



gold coast convention and exhibition centre

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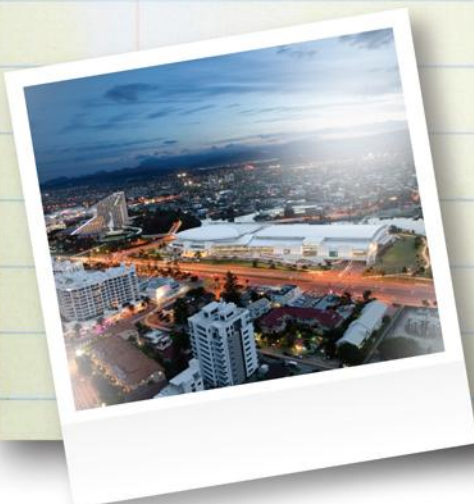
Prepared by: Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre

Client: Australian Cotton Shippers Association
Event: 16th Australian Cotton Conference 2012
Attendees: 1,586
Days: 3
Date: 14 - 16 August 2012
Budget: Undisclosed

THE EVENT

The Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre was the award-winning venue for the 16th Australian Cotton Conference which attracted more than 1500 representatives from the industry including cotton growers, researchers, agronomists, farming consultants, merchants and representatives from the Australian cotton industry. The biennial Conference is a joint venture between Cotton Australia and the Australian Cotton Shippers Association - two peak industry bodies who ensure best practice for Australian cotton production and export, and protect the interests of the industry by tracking and streamlining compliance, quality control, CSR and creating new market ventures.

In its 32nd year the Australian Cotton Conference focused on producing better product across the entire supply chain from research to land efficiency, agronomy, water and processing, and all of the behind-the-scenes activities that create a superior product. Cotton is a significant Australian commodity which generates in excess of \$1 billion in export revenue each year, and enjoyed two record seasons from sufficient water supplies and competitive pricing.





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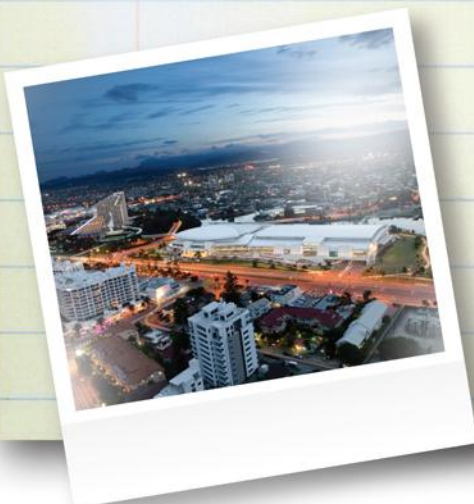


These two fruitful seasons followed 7 years of drought where crops got smaller and smaller each year: our 2008 cotton crops yielded only 20% of the total produced for 2012.

Conference secretariat Tracey Byrne-Morrison said coming out of two record seasons provided a vibrant setting for the 16th Cotton Conference, where the industry's tenacity and strength meant that the spotlight could be focused on enhancing best practices and efficiency on a global scale, rather than looking at survival measures during rockier times. "Our conference theme, 'Growing Better all the Time', reflected this prosperous setting which poses challenges for growers and the export industry nonetheless, and this was a forum to address those hurdles," she said.

To provide some further background into this core industry; Australia is the third largest cotton exporter in the world behind the US and India, which is sold into a world market competing against 75 cotton producing nations. It therefore forms part of the backbone of Australia's commodity trade, where:

- 100% of Australian cotton is exported with Australia's primary cotton export markets being China, Indonesia and Thailand;
- approximately 1,500 cotton farms operate in the country, roughly half in NSW and half in Queensland;
- Australia's cotton growers produce yields which are two and a half times the global average;
- in an average year, Australia's cotton growers produce enough cotton to clothe 500 million people.





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VENUE AND CLIENT

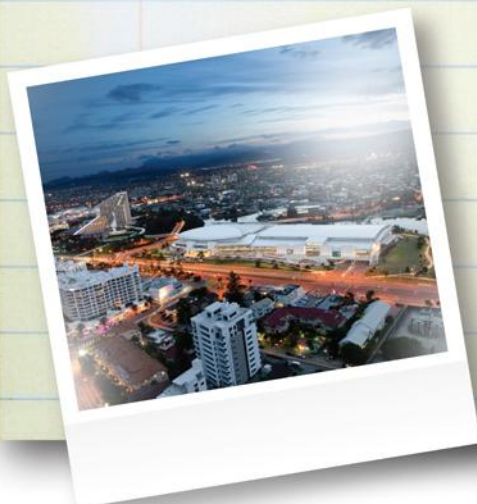
In an average production year, the Australian cotton industry generates in excess of \$1 billion in export revenue. The conference attracted a significant representation of one of Australia's biggest rural export industries delivering significant economic impact to the Gold Coast as well. Attracting 1,586 delegates and more than 2,400 room nights booked at hotels and apartments situated within walking distance to the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre, the conference added up to some great bookings and local spend. While the majority of the three day event was situated in-house at the Centre, delegates ate breakfasts and dinners offsite on most days and extended their stay in some instances to explore the leisure destination post-event.

