggregated by the system would correspondingly expand. In particular, this would endeavour to include the value chain audiences and cater to their knowledge needs while, importantly optimising ongoing cross industry knowledge sharing and action research possible through 'myBMP' and FarmPlus.

8. A. List the publications arising from the research project and/or a publication plan.

CRDC Spotlight Magazine Spring 2009

B. Have you developed any online resources and what is the website address?

None developed as part of the project.



## ***Part 4 – Final Report Executive Summary***

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The 2008–09 year has seen extensive development of the online portal to support myBMP, the web-based version of the industry's environmental management system, Best Management Practices. myBMP is designed to enable cotton growers to self-assess their performance and practices against industry agreed standards. It will enable growers to access streamlined information packages and tools as they seek to improve practices and their business. The web-based system also provides a pathway for delivering R&D knowledge, providing targeted support for adoption and evaluating the impact of R&D on practice change.

The role of FarmPlus was to deliver a knowledge resource far broader than the information contained within the myBMP site. The intention was for accreditation candidates to access broad topical information associated with a particular module.

CRDC investments and personnel were central to a pilot project designed to shorten the time and reduce the complexity involved in discovering up-to-date information on cotton R&D. This was developed for the 14th Australian Cotton Conference in August 2008. Organisers provided all delegates with a USB memory stick that allowed them to upload conference presentations, video of many presentations and the papers from presenters. After the event all available information, including videos of most presentations, remained available to delegates on the Conference website. The aim of making the 14th Conference a 'paperless' event is being extended through a new project, managed by FarmPlus Info. This system aggregates on-line content from all cotton industry information websites and make it available inside the industry's online BMP system. It will also provide access to the content contained in the industry's pilot e-Learning project and provide the framework for social networking.

FarmPlus is based around aggregation of industry specific information by experts with industry know-how and knowledge. It presents an opportunity to consolidate both national and international research findings to better inform primary producers, regional communities, policy makers and researchers.

Upon the merge of ACGRA with Cotton Australia in 2008, CA supported the myBMP framework as industry's knowledge system and the FarmPlus Pilot project being developed was to be tested in that environment rather than the Cotton Conference Knowledge System (see Attachment 1).

FarmPlus project implementation was put on hold while Cotton Australia finalised and validated all content to be contained in the my BMP portal. Therefore FarmPlus' system has been effectively 'parked' until such time as the whole system is made live and tested with the myBMP reference group of growers. **The FarmPlus /my BMP project cannot progress until this is enacted.**

The FarmPlus /myBMP site has been developed and is parked on the FarmPlus server as a staging site until activated in myBMP and can be viewed at the following web address;  
[http://farmplus.net.au/bmp\\_staging/](http://farmplus.net.au/bmp_staging/). A site screen dump can be seen in Attachment 2.

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