



Australian Government

**Cotton Research and
Development Corporation**

FINAL REPORT 2013/2014

Part 1 - Summary Details

CRDC Project Number: CGA1404

CGA Menindee and Lower Darling

Project Title: Education and Development of the Cotton Industry

Project Commencement Date: 1/01/2014 **Project Completion Date:** 31/12/2014

Part 2 – Contact Details

Administrator: Alexander Roughley President, Emma Ayliffe Secretary

Organisation: Menindee and Lower Darling Cotton Growers Association

Postal Address: PoBox 19 Menindee NSW 2879

Ph: 08 81911513 **Fax:** 08 80911512 **E-mail:** eayliffe@tandou.com.au

Part 3 – Final Report

Background

We are part of an organisation formed throughout cotton growing areas in Australia by local growers and sponsored by Cotton Australia with the aims of;

1. To be a link between grower, community and industry.
2. To promote cotton production as a sustainable and responsible industry.
3. To be a source of information for members and the community.

We do this by support events that are going on in our community and educating people within our district about the cotton industry, as well as promoting ourselves, what we do, our growers and anything else we have to offer.

Objectives

The project has three key aspects:

1. Developing a school based traineeship for two students at Menindee central school. Traineeships run in conjunction with the Menindee Enterprise Park Education Services provides great options for students disadvantaged by isolation to access skills and training otherwise not available. It also encourages students to finish their year 11 and 12 studies and provides some full time employment.
2. Educating students studying high school level agriculture. Members of the Menindee and lower Darling CGA and Tandou LTD staff have offered their time to provide tours and awareness of cotton production. Additionally Tandou agronomists have

offered to conduct training on chemical and spray application as well as advice on the school ag plot.

3. Educating and promoting the cotton industry to the general public (particularly Menindee, Broken Hill and Mildura regions) through a field day at Tandou.

Methods

For each of our key areas a slightly different approach was undertaken.

1. For this project we got in touch with the school to assess if any of the year 11 or primary Agriculture students would be interested in undertaking the training. Once assessing interested candidates were to be considered and through careful consideration selected. Once selected the traineeship was to be set up and their work period to begin. Over the course of their work period courses were to be undertaken through the sponsorship of Tandou Ltd., the Menindee and Lower Darling CGA and Menindee Enterprise Park Education Services.
2. Get in touch with local schools in regards to organising visits or educational material. Once a connection has been established Tandou agronomist will spend time working with the students on agricultural projects including working in agriculture plots and helping with spray application.
3. Advertising and creating a good image for cotton through the sponsorship of community events and opening up our grower to the immediate public so they can see the enterprise and what is involved in the production of cotton.

Outcomes

The Outputs are as follows:

1. Twelve month supported traineeship for 2 high school students including completion of at least two certificated courses (such as forklift, chemical handling etc.)
2. Purchase and installation of a miniature spray rig to be utilised by the school ag plot, under the direction and advise of Tandou staff and consultants to provide a hands-on, practical educational tool about chemical safety, correct application, calibration etc. This rig will be used by Tandou staff and consultants on a number of in-schools days throughout the year, based at the School Ag Plot.
3. An open day at Tandou for local students and public from Menindee, Broken Hill and Mildura regions outlining cotton production and processing techniques.

The Outcomes generated from this project were:

1. From our first project we have two year 11 students undertaking a traineeship here at Tandou. Elton Johnston and Toby Burt work here 1 day a week during school and through school holidays as part of schooling. The boys are working with the mechanics and boiler makers a high percentage of their time, while also partaking in tractor driving, cotton picking, planting and any other event of interest around the farm. They have both completed their Chemical Accreditation, Tractor Training and been to a Crutching School. Both students are interested and engaged in what they do at the farm with both students now looking towards an apprenticeship in the near future in the areas of Mechanics and Boiler Making.
2. MLD CGA bought a 300L tow along spray which was donated to the Menindee Central School for use on their Agriculture Block at the school by the primary industry students. In conjunction with the MLD CGA also sponsored a Chemical Accreditation Course to teach the students about chemical application. There were 5 students and the Groundsman of the school that successfully completed this course. Tandou Agronomists Emma Ayliffe and Greg Davies donated their time to set the sprayer up, calibrate and give the Agriculture teacher, Miss Jessica Tate, a run down to its operation.

