



# **CottonInfo** **Strategic Plan**

## 2025–28

HELPING YOU GROW



# Contents

About CottonInfo	2
Vision	3
Mission	3
Values	3
<b>The CottonInfo Team</b>	<b>3</b>
CottonInfo Team Structure	3
Regional Extension Officers (REOs)	4
Technical Leads	4
myBMP experts	4
<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Alignment with CRDC's Clever Cotton</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Strategic Goals</b>	<b>7</b>
Strategic Goal 1	7
Strategic Goal 2	8
<b>Implementation</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Governance and Reporting</b>	<b>9</b>
CottonInfo partners, governance and team structure	9
<b>Target and Measures</b>	<b>10</b>
CRDC Strategic Plan re CottonInfo	10
CRDC Strategic Plan Strategic Goals	11
CRDC and CottonInfo communication strategy	13
<b>CottonInfo - Strategic Plan 2025-28: plan on a page</b>	<b>14</b>



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## About CottonInfo

**CottonInfo is the Australian cotton industry's extension program, designed to deliver research and development (R&D) outcomes to cotton growers and consultants.**

It is a partnership of the Cotton Research and Development Corporation (CRDC), Cotton Australia and Cotton Seed Distributors (CSD) to deliver industry good.

The CottonInfo Management Committee, comprised of representatives of CRDC and Cotton Australia, leads the CottonInfo program. CRDC manages the program and team, Cotton Australia delivers the industry's best management practices program *myBMP*, and CSD is a key investor.

CottonInfo gratefully acknowledges the funding it receives from CSD to support the Regional Extension Officers and the activities they undertake for the benefit of the industry.



CottonInfo connects growers and consultants with the latest R&D to help achieve best practice. The team works across a broad portfolio, aligned with CRDC's Strategic Plan 2023–28, Clever Cotton, and the cotton industry's sustainability framework PLANET. PEOPLE. PADDOCK. The topic areas include biosecurity, climate, crop nutrition, disease management, energy use efficiency, fibre quality, insect and mite management, natural resource management, pesticide input efficiency, soil health, stewardship, water management and weed control.

The success of cotton growers is the driving force underpinning CottonInfo. CottonInfo works with growers and their consultants to improve practices, productivity, competitiveness and performance.

Cotton is a major contributor to the Australian economy and Australian cotton is considered to be one of the most sustainable in the world. At the same time, growers face increasing local and global challenges, such as adapting to climate change, producing more cotton with fewer inputs, combating diseases, pests, and weeds, and meeting market and community sustainability expectations.

To ensure long-term profitability and resilience, CRDC's Strategic Plan Clever Cotton is focused on developing adaptive farming systems and accelerating the adoption of new solutions, technologies, and practices delivered through research, development and extension (RD&E). As cotton's extension arm, CottonInfo's role is to assist growers to achieve this.



## Vision

To see an advanced, productive, and thriving Australian cotton industry, guided by cutting-edge RD&E.



## Mission

Leading engagement with industry through relationships, innovation and adoption of research and best practice. Supporting the delivery of CRDC's Clever Cotton and extension of other critical industry research.



## Values

The CottonInfo team aim to be trusted, collaborative, engaging, and relentless in their pursuit for excellence. They will deliver CottonInfo's vision and mission by operating with integrity. As a team, the culture aims to be dynamic, responsive, and dedicated to delivering value.

## The CottonInfo Team

Led by the CottonInfo Management Committee, the CottonInfo team comprises a Program Manager, a Communications Lead, and three sub-teams: Regional Extension Officers (REOs), Technical Leads and *myBMP* experts. CRDC employs the Program Manager, Communications Lead and REOs as part of the CRDC Communications and Extension team, and manages the Technical Leads via CRDC-supported research projects. Cotton Australia employs the *myBMP* experts. Funding for the REOs and their activities is provided by CSD.

### CottonInfo Team Structure





## Regional Extension Officers (REOs):



**Direct Support:** Based in cotton-growing valleys, REOs provide on-the-ground support to cotton growers and consultants, addressing their needs and concerns. They build trust with growers, understand their needs, and offer solutions to facilitate change.



