

SECTION 8
PROCESSING &
MARKETING

This section brought to you in association with



Mill survey identifies demand trends

Identification of future demand trends and mill perceptions of Australian cotton will be the key outcomes of a survey of international mill customers recently commissioned by the Cotton Research and Development Corporation (CRDC). The survey will be undertaken by CSIRO Materials Science and Engineering in conjunction with CRDC.

The survey follows on from international customer studies completed in 2003 and in 2007. The survey assessed fibre quality aspects for Australian cotton from the mill perspective. An assessment of demands for quality cotton types and BMP cotton was also completed during the previous surveys. In conducting the current survey CSIRO Textile Technologist Rene van der Sluijs said “it would be interesting to note if mill’s perception of Australian cotton had changed over time”.

“The initial survey helped identify a number of market opportunities for Australian cotton as well as provide ideas for a number of new research projects – and it is hoped this round of surveys currently being undertaken will do the same,” Rene said.

Mills’ perceptions of a range of Australian raw



René van der Sluijs.

cotton properties are being measured, including length, strength, micronaire, uniformity and neps – and while it was still too early to analyse the results, he said initial indications from mills surveyed in Japan and Korea had been pleasing.

“What is apparent is that by and large Australian cotton fibre parameters are viewed favourably against most other competing 1-1/8” style growths, but there are some fibre areas where we appear to be falling behind, and this needs to be further investigated once surveys in other consuming countries have been conducted before we can make any conclusions.”

Rene has been conducting the surveys in Japan and South Korea with Pete Johnson from Left Field Solutions who said the survey was also looking at demand trends further down the supply chain, in an attempt to identify and prioritise potential “blue sky” areas of fibre and textile research and marketing efforts.

Pete said surveys to date have clearly identified ‘casual attire’ as the growth segment for cotton usage.

“In both Korea and Japan, casual attire was by far the biggest growth area – but what surprised me was the large loss of cotton’s market share in the inner-attire segment. It appears that cotton was being replaced by functional fibres that integrated a range of nanotechnologies for use in the inner attire area, and to a similar extent in the sports attire segments.”

In both the Korean and Japanese studies, Australia was the dominant (upland) raw material in the production of fine count yarns in the 40-59 Ne yarn market.

Once complete, it is hoped the survey will provide an accurate picture of where Australian cotton is currently being utilised, and what market segments provide the greatest scope for growth in the future.

Further information can be obtained from rene.vandersluijs@csiro.au or Dallas Gibb, CRDC’s Value Chain Investment Manager at admin@techmac.com.au