Agronomist Emma Ayliffe also donated her time for the student's chemical accreditation course to help educate the student on the weeds and issue that are relevant to the Menindee area and also help the student to identify where they could go if they require further assistance.

There has now been a much better relationship established between our local school, Menindee Central School, our grower, Tandou Ltd. and the MLD CGA. This in time means that there is likely to be further job options and traineeships to be developed in between these groups, as well as a better flow of information and more support given.

3. For a number of reasons we have been unsuccessful in establishing and running an on farm open day in conjunction with our grower, Tandou Ltd. This money has been used to help with the promotion of the cotton industry in other ways. We sponsored a group of year 3-6 students from the Mildura Christian Collage to come and see Lake Tandou during cotton picking. The Tandou Agronomists and Assistant Farm manager donated their time in presenting a slideshow to the students about the growing of cotton, provided a tour of the farm to see the cotton gin and the pickers as well as providing the students with lunch.

In conjunction with this we have sponsored the Sunset Strip Progress Association for their tree planting day, as well as a golf day to raise money for the Menindee Hospital. A donation was made to the Pooncarie Outreach Children's Services to help by musical equipment and other necessity to support the development of specifically School of the Air Children in our remote district. We also sponsored, and represented at, the Little Topar Campdraft.

Through all of the above listed, although we have been unable to come through with the open day we have managed to give ourselves a positive image within our community and put back in for some of the great things that we get out of it.

Chemical Certification



Menindee Central School Chemcert Student, with their instructor

Comments from the Chemical Certificate Students:

On Tuesday 22nd July I participated in a chemical user's course. We learnt about different types of weeds and how to kill them in the best ways possible. We also learnt about spray drift, LD50 scale and what chemicals are most dangerous to the least dangerous. Also Emma was a good helper when it came to weeds in this area.

Elton Johnstone Yr 11 Primary Industries student

On Tuesday week 2 Term 3 I did the chemical course. We learnt how to kill all different wees and how to mix chemicals. It was great when Emma came in, as she showed us samples of weeds around the school.

Tiffany Pagano Yr 11 Primary Industries student

On Tuesday 22nd of July we did the chemcert course and we learnt about the different weeds and how to kill them with different chemicals. We also learnt about what chemicals we can mix with other chemicals. We learnt about spray drift and LD50. It was very nice for Emma to come out and talk about weeds in the Menindee area.

Toby Burt Yr 11 Primary Industries student

Mildura Christian Collage Visit



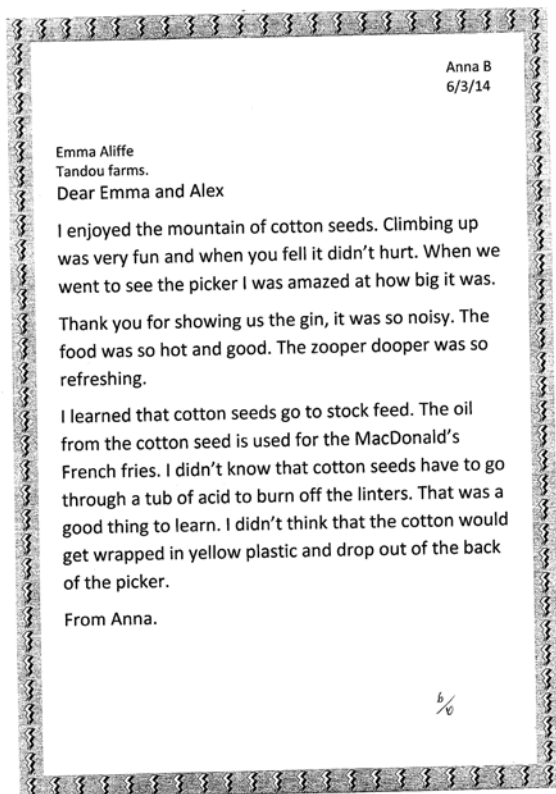
Students who visited the farm

Some Letters received from the children who visited:

