

2002 National Australian Cotton Trade Show

# From steam traction to steamy attraction

By Brian O'Connell

The 2002 National Australian Cotton Trade Show again had something for everyone.

From: A beautifully restored fully operational 1912 steam traction engine that is into its second century of service to Australian agriculture.

To: A MIG 15 jet from the mid 1950s when the modern cotton industry was just getting under way.

And: The very contemporary South American dancers who proved a wonderful incentive for Australian growers to embark on study tours to see how it was done across the Pacific — cotton growing that is.

And in the midst of what could at best be described as "challenging times" for the cotton industry, 'everyone' turned up to see these and many other exhibits. The exhibitors were there in greater numbers than ever before but exhibitors and growers alike were pleased that the organisers had maintained the strictly cotton focus. Exhibitors were on site to address every aspect of cotton production and marketing.

The growers were there from every cotton producing area in Australia. Again over 1700 growers, their consultants and farm staff were registered at the gate. And, indicative of the growing international awareness of the trade show, we had cotton industry visitors from South African, the US, Europe, the Middle East and Asia.

As in previous years, the grower forums and the in-field machinery demonstrations were well attended. The new irrigation display area proved a real drawcard and the other on-site improvements worked well. Over the past five years cotton industry support for the trade show has enabled us to provide around \$100,000 of capital improvements on the TAFE Agricultural Centre site.

Planning is already under way for 2003 and we are pleased to announce that the National Australia Bank, our naming rights sponsor over



The in-field demonstrations were again popular this year.



Steam traction provided by a 1912 steam engine.

the past four years, will continue this support through to 2005.

Among other things we are looking to bring the machinery demonstrations closer to the main site area and to provide people movers around the car park and on site. The growth in visitor numbers — there were 800 vehicles in the main car park by 11.00 am on the first day — has meant a longer walk to the site entrance.

Similarly the number of machinery demonstrations is on the increase and we want to accommodate these in close to maintain the focussed nature of the event. We would welcome any feedback from cotton industry visitors and exhibitors alike because it is only by meeting the needs of those attending that we will ensure the continued success of the Trade Show.

See you on site Wednesday May 28 and Thursday May 29, 2003.

The new irrigation display was a real drawcard.



Steamy attraction provided by Brazilian dancers.



Industry seminars were well attended.

Senator Judith Troth launching AgGuide's new precision agriculture software.