**Local Coordination:** REOs organise workshops, site visits, field demonstrations, and trials and connect growers with CottonInfo Technical Leads and industry researchers. This helps share best practices and new technologies with growers and consultants by providing them with the latest research and information.



**Feedback Loop:** REOs gather valuable insights from the ground, identifying pain points and challenges faced by growers. This feedback ensures the support provided is practical and effective, along with informing future RD&E needs via close collaboration with the CottonInfo Technical Leads and CRDC Innovation Brokers.



## Technical Leads:



**Expertise:** Technical Leads have specialised knowledge in key areas of cotton production, including biosecurity, energy, climate, nutrition, disease, fibre quality, pest management, natural resource management, soil health, stewardship, irrigation, and weed control. Their expertise ensures scientifically sound solutions.



**Research and analysis:** Via their CRDC-supported projects, Technical Leads work closely with CRDC Innovation Brokers and researchers to stay up to date with the latest research, and work with REOs to turn complex findings into practical applications. They develop and coordinate on-farm research trials across multiple cotton valleys and update the modules in the industry's best management practices program, *myBMP*, with the latest practices, technologies and information resources.



**Guidance:** Technical Leads guide and support extension activities and key messaging, ensuring information provided to growers and consultants is accurate, consistent, and impactful.



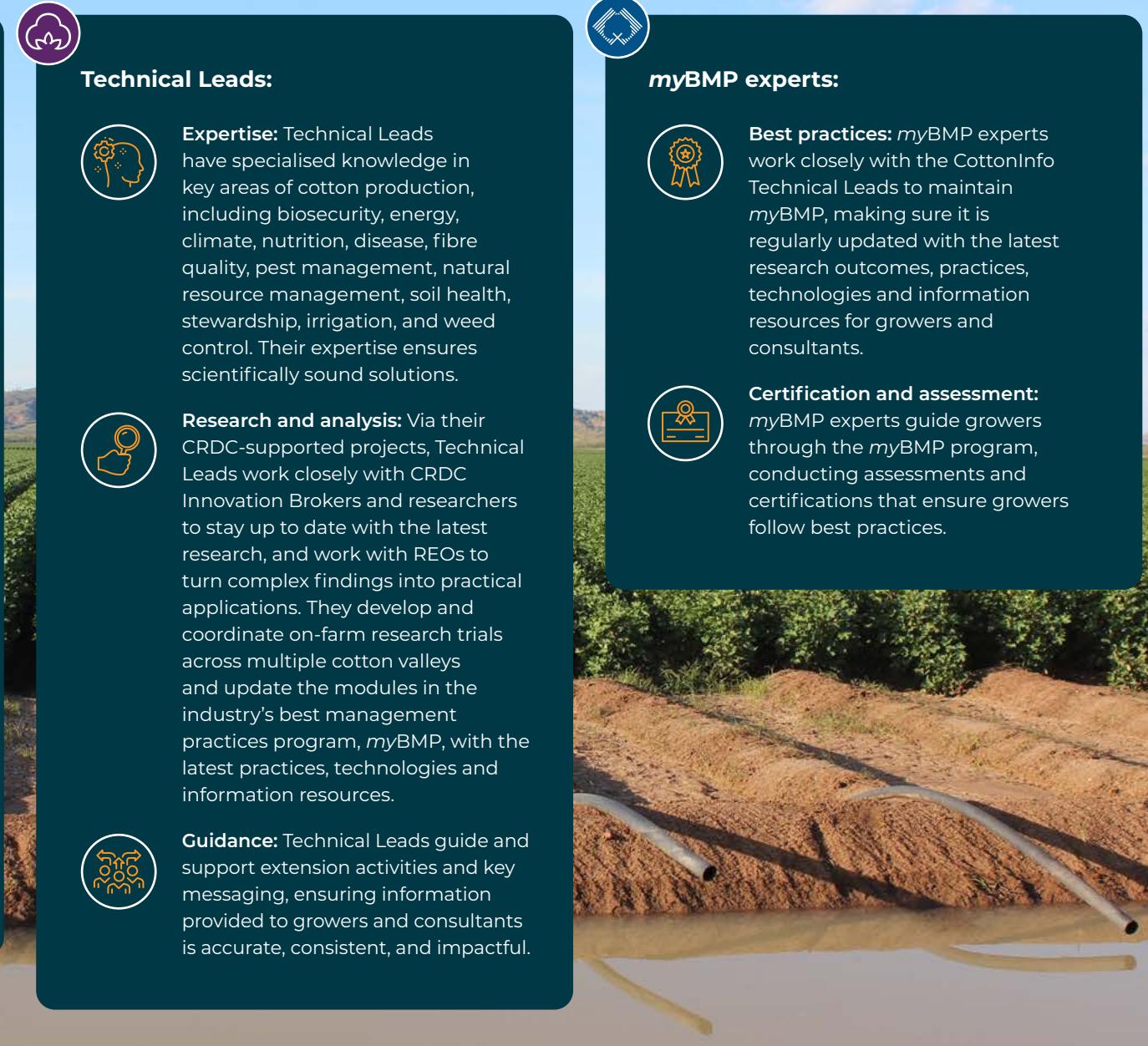
## myBMP experts:



**Best practices:** *myBMP* experts work closely with the CottonInfo Technical Leads to maintain *myBMP*, making sure it is regularly updated with the latest research outcomes, practices, technologies and information resources for growers and consultants.



**Certification and assessment:** *myBMP* experts guide growers through the *myBMP* program, conducting assessments and certifications that ensure growers follow best practices.



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## Stakeholders

CottonInfo's main stakeholders are growers and consultants, and this strategy centres on their current and future needs.

CottonInfo also considers other stakeholders to ensure the plan fits into a comprehensive approach to agricultural innovation and RD&E across cotton and its farming systems partners.

These stakeholders include:

- » The three CottonInfo partners
  - › CRDC
  - › Cotton Australia
  - › CSD
- » Researchers and research organisations
  - › Universities
  - › Government agencies
  - › Other research providers
- » Industry organisations
  - › Cotton Grower Associations
  - › Crop Consultants Australia
- › Australian Cotton Ginners Association
- › Weedsmart
- › Dryland Cotton Research Association (DCRA)
- › Irrigation Research and Extension Committee (IREC)
- › Stop Off-target Spraying (SOS) groups
- › Chemical resellers
- › Irrigation engineers and system designers
- » End users of cotton and value chain partners
  - › Ginners
  - › Textile manufacturers
  - › Merchants and brokers
  - › Brands, retailers and consumers
- » Local communities in cotton growing valleys
- » Agricultural industry partners including CRDC's fellow research and development corporations, particularly the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) and Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA)
- » Regulators
- » Natural Resource Management (NRM) groups



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## Alignment with CRDC's Clever Cotton

As CRDC manages the CottonInfo Program on behalf of the joint venture partners and the cotton industry (under the leadership of the Management Committee), and as CRDC's role is to invest in the majority of the research and development that CottonInfo then extends, this CottonInfo Strategic Plan aligns with CRDC's Clever Cotton.

CottonInfo itself fits within the Clever Cotton People Pillar and Adoption and Impact theme. The objective of this theme is to adopt knowledge and technology through dedicated development and delivery pathways. It is measured through the:

- » Percentage of growers that actively contribute to RD&E adaptation through regional trials and data collection
- » Percentage of growers that actively engage with RD&E programs
- » Percentage of growers that recognise that CRDC and CottonInfo contribute to improving their productivity and sustainability.

By 2028, the stated Clever Cotton impact for CottonInfo is that it has increased its rate, reach and effectiveness. These objectives and measures form part of the monitoring and evaluation for both CRDC and CottonInfo.

In addition, the focus areas for CottonInfo – biosecurity, energy, climate, nutrition, disease, fibre quality, pest management, natural resource management, soil health, stewardship, irrigation, and weed control – fit within the Paddock and Planet pillars of Clever Cotton.