In seeking a conference destination the client wanted a venue and location which appealed to all delegates, who largely came from regional Queensland and NSW where all of Australia's cotton farms operate out of. A variety of factors influenced the decision to choose the Gold Coast Convention Centre, including the venue's walking distance location to 3,000 accommodation rooms, restaurants and world-famous surf beaches which provide entertainment and leisure options as added-value post event.

The Centre facilitated the smooth delivery of the conference which left the client happy and achieving all objectives of the event. Showcasing a trade exhibition, plenary sessions, breakout spaces for networking and an awards evening for 1020 delegates to celebrate the achievers of industry, the Centre was the hub of the Australian cotton industry for the three day event.

LOGISTICS AND CHALLENGES

A significant component of the conference was the trade expo featuring 76 exhibitors and a full scope of products from the production, processing and marketing side of cotton. This included research bodies, chemical companies, agribusiness banks, shippers, ginners and all the major machinery manufacturers who showcased a range of tractors, high clearance self propelled sprayers, planters, mulchers, module loaders and stationary engines. Exhibition organiser Brian





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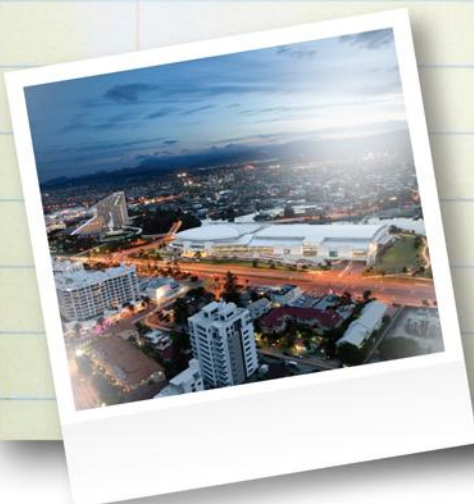
O'Connell said the biggest logistical challenge was bringing the big gear tractors into the Centre's exhibition halls. "We had to transport these machines up the Gold Coast Highway and because they exceeded the allowable load size they required escort vehicles to accompany them. Travel up the highway for oversize load is also restricted to certain times of day outside of peak traffic which all had to be taken into consideration when coordinating the expo."

CONFERENCE AND THE FUTURE OF THE AUSTRALIAN COTTON INDUSTRY

Enjoying two record seasons and a strong track record of management practices backed by best practice and research, the future of the Australian cotton industry looks bright, albeit always at the hands of Mother Nature. Focused on producing a better product across the entire supply chain, the Conference created a forum for 80+ presenting experts to share their research and insights into growing and exporting better cotton to more than 1500 delegates. The conference's extensive speaker program included research scientists and agronomists on GM crops, nutrition and practices, environmental and sustainability experts on market benchmarks and climate change, presenters from banking and finance on economics for both the global cotton industry and closer to home with funding operations, and key personnel from the Chinese textile market to list a few. A few of the presentation topics included future farming initiatives and technological requirements, carbon energy costs, animal nutrition, protecting and promoting the cotton trade, herbicide resistance, weed management and an overview of the Chinese cotton market, Australia's largest export destination.

The 16th biennial Cotton Conference provided the platform for mixing, networking and sharing key research and information to bring one of Australia's biggest commodity trades together under one roof.

For more information about the Australian Cotton Conference, information about guest speakers and papers, visit www.australiancottonconference.com.au.





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CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

"The Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre was the venue of choice for the 2012 Cotton Conference, where all facets of the event were delivered with an exceptionally efficient and professional approach. From the trade exhibition and all aspects of audio visual, to the on-site lunches and gala dinner, all of our requirements were looked after with attention to the smallest details which ensured the successful roll out of our conference. Our Event Manager and the Centre's staff were a pleasure to deal with and brought the expertise of a world-class conferencing venue situated in an enviable destination. We couldn't be happier with the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre."

Tracey Byrne-Morrison

Secretariat - Australian Cotton Conference