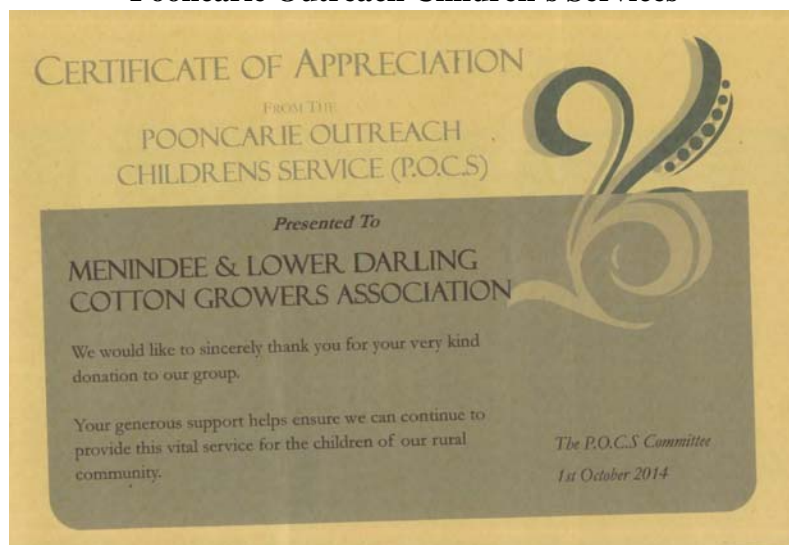
Dear Alex and Emma thanks for let us climb on mountain cotton seed my legs were started to hurt when I was climbing the mountain cotton seed. I learned that cotton was growing 5,000 years ago. I enjoyed picking the cotton off plant.

From Bradon

Juliet Jay
8 June 2014
Emma Ayliffe
Pandau Farms
Dear Emma and Alex, I enjoyed learning about cotton. It was fun. I thank you for showing us the gin it was so noisy and I enjoyed picking the cotton. I liked the fruit but the juiciest part was apple!! I thank you for showing us the big machine to take out the cotton seeds. I like Mt cotton seeds. I like the food and I like the sausages. I like the juicebox and the Zapper Dooper. Thank you so much for teaching us about cotton.



Pooncarie Outreach Children's Services



There are a number of events that have not yet finished or have just finished. Overall for all event that we have been involved in, or things that we have sponsored there has been a significant number of people involved or who will benefit for the little bit we have done to help out.

Budget

Application Budget:

EXPENDITURE		Sub-Totals
Traineeships	Training eg. chemical, forklift, first aid	2000.00
	<u>Tandou supervision and support</u>	10000
School ag development	Training spray unit	4000.00
	Chemical cert and training	1500.00
	School visits	500.00
	Staff and Consultant time for school visits	4000
Education/promotion to the public	Bus	1300
	Catering	700
Total Expenditure		\$14,00.00
Cash Requested from CRDC		\$10,00.00

Actual Expenditure

EXPENDITURE		Sub-Totals
Traineeships	Training eg. chemical, forklift, first aid	1382.66
	<u>Tandou supervision and support</u>	10000
School ag development	Training spray unit and Plaque	3,345.99
	Chemical cert and training	2213.34
	Mildura Christian Collage - Food Provided	60.64
	Mildura Christian Collage - Time	600.00
Education/promotion to the public	Sponsorship - Broken Hill Stockhorse Society - Topar Campdraft	500.00
	Sunset Strip Charity Golf Day - New Examination Bed for Menindee Hospital	150.00
	Pooncarie Outreach Children's Services	250.00
Total Expenditure		\$15,502.63
	Time in Kind	5000.00
Funding Spent		\$10,502.63

1. Conclusion

In conclusions the funding that we have received, although not used 100% as initially intended has allowed us to undertake and support a number of events in our community and help to promote the cotton industry in our community. It has allowed us to become involved

in a number of events that have been happening, supporting both people who work directly in our cotton industry and our surrounding community.

One big think that can be taken from the work that we have done is the we have helped to make a number of students more aware of cotton, agriculture and associated industries as a job opportunity and help them be job ready for when they leave school.

Extension Opportunities

From here we hope to continue our involvement with the school and local community helping support and facilitate local events. Education of the next generation is also a big driver and working with the school, support student education is going to be a big part of our next 12 months, provided we can get the funding required.