The CottonInfo team are part of CRDC's Communications and Extension team and work closely with CRDC's Innovation team to ensure the alignment of research, development and extension.



## Strategic Goals

The CottonInfo program has two overarching strategic goals, each with three supporting objectives:



### Strategic Goal 1:

#### **Helping grow industry profitability through extending CRDC and other industry R&D to meet current and future challenges.**

The CottonInfo team is uniquely positioned to provide ongoing support and guidance to cotton growers and consultants as they transition to new systems and processes. This includes providing the latest research outcomes, best practices and technologies.

There is the opportunity to increase the use of on farm experimentation through a combination of education, support, incentives, and resources. On farm experimentation creates many benefits: the exchange of knowledge, creating networking opportunities, and the sharing of experiences, best practices, and lessons learned.

#### **Objectives:**

- A. Leading adoption of best management practices and the latest research to improve efficiency, profitability and resilience.
- B. Enabling the adaptation of best management practice and latest technologies to ensure solutions are fit for purpose.
- C. Capturing emerging issues from industry to inform research priorities.



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## Strategic Goal 2:

### Helping grow the industry's sustainability and responsiveness to threats and risks.

The Australian cotton industry has been continuously improving its sustainability for over 30 years and aims to be a global leader in sustainable cotton production.

PLANET. PEOPLE. PADDOCK. is the Australian cotton industry's sustainability framework, developed by Cotton Australia, CRDC and the Australian Cotton Shippers Association, that sets a pathway and future direction for the industry's investments and action. As the framework is focused at the farm-level and is designed to be delivered through existing industry structures and programs, all industry bodies including CRDC and CottonInfo have a vital role to play in ensuring its success. CRDC has built Clever Cotton around these three pillars, recognising that CRDC research and development, and CottonInfo extension, play a fundamental role in delivering cotton sustainability.

#### Objectives:

- A. Supporting Cotton Australia to encourage grower participation in myBMP, to contribute to the Australian cotton industry sustainability framework PLANET. PEOPLE. PADDOCK.
- B. Providing capacity and support to industry for effective preparedness and response to biosecurity incursions and unforeseen events.
- C. Increasing grower awareness of the Australian cotton industry sustainability framework.



## Implementation

This CottonInfo Strategic Plan guides CottonInfo's focus for 2025–28, led by the CottonInfo Management Committee, and supported by Annual Operational Plans (AOPs) with yearly objectives. These objectives will be reflected in the work plans of the Program Manager, Communications Lead and REOs and milestones of the Technical Leads and myBMP experts.

