



MacIntyre Valley Cotton Field Day 2014

A day for growers

ON Wednesday March 12 the MacIntyre Valley Cotton Growers Association and MacIntyre Valley Cotton Field Day Committee will host their annual field day for growers.

The day will include a bus tour to properties of "Turkey Lagoon", Boggabilla and "Holdfast", Yetman.

Last year the MacIntyre Valley Committee joined forces with Monsanto and Cotton Australia to hold the national cotton grower's field day at Nigel and Vanessa Corish's property "Yambocully".

Last year's field day was a huge success, with over 200 people attending and the committee are hoping for another great turnout this year.

This year's event will visit two

farms – both 2012 MacIntyre Valley Crop Winners – the first being Graham and Kylie Cook followed by a trip to Sam and Jocelyn Dight's property.

MacIntyre Valley Cotton Field Day Committee president Amy Billsborough said attendees could expect to get a variety of knowledge from the day.

"Participants have the opportunity to learn about two very distinct systems and how each grower and their team has managed their production system throughout such a warm season," she said.

"Growers and the industry band together for the day which is perfect opportunity for networking.

The sponsor's trade show is also a great opportunity for

growers to view the latest technologies on the market," Ms Billsborough said.

The field day has run since the early 1990s and has become a tradition for the valley.

"It's the perfect opportunity for everyone to catch up at the end of the growing season, and just before picking begins for most," she said.

"It's also a day of information in the paddock and finishes with a barbecue and beers – it's the best of both worlds."

Attendees are expected to come from the wider national industry, local and afar with growers from the MacIntyre, Gwydir, Darling Downs, St George and Namoi Valleys are also expected to attend.



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Attendees listen to last year's presentation for dryland farming.

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Phil Sloan
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Fax: (07) 4671 3833

Amy Billsborough
Grower Services
PO Box 1203
GOONDIWINDI Qld 4390
Ph: (07) 4671 4638
Fax: (07) 4671 3833

Roger McCumstie
Logistics Manager
PADDINGTON Qld 4064
Ph: (07) 3367 2629

AGENTS:

Pete Johnson
Left Field Solutions
Mob: 0409 893 139

Paul Kelly
Moree Real Estate
MOREE
Ph: (02) 6751 1100

David Dugan
Joe Jones & Associates
TRANGIE
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MacIntyre Valley Cotton Field Day 2014



Proud history for Cook family

GRAHAM and Kylie Cook have a long family history in farming.

Both are fifth-generation farmers and their property 'Turkey Lagoon' will be the first stop at this year's MacIntyre Valley Field Day to be held in Boggabilla.

Mr Cook said the farm had a proud family history.

"I took over the farm in 1986 when dad died and we're proud of it," he said.

Their farm consists of 1800 hectares of mixed irrigation country and another 1200 hectares is leased nearby.

'Turkey Lagoon' is a highly efficient operation using industry best practice across all aspects of production.

Data from soil tests, yield maps, surveys, trials, weather stations, historical records and C-

probes is used to make decisions on nutrition, pest management and irrigation timings and nothing is left to chance.

The operation is not only water and resource efficient, it's also time efficient and very flexible which allows the two staff members to manage all aspects of crop production to keep costs down and maximise profitability.

These efficiencies have translated into exceptional quality cotton crops with high yields over most years.

Mr Cook said the benefits of being a part of the field day at 'Turkey Lagoon' were twofold.

"Any way you can share ideas with other people might benefit both yourself and the growers.

"We can both learn off each other."

In 2012-13 the Cook's crop was knocked around with 13 inches of rainfall in one event during January, but still managed to yield an average of just under 10 bales per hectare, well above the Macintyre Valley average for the year.

They have spent over 30 years in cotton production and in 2012 took out both the irrigated cotton and grower of the year awards for the Macintyre Valley, with phenomenal average yields of 13.2 bales per hectare.

The Cooks enjoy being involved in the community whether it's through the show society and sporting clubs.

Next Wednesday they will again throw open their farm gates to allow fellow growers the opportunity to experience their surrounds.

