

Cotton conference heads back to Gold Coast

By David Swallow

The 12th Australian Cotton Conference will be held at the new Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre, Broadbeach, Queensland, from Tuesday August 10 to Thursday August 12, 2004.

This is an exciting venue at a location that has always been popular with the cotton industry.

The new Conference Centre, which is being built alongside the Gold Coast Highway, will be linked by a covered walkway to Conrad Jupiters Hotel. It is only a short walk to the Grand Mercure Hotel and the Broadbeach shopping and restaurant precinct.

The conference centre has two large auditoriums, with a large exhibition hall adjacent.

The theme for this year's conference is **Quality Cotton – A Living Industry.**

PROGRAM

At the time of writing, the conference program is all but finalised. At the opening session, the topics will include the effects of global trade reform on the Australian farmer, and the implications and opportunities for Australian cotton.

There will be sessions on Integrated Natural Resource Management, which will include talks on catchment management both in New South Wales and Queensland, and also on managing climate variability and change.

"Quality Cotton, not just another yarn" will bring together a range of speakers to discuss Australian fibre and international feedback, ginning, "smart farming for quality", and being rewarded for quality.

In this session, Bill Dunavant III will be a key speaker on the changing market.

Other sessions will include Biotechnology Application, in which there will be speakers on management changes for Bollgard II and other new biotechnology, and a session on Sustainable Farming Systems, in which soil health and biological farming will be highlighted.

On Thursday afternoon, August 12th, the conference will break into two concurrent sessions. One session will be a dry-land cotton workshop, which will include



The 2004 Australian Cotton Conference will be one of the first events at the new Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre which is taking shape at Broadbeach.

topics on yield, fibre quality, and new technologies.

The other will be a hands-on research session, in which delegates will have a chance to go one-on-one with researchers via interactive discussions and practical demonstrations in small groups, addressing current cotton research projects.

This hands-on research session is a new concept, and will provide a great opportunity for delegates to practically share ideas between research, extension and industry from different regions.

There will be a poster display in the arena between the conference hall and the trade display area, where meals will also be served. So delegates will have a great opportunity to talk to the researchers about their work.

TRADE DISPLAY AREA

This year, ACGRA is pleased to announce the appointment of the organisers of the Australian Cotton Trade Show to promote and coordinate the trade display at the Cotton Conference. ACGRA believes that this alliance will deliver major benefits for both exhibitors and delegates to our conference. Potential exhibitors

have already been sent folders in which a *Gateway to the Cotton Industry* package has been designed to give exhibitors the opportunity to attend both the trade Show and the Cotton Conference.

It is proposed to have a central bar area at the trade display, so there will be a great opportunity for networking!

CONFERENCE DINNER

The popular and entertaining conference dinner will be held on the Thursday evening, and this time, new cotton industry awards will be presented at the dinner. These awards include Researcher of the Year, Service to Industry, Cotton Grower of the Year, High Achiever of the Year, and Young Achiever of the Year Awards.

So, make sure the dates for the 12th Australian Cotton Conference (August 10 to 12) are on your calendar. The registration and accommodation brochures will be mailed out in the next few weeks. You will also be able to register and book accommodation for the conference by going to the ACGRA website: www.csd.net.au/acgra/

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