



Australian Government
**Cotton Research and
Development Corporation**

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Mr Rowan Ramsey MP
Committee Chair
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Agriculture and Industry
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

25 September 2015

Dear Mr Ramsey,

On behalf of the Cotton Research and Development Corporation (CRDC), please accept this letter as our submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Agriculture and Industry's inquiry into Agricultural Innovation.

The Australian cotton industry is internationally recognised as innovative, dynamic and hugely successful – due in part to the willingness of the industry to invest in world-class results and rapidly adopt the emerging science, innovations and technology. Research and development continues to be at the forefront of driving our industry's productivity growth.

There are many examples in the cotton industry of improving the efficiency of agricultural practices due to new technology – take, for example, the introduction of biotechnology into the cotton industry in 1996. This technology has made a dramatic contribution to the reduction in insecticides applied to Australian cotton crops: in the past 15 years, Australian cotton growers have reduced their insecticide use by 95 percent.

This is but one benefit of this technology to the industry, the environment and society at large: others include increased populations of beneficial insects and wildlife in cotton fields, reduced pesticide run off, improved farm worker and neighbour safety, a decrease in labour and fuel usage, improved soil quality, reduced production costs, increased yield, reduced risks and further opportunities to grow cotton in areas of high pest infestation.

We recognise, as the wider agricultural industry does, that the environment in which our growers operate is rapidly, and continuously, changing – hence the need for continued investment in innovation through research, development and extension. Our focus is on ensuring that our industry is able to overcome future challenges, capitalise on opportunities, adapt to change and, most importantly, remain profitable, sustainable and competitive.

As such, the Standing Committee's inquiry into Agricultural Innovation is of great interest to the cotton industry, and we have collaborated with our colleagues at the Council of Rural Research and Development Corporations (CRRDC) on a joint submission. We encourage you to consider this submission, and that of our representative body, Cotton Australia, once received.

We would be very pleased to appear in front of the Standing Committee as you consider submissions to this inquiry.

Kind regards,

Bruce Finney
Executive Director