Inviting all growers & industry representatives to the
2014 Cargill Cotton MacIntyre Valley COTTON FIELD DAY

Wednesday 12th MARCH 2014
 "Turkey Lagoon" Boggabilla & "Holdfast" Yetman
 7.30am Start @ the Goondiwindi Showgrounds
 BBQ Breakfast, Sponsors Trade Display & Demonstrations

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First Stop
 Graham & Kylie Cook - 2012 MacIntyre Valley Cotton Grower of the Year and First Place Irrigated Crop "Turkey Lagoon", Boggabilla.
 - Bankless Irrigation System Overview

Second Stop
 Sam & Jocelyn Dight - 2012 First & Second Place Dryland Crop "Holdfast", Yetman.
 - Dryland farming: Eastern reaches of the Macintyre Valley.

Third Stop
 BBQ Lunch & drinks will be hosted by the Committee at Sam & Jocelyn's home once the tour has concluded.
 - Market Update from Pete Johnson, Cotton Compass
 - Cargill Cotton Crop Consistency Award to be presented by Phil Sloan.

Travel back to Goondiwindi by 4pm. \$20pp cover charge
 - Includes travel, morning tea, BBQ lunch, & drinks.

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CONTACT: Amy Billsborough for more details 0407 547 493

Schedule for cotton field day

- 7.30 am
Where: Goondiwindi Show Grounds
What: Breakfast hosted and trade show, demonstrations and registration.
- 8.30 am
What: Presidents gives welcome to the 2014 MacIntyre Valley Cotton Field Day attendees
- 8.35 am
What: Boarding of the bus
- 9 am
Where: "Turkey Lagoon", Boggabilla
What: Welcome Graham Cook (owner and operator) and introduction of Adam Kay (CEO, Cotton Australia)
- 9.10am
What: Bankless channel system and farm overview of the 2012 MacIntyre Valley Cotton Grower of the Year and first place irrigated crop
- 10.45am
What: Morning tea on bus
- 12pm
Where: "Holdfast", Yetman
What: View 2012 first and second place dryland crop and hear from Sam and Jocelyn Dight.
- 1.20pm
What: Lunch
- 2pm
What: Marketing update
- 2.10pm
What: Cargill Cotton MacIntyre Valley Cotton Crop Consistency Award presented
- 2.20pm
What: Close
- 3.00pm and 3.30pm
What: Buses Depart



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Dight's share their dryland season struggle

THE second stop during the day will be all about dryland crops.

Attendees will meet Sam and Jocelyn Dight at their Yetman property "Holdfast".

The Dight's were the 2012 first and second place winners of dryland crop.

Mr Dight said he would show his dryland crops that had virtually no in-crop rain during

the season.

"I will definitely talk about the struggles we faced during the season. We now know our limit and in a couple of weeks we will see what we can grow for next season," he said.

Mr Dight said he could not see how a season could be worse than the current one.

