

Emerald grower wins top cotton industry award

By James Holden

For the first time in the six year history of the award, a grower from Emerald has become the Australian Cotton Grower of the Year.

Wayne Reeves of 'Parker Joint Venture' won the major prize — funding for cotton-related study — at an awards dinner on May 29 hosted by the Gwydir Valley Cotton Growers' Association.

A popular winner, Wayne was clearly delighted with the award, which was given in recognition of his excellent OH&S practices, environmental monitoring and practical farm management (see story on page 11).

The 2002 Cotton Grower of the Year award was presented by Christine Campbell, chairman of Cotton Australia.

Earlier in the evening Deidre McCallum of AgriRisk and Paul Wilcox of Aventis presented Wayne with the Cotton Grower of the Year (under 600 hectares) award. The other farms in this category were Ian Thomas of St George, the Maunder family from the Upper Namoi and the Skerman family, dryland farmers from the Darling Downs.

Craig Foreman from Incitec Fertilizers presented the Cotton Grower of the Year (over 600 hectares) award. The finalists in this category were the Watson family from the Upper Namoi and Lance Brown of Haddon Rig in the Macquarie Valley.

John, Robyn and Andrew Watson were deserving winners of this award, especially in light of their commitment to the cotton industry over the past 20 years.

Lance Brown of Haddon Rig took out the Cotton Australia Encouragement Award — which also includes funding for cotton study — for his innovative farm management. This was presented to Lance by Philip Russell, chief executive officer of Cotton Australia.

The major sponsors of the 2002 Australian Cottongrower of the Year awards were AgriRisk,



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2002 Cotton Grower of the Year Wayne Reeves with Christine Campbell, chairman of Cotton Australia.

Aventis and Incitec Fertilizers.

All proceeds from the charity dinner went to the Cotton Industry Medical Undergraduate Scholarship Scheme. This funds medical students for part of their studies to encourage them to work in rural communities when they graduate as doctors.

An auction of State of Origin tickets and sporting memorabilia raised money for the Westpac rescue helicopter.

From left: Paul Wilcox (Aventis) with the Watson Family who won the Cotton Grower of the Year Award (over 600 hectares).