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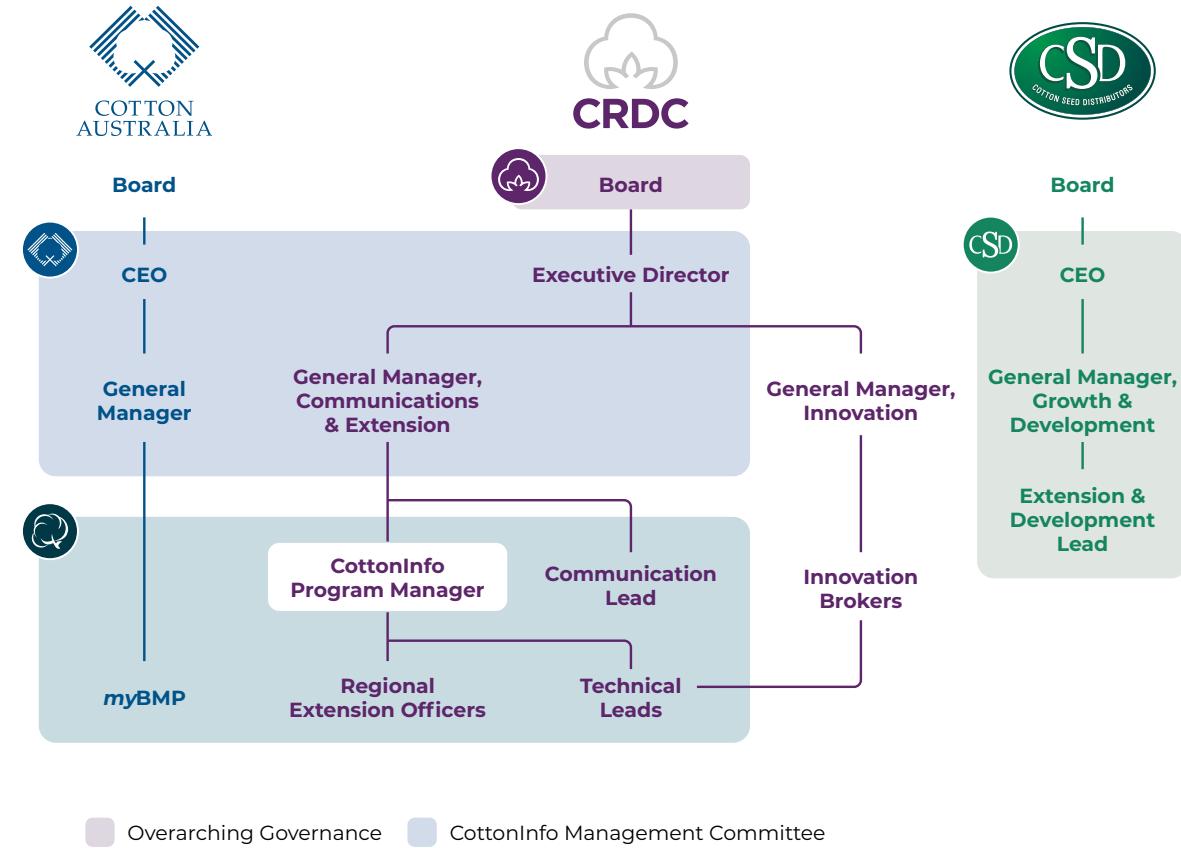
## Governance and Reporting

From 2025, CRDC is managing the CottonInfo program on behalf of the joint venture partners, including financial management and resourcing. As such, the CRDC Board oversees the governance of the program with the CottonInfo Management Committee. This is supported by twice-yearly reporting to CSD as an investor.

The CRDC Board and the CottonInfo Management Committee will review the performance of CottonInfo, and the achievement of the strategic goals, objectives and measures. The CRDC Board and CottonInfo Management Committee will approve the CottonInfo Strategic Plan and the Management Committee will approve the AOP. The Management Committee will meet at least three times a year to monitor program progress and performance, discuss strategic issues of relevance, and to provide direction to the CottonInfo team via the CottonInfo Program Manager.

Ensuring that cotton industry research, extension and communication efforts are collaborative and not duplicative is a key focus of the CottonInfo partners. As such, the Chairs of the three partner organisations meet regularly, as do the Executive Directors/CEOs, and the relevant members of the CRDC Innovation and Communications and Extension teams, the Cotton Australia Communications team, and the CSD Research, Extension and Development teams.

### CottonInfo partners, governance and team structure:





## Targets and Measures

Achievement of CottonInfo's objectives and measures will be monitored, evaluated and reported as part of CRDC and CottonInfo's M&E Framework. The below outlines three sets of measures relevant to CottonInfo: those from the CRDC Strategic Plan Clever Cotton, the CottonInfo Strategic Plan strategic goals, and the CRDC and CottonInfo Communications Strategy goals.

### CRDC Strategic Plan re CottonInfo



#### People: Adoption and impact



Objective	Impact target	Measure	Metric
Adopt knowledge and technology through dedicated development and delivery pathways	In 2028, adoption has increased its rate, reach and effectiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Percentage of growers actively contributing to RD&amp;E adaptation through regional trials and data collection. Percentage of growers actively engaged with RD&amp;E programs.</li><li>» Percentage of growers recognise that CRDC and CottonInfo have contributed to improving their productivity and sustainability.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» 10 per cent of growers are involved in increasing utility and adaptation of research outcomes through trials and data collection.</li><li>» 90 per cent of growers recognise that CRDC and CottonInfo have contributed to their productivity and sustainability.</li></ul>