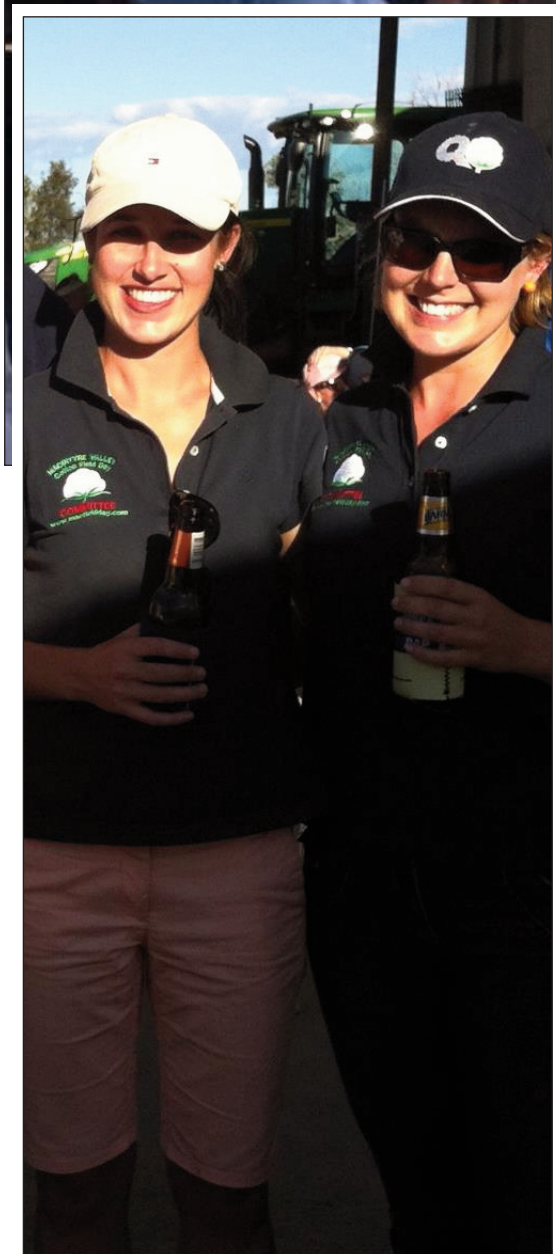
He said there were 400

hectares of dryland cotton and 100 hectares of irrigated.

There will also be a presentation of the ins and outs of dryland farming from growers and agronomists in the eastern reaches of the MacIntyre Valley.

A seasonal update from CSD in a dryland system will also happen at the second stop.

Interesting and informative field day



EVERY year is a success at the MacIntyre Valley Cotton Field Day.

All farmers find the day to be helpful for the coming season and a chance to reflect on the previous.

Industry professionals give detailed presentations for growers benefits.

Above are photos of last years cotton field day...



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Cotton market update beneficial for growers

COTTON Compass' Peter Johnson will be a feature speaker at the Cargill Cotton MacIntyre Valley Cotton Field Day.

Giving a cotton market update, Mr Johnson is the managing director of Left Field Solutions and is also the part owner of Cotton Compass which is an interactive cotton marketing news service that is published weekly.

Mr Johnson said he would speak about the potential impacts of shifts in Chinese policy on the market for Australian cotton, impacts of tightening global high grade supply on Australian cotton prices and the impacts of speculative activity on cotton futures and foreign exchange markets.

In the latest edition of Cotton Compass Mr Johnson said China imported 292,485 tonnes of cotton in January - well down on the 608,606 in December and the lowest January import level since 2008/09.

"Recent import statistics out of China appear to be confirming concerns that demand from the Middle Kingdom will be substantially less than in recent seasons. The USDA is estimating Chinese imports at 11 million bales - which would be roughly half what we have enjoyed over the last two seasons. This is linked to pending policy changes both in terms of China's state reserves and also potentially import quota releases."

Mr Johnson said China

accounted for more than two thirds of Australia's export demand - so any shifts in their appetite posed a significant risk for Australian producers.

"That said, we do have the benefit of being amongst the best quality upland cotton fibre producers in the world - and supplies from our key competitor in California are running tight.

This bodes well for the high grade balance sheet, and hence the market for Australian cotton."

Technically, Mr Johnson said there were signs that support for cotton on the ICE futures

exchange was starting to break down. At the time of writing, price had started to slip, and Mr Johnson said that over time it looked unlikely that the market could push through current levels.

"Ultimately, we think the recent prices of around A\$520/bale have represented pretty good selling - and were probably reflective of a futures market that was overdone. Time will tell on this, but whatever the case, anything above A\$500/bale is historically a good place to sell Australian cotton."

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Competition heats up for cotton crop consistency

PHIL Sloan will present the Cargill Cotton Crop Consistency Award this year.

President, Amy Billsborough, said the consistency award had been given to the grower with the largest farm average yield since the early 90's.

"Cargill has been the sponsor of this award since 2005. Any cotton grower in the MacIntyre can enter," she said.

For this year's competition there were six entrants.

- Previous winners include:
- 2012 Prime Ag MacIntyre Downs 12.00 bales/ha
 - 2011 Prime Ag MacIntyre Downs 12.95 bales/ha
 - 2010 Evolution Farming 12.75 bales/ha
 - 2009 Smith Brothers Ag 10.78 bales/ha
 - 2008 Corish Farms 13.04 bales/ha
 - 2007 Morella Ag 11.67 bales/ha
 - 2006 TSI Ag 10.33 bales/ha
 - 2005 Norman Farming 12.06 bales/ha
- Ms Billsborough said good luck to all who entered the competition.