

Welcome to www.cottongrower.com.au

By David Dowling

With a good deal of kicking and screaming *The Australian Cottongrower* magazine has finally been dragged into the internet age of the 21st century. Our web site is now officially up and running so please visit: www.cottongrower.com.au. Any comments and suggestions are very welcome.

The birth of the new internet baby comes after a long and protracted labour and the parents realise they are in for an extended period of hard work to keep the site operating with little if any financial reward.

But the end result should be worth it. The archives of *The Australian Cottongrower* provide one of the most important reference resources in the industry and it has long been our aim to make these available in digital format.

After much discussion about how much — or how little — information to make available on the site, we have decided to put on the site as much of our back issues



and stories as we have time to process. The only restriction will be on the most recent issues of the magazine.

The latest issue and the previous issue will each have about six articles available

on line in html format. We decided to use html format rather than providing content as pdf files because it is much more internet-friendly and easier to search and down-

12 ▷

load. Unfortunately, it also means more work at our end.

The most recent edition of the *Cotton Yearbook* will be on line — as a cut-down version for the first six months or so — and then as a full text version.

All articles in back issues of *The Australian Cottongrower*, for which we have decent digital files, will eventually be available on-line. Within the next six months, we hope to have at least the past five years of the magazine available in their entirety.

The aim is to make this valuable database searchable by key words, by title and by author. But as anyone who has worked on web site development will tell you, there is often a big gap between what you aim to do and what the technology can deliver. We are happy with the way the site works now, but we know it can be much better with continued development.

We believe that content is the important thing whether it is a web site or a magazine and we will continue to deliver quality content via both media.

By the time this magazine is in your hands, we hope to have every article in the first four issues of 2002 freely available on-line, with about six articles plus the contents page from each of the past two issues. Selected extracts from the 2002 *Cotton Yearbook* will also be available from the site.

There is a search facility available on the site, but we hope to have something more sophisticated there in the near future. New subscribers can subscribe on-line and we will soon have a subscription renewal service available on the site.

While *The Australian Cottongrower* is not a newspaper, the office regularly receives cotton news press releases and new product information. These are now available in the Cotton News section of the

web site and older news items are archived and searchable.

If you have any industry-related news you want to publicise, feel free to email it (cotton@greenmountpress.com.au) and it may well make its way on to the web site.

Because this is an information site, we are happy to link to many sources of news concerning the cotton industry. Again, if you have any suggestions, please let us know.

Useful links to other sites

From *The Australian Cottongrower's* site, check out the weather links if you get a chance — they go through to a number of interesting forecasting models. You can become your own weather forecaster with constantly updated radar views of your local region.

You can also link directly to the National Australian Cotton Trade Show site (www.cottontradeshow.com.au) where you'll find all you need to know about this not-to-be-missed event. You can even make an electronic booking to reserve a site for next May.

There are other handy links including sites for cotton marketing information, finance, currency conversion and domestic and international cotton research. Cotton industry organisations are also linked.

And proud of it

We would like you to visit our new *Cottongrower* site if you get a chance. We are proud of it and excited about what we think it can become. We would also be thrilled if you bookmarked it — or better still — made www.cottongrower.com.au your home page.



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