## CottonInfo Strategic Plan Strategic Goals

<b>Strategic Goal 1:</b> <span style="float: right;">Helping grow industry profitability through extending CRDC and other industry R&amp;D to meet current and future challenges.</span>			
Objective	Impact target	Measure	Metric
Leading adoption of best management practices and the latest research to improve efficiency, profitability and resilience.	By 2028, CottonInfo has assisted growers and consultants to adopt best management practices and the latest research.	» Increase in growers and consultants knowledge, attitude, skills, aspirations and practice change (KASAP).	» 70 per cent of growers and consultants have increased their KASAP regarding best management practice and the latest research as a result of engaging with CottonInfo.
Enabling the adaptation of best management practice and latest technologies to ensure solutions are fit for purpose.	By 2028, technologies and management practices are adapted to different regional and farming system contexts.	» Number of growers that agree the on farm trials and/or demonstrations have influenced their intention to change their farming practice.	» 70 per cent of growers agree that on-farm trials and/or demonstrations have influenced their intention to change their farming practice.
Capturing emerging issues from industry to inform research priorities.	By 2028, growers and consultants are actively contributing to research ideation and priority setting.	» Growers and consultants agree they can effectively raise research gaps and opportunities. The percentage of these ideas that are incorporated into R&D planning.	» An increase in the number of RD&D priorities and ideas provided to CottonInfo and CRDC.



## Strategic Goal 2:

### Helping grow the industry's sustainability and responsiveness to threats and risks.



Objective	Impact target	Measure	Metric
Supporting Cotton Australia to encourage grower participation in <i>myBMP</i> , to contribute to the Australian cotton industry sustainability framework.	By 2028, CottonInfo is an active promoter of the <i>myBMP</i> program, and <i>myBMP</i> modules are up to date with best practice information via Technical Leads.	» Growers participating or planning to participate in <i>myBMP</i> , and citing CottonInfo as a significant influence in their decision.	» 70 per cent of growers are aware of the linkage between <i>myBMP</i> and the Australian cotton industry sustainability framework, through CottonInfo extension.
Providing capacity and support for effective preparedness and response to biosecurity incursions and unforeseen events.	By 2028, the CottonInfo team have the skills, capacity and resourcing to assist growers and consultants with biosecurity incursions or unforeseen events.	» Support provided by the CottonInfo team in the case of biosecurity incursions or unforeseen events.	» 100 per cent of the CottonInfo team are prepared for an industry emergency. 70 per cent of growers find CottonInfo support during the recovery of unforeseen events.
Increasing grower awareness of the Australian cotton industry sustainability framework.	By 2028, growers and consultants are aware of the environmental, economic and social sustainability topics as per the cotton industry sustainability framework.	» Average increase in grower and consultant KASAP associated with key framework topics: water use efficiency, nitrogen use efficiency, integrated pest management, carbon/greenhouse gas emissions, soil health, and native vegetation.	» 70 per cent of growers and consultants have an increase in KASAP regarding the Australian cotton sustainability framework as a result of CottonInfo extension.

## CRDC and CottonInfo communications strategy



Goal

Key audiences consider CottonInfo a trusted program, delivering research impacts and adoption of best practice.

Objective	Measure	2028 target
Grower and consultant feedback indicates a strong relationship with CottonInfo, built on trust and the delivery of research impacts and best practice.	Growers are aware of CottonInfo	100 per cent
	Growers agree CottonInfo provides useful, credible information	95 per cent
	Growers agree CottonInfo is a trusted information source	95 per cent
	Growers use CottonInfo to source information	95 per cent
	Growers agree CottonInfo assists with practice change	95 per cent
	Consultants are aware of CottonInfo	100 per cent
	Consultants agree CottonInfo provides useful, credible information	95 per cent
	Consultants agree CottonInfo is a trusted information source	95 per cent
	Consultants use CottonInfo to source information	100 per cent
	Consultants agree that CottonInfo assists with practice change.	100 per cent



# CottonInfo – Strategic Plan 2025–28: plan on a page





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