



The Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP
Minister for Primary Industries
Assistant Minister for Tourism and Major Events

MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW PERSONNEL SUPPORTING THE NSW COTTON INDUSTRY

Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson, and Member for Tamworth, Kevin Anderson, today announced three new personnel supporting the NSW cotton industry.

Ms Hodgkinson made the announcement at Australia's largest agricultural industry field day event, AgQuip, in Gunnedah.

"The majority of Australia's cotton is grown in NSW, and in 2010-11 export revenue from this vital industry totalled more than \$1.1 billion," Ms Hodgkinson said.

"The NSW Liberals & Nationals Government is committed to supporting this industry, which is why a weeds researcher and two new soil science personnel have been appointed in the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) to work on important projects.

"This industry underpins the viability of many communities, particularly in the North West.

"To ensure it remains profitable and sustainable, the NSW Liberals & Nationals Government and industry both recognise the need for cutting edge research and development.

"These new positions add to the ongoing R&D commitment of the NSW Government, with more than 1000 active projects worth about \$100 million managed by the DPI."

The new officers are:

- Dr Sudheesh Manalil, a weeds research scientist at Narrabri, who is looking at the rapidly escalating issue of herbicide-resistant weeds in cotton farming systems;
- Dr Guna Nachimuthu, a research scientist (soils) based at Narrabri, who is investigating the effect of selected crop and soil management practices on carbon sequestration in irrigated cotton farming systems; and
- Ms Annabelle McPherson, a technical officer (soils) based at Tamworth, who is working on a project to determine nitrogen strategies to reduce nitrous oxide emissions for different irrigated cotton systems.

Member for Tamworth, Kevin Anderson, welcomed the new positions.

"There is significant DPI research effort focused on enhancing northern broadacre farming systems involving integrated insect, weed, water, soil and disease management – this work will be bolstered by today's announcement," he said.

The roles are funded by the Cotton Research and Development Corporation, Commonwealth Department of Agriculture and the DPI.