

AUSTRALIAN COTTON SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE 2021



PLANET. PEOPLE. PADDOCK. is the Australian cotton industry's framework to achieve its vision of being a global leader in sustainable cotton production.

It guides work to set sustainability targets in the areas most important to industry and stakeholders, coordinate a whole-of-industry strategy to achieve these targets, and engage effectively with stakeholders on actions and progress.

Sustainability for the Australian cotton industry means running profitable and efficient cotton farms while creating environmental, economic and social value. It also means being accountable to stakeholders for the industry's actions and impacts. Since becoming the first Australian agricultural industry to independently assess its environmental impacts in 1991, the Australian cotton industry has been quietly improving its sustainability. That work continues.



AUSTRALIAN COTTON SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK
PLANET. PEOPLE. PADDOCK.

2020/2021 SUSTAINABILITY

This snapshot provides a summary of the Australian cotton industry's sustainability progress for the 12 months to 30 June 2021 across its most important PLANET (environment), PEOPLE (social) and PADDOCK (economic) topics.

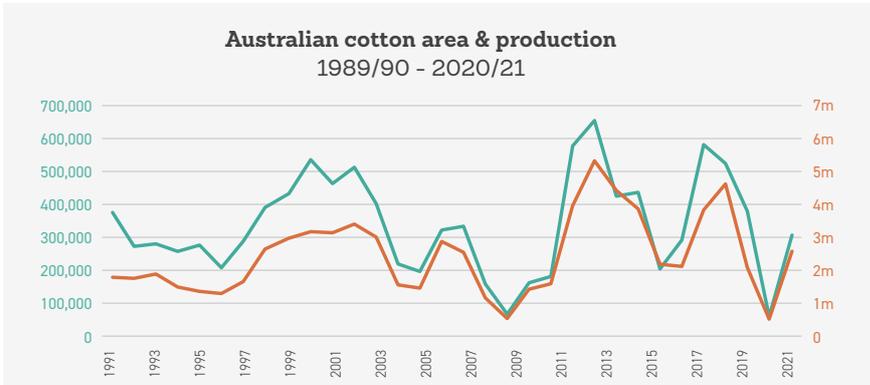
THE FULL 2020/21 SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE IS AVAILABLE HERE 

ADDITIONAL DETAILED INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE IN AN ONLINE DATA PACK HERE 

2020/2021 SEASON

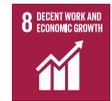
As cotton is an annual crop, growers adjust the area of cotton they plant each year to reflect water availability.

Following two years of severe drought, improved seasonal conditions in 2020/21 saw 2.8 million bales picked with a gross value of \$1.6 billion.



Source: Cotton Australia

— Area planted (ha) — Bales picked

TARGETED OUTCOMES		2020/21 SUMMARY	SDG ALIGNMENT
PLANET	 Water	Continuous increase in the efficiency of water used for cotton irrigation, within sustainable river & ground water system limits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water use efficiency improved 48% less water now needed to grow a bale of cotton compared to 1993. 
	 Greenhouse gases	Contribute to the Paris Agreement's aim of a climate neutral world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emissions per bale estimated to have reduced 6% from the previous year 
	 Biodiversity	Native vegetation management in the cotton landscape is in line with regional priorities ¹ .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21% of an average cotton farm is remnant native vegetation 
	 Pesticides	Pesticide use supports optimal crop production while having no negative impact on human & environmental health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insecticide hazard reduced Herbicide hazard increased: more rain = more weeds 
	 Soil Health	Sustained cotton productivity growth by improving soil health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soil health measures are being developed 30% of growers use cover crops 
PEOPLE	 Wellbeing	Contribute to improved wellbeing of people living and working in cotton communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical health and community involvement has increased Mental health has decreased 
	 Workplace	Injury-free cotton farms, skills for innovative and modern agriculture, & a diverse workforce that is treated ethically.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better workplace data is a priority Industry workplace strategy in development 
PADDOCK	 Productivity	Increase Australian cotton yield and quality within sustainable environmental boundaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yield increased from previous two drought years, but remains below long-term trend 
	 Profitability	Growers have sufficient profitability to confidently re-invest in their business & community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No insights on 2021 profitability due to a data lag. 

¹The Australian cotton industry is working with NRM Regions Australia to explore if the cotton industry can align to regionally-specific biodiversity priorities.