

Registrations open for 2018 Australian Cotton Conference

THE 2018 Australian Cotton Conference organisers have been 'Pushing Boundaries' in preparation for this year's event, August 7–9 on the Gold Coast with registrations now open via a brand new website.

Following a committee meeting in February significant progress has also been made on program development, speaker engagement, sponsorship and the trade exhibit.

"We now have 48 confirmed exhibitors with more coming in each day and a large contingent of sponsors including CRDC, Cotton Seed Distributors, ANZ Bank, Dow AgroSciences, John Deere, Monsanto and Rabobank," Conference Chairperson, Fleur Anderson said.

According to Conference Trade Exhibit Coordinator Brian O'Connell, bookings for the Trade hall are well ahead of the same time in 2016, which was a record year. "We have already committed 80 per cent of the sites in the Trade Display," said Brian, "and there are plenty of new exhibitors showing interest including many companies with exciting new products to display. The Conference will also feature some sessions on new products and innovations from industry following on from the overwhelming success of these sessions in 2016.

"We've also extended the Trade Hall which has allowed us to include a Wellbeing Area including free health checks and the Heart Truck – a 25 metre custom-designed clinic-on-wheels, driven by a Kenworth K200 prime mover and operated by the organisation Heart of Australia.

"The purpose-built, self-sufficient trailer provides two private clinic rooms, a testing room and a reception area for patients. It is wheelchair accessible and fully-air-conditioned."

Conference program

With the theme 'Pushing Boundaries,' delegates can expect to be informed and challenged by a range of technical and not-so-technical topics that put Australian cotton at the cutting edge of agriculture.

"We've spent a lot of time debating and working up the program to include plenary and concurrent sessions, workshops and breakouts that will engage a wide variety of delegates," said Fleur Anderson.

Sessions on topics as diverse as weeds and diseases, designer fibres, gene technology futures, automation, Integrated Pest Management, Australian cotton's social licence, pesticides and herbicides, water use efficiency and perspectives from the supply chain can now be confirmed.

"As always there will be a strong focus on hearing from leading experts on each topic, coupled with practical views from as many growers as possible and cotton industry employees closest to the action," Fleur said.

The program is under development and is likely to include topics and sessions such as:

- Digital agriculture, big data and robotics.
- The global sustainability landscape.
- Perspectives from the cotton supply chain.
- Three Minute Theses, delivered by pre-eminent cotton researchers.
- Gene technology.

- Stewardship.
- Environmental and social sustainability.
- Economics and marketing.
- Succession planning.
- Crop forecasting.
- Managing risk.
- Traceability, blockchain and crypto currencies.
- Worker health and safety.
- Smarter irrigation and automation.
- Energy efficiencies.
- Dryland (rain-grown) cotton cropping.
- Nitrogen and fertilisers.
- Business planning and strategy.

Some of the speakers already confirmed include Barry Irvin, Executive Chairman of Bega Cheese; Phillip Glyde, Chief executive of the Murray Darling Basin Authority; futurist Thomas Frey and UN Peacekeeper and author Matina Jewell. During her 15 year military career, best selling author Matina Jewell tracked down war lords, worked with the US navy seals, fast roped out of helicopters onto ships, and successfully led a UN peacekeeping mission in Lebanon where she found herself thrown into the middle of a devastating war.

Associated events

The Committee is busy organising a range of opportunities and events for delegates to 'get social' during the Conference.

Photo Comp

Cotton Australia is running its famous photography competition – Click 2.0 – alongside the 2018 Australian Cotton Conference.

With over \$8000 worth of prizes up for grabs, professional



Matina Jewell.



The ACSA Fashion Parade will also be a feature.

and keen amateur photographers are encouraged to enter in three categories aimed at capturing the essence of Australian cotton during the 2017–18 season.

1. Aussie cotton people
2. Aussie cotton landscapes
3. The moving image

Closing date is June 8, 2018.

For competition details and entry forms, please go to <http://cottonaustralia.com.au/latest-campaigns/click>

Australian Cotton Shippers Association Golf Event

Monday, August 6

Enquiries to secretariat@austcottonshippers.com.au

Welcome Reception

Tuesday, August 7, 6 – 8 pm in the Trade Hall.

First Timers Welcome

Tuesday, August 7, 5 pm in Foyer E (upstairs).

Hosted by Wincott, first-time Conference attendees will be welcomed at an intimate gathering, providing general information and an introduction to key industry organisations. If it's your first time to Conference, please join us for a drink and an opportunity to meet fellow delegates

Australian Cotton Shippers Association Fashion Parade

The Australian Cotton Shippers Association fashion event will be held on Wednesday, August 8 during the lunch break between sessions and it promises to be very different to recent fashion parades.

Conference Vice Chairman and ACSA Chairman Cliff White revealed there will be a different feel to the show this year with prominent designers being invited to create fashions that showcase different styles of denim.

The denim has been supplied to by Square Textiles of Bangladesh. Square Textiles is a significant buyer and supporter of Australian cotton and is delighted to provide the denim for our parade. They will also be in attendance at the Conference to see what creations the designers have produced from their denim.

Bangladesh is Australian cotton's second biggest market and is the world's leading garment manufacturer. "It is no surprise that Australian cotton is in high demand to make quality fabrics and apparel and we are excited to see denim fabric and garments made from our own cotton," said Cliff.

Around 2.5 million metres of denim is produced every year – evidence that denim is one of the most popular materials in our wardrobes today. While not an included question on the Australian Census, it is estimated that each American owns an average of seven pairs of jeans.

Australian Cotton Industry Awards Presentation & Dinner

Thursday, August 9, 6.30 pm for pre-dinner drinks in Halls 3/4.

Women in Cotton Annual General Meeting

Thursday, August 9, 10.30 am in Foyer E (upstairs).

Women in Cotton Industry Networking Lunch

Thursday, August 9, 12.30 pm in Foyer E (upstairs).

Enquiries to Sally Dickinson 0407 992 495 sally.dickinson@cottoninfo.net.au

John Deere Cotton Club

Tuesday, August 7 open until 8 pm

Wednesday, August 8 open until 8 pm

Thursday, August 9 open until 6 pm

An ideal location to network in the Trade Hall.

Kids' Club

To make planning easier for parents with small children, the 2018 Australian Cotton Conference is offering a FREE Kids Club for children of conference delegates. This has proved a very popular service during past conferences, and allows the whole family to participate.

This year Kids Club will engage children with a full program bursting with variety, choice and a mix of indoor and outdoor activities suitable for 2 to 12 year olds.

Activities will include face painting, body balance, hip hop dancing, indoor and outdoor sports (appropriate to age group), DVDs, gift making, play dough, craft, role playing, bubble machine, dress ups, story time and colouring-in.

Kids Club will be staffed by Heaven Sent. All staff are Blue Card accredited, first-aid certified, accommodating and flexible and most of all are fun, fabulous, energetic and full of smiles.

Under 2s are free to enjoy this area if accompanied by a parent or carer.

The early bird rate for Conference Registrations will remain in place until 30 June, so get in early at www.australiancottonconference.com.au/register.

To sponsor or book an exhibition space, please contact Brian O'Connell on 0413 130 777.

The 2018 Australian Cotton Conference is hosted by Cotton Australia and the Australian Cotton Shippers Association.



2018 Conference committee.