

CSIRO cotton breeding team recognises 40-year partnership

STRONG relationships formed between growers and researchers have been an essential part of the cotton industry's success in Australia and will continue to play an important role in the future.

The CSIRO has been running cotton breeding trials with Moree farmer Peter Glennie at his 'Norwood' property in the Gwydir Valley for 40 years.

To celebrate the milestone, CSIRO recently presented Peter with a framed plaque to recognise his contribution, assistance and achievements over this period.

"It's been marvellous, I've really enjoyed it," said Peter about his collaboration with CSIRO.

Their working relationship began in 1980 when Peter was one of the very early cotton growers in the region and the CSIRO was on the hunt for growers who were not only keen on developing the cotton industry but also showed interest in the research that would enable the industry to be viable.

CSIRO cotton breeding leader Dr Warwick Stiller said research and its adoption by industry relies on people like Peter who make their properties available for field trials.

"To successfully validate new cotton varieties before wider commercial release, we need to be able to test them under a range of different growing conditions, such as different climate and soil, together with different crop management," Dr Stiller said.

"We're tremendously grateful to those growers across the industry who allow CSIRO to trial new varieties – of cotton and other crops – on their properties for the wider benefit of



Dean Cameron (Team Leader) and Dr Warwick Stiller (Cotton Breeding Lead) presented a pictorial mosaic to Peter Glennie (centre) to commemorate their 40-year partnership.



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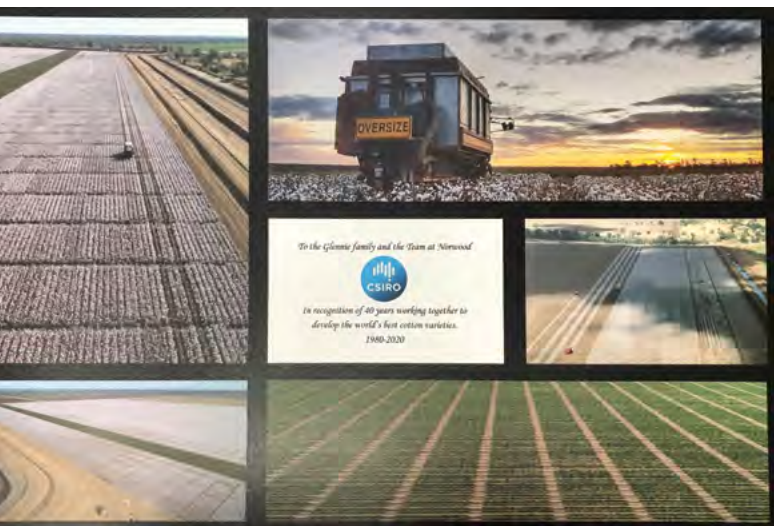
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the entire industry. Every cotton variety released over the past 40 years, and there have been 106, have been evaluated and selected on Peter's farm."

"Peter really is a shining beacon for the researcher-farmer relationship – I don't know of any other farmers who have been involved in field trials for as long as him. We're incredibly thankful to him."



Stomping cotton from Norwood's first crop in 1977.



The mosaic presented to Peter glennie to mark 40 years of trials.



Picking variety trials at Norwood in 1994.

During this 40 years Peter has enjoyed working with CSIRO breeders to improve cotton varieties for the benefit of all Australian cotton growers (all cotton grown in Australia are CSIRO-developed varieties), as well as international adopters.

In that time, he has worked with a number of CSIRO cotton breeders including the late Dr Norm Thompson, Peter Reid, Dr Greg Constable, Dr Warwick Stiller, Dr Shiming Liu and Dr Warren Conaty. Peter also witnessed the development of Cotton Seed Distributors, CSIRO's commercial partner for increasing and marketing the cotton varieties.

When CSIRO and Peter first become involved together, CSIRO wanted growers interested in developing the industry and research. Peter has an interest in both – having not only worked with CSIRO, but also with other leading cotton industry researchers who have investigated nutrition, pest management and biodiversity.

Peter firmly believes that research is important, but also that growers and researchers working together is critical. This helps ensure that the research is relevant and helps extend it to the broader industry.

"I've really enjoyed being involved and think it's important that researchers have a connection to what's going on in the field."

Through improvements in cotton varieties and farming technologies, he's seen cotton yields more than triple in this time. Peter can be proud of the part he has played in developing Australian cotton into a world-class product.



Norwood featured in the 1996 Gwydir Valley field day.

