

Adam Kay short profile

Adam Kay has been Chief Executive Officer at Cotton Australia (Australia's peak representative body for cotton producers) since 2007 and is currently enjoying his 31st year of service to the Australian cotton industry. He began his cotton industry involvement in 1985 as a Department of Agriculture, Extension Agronomist the southernmost cotton production area in Australia at the time. Over the next 10 years, Adam provided assistance and guidance to new and established growers and when he left in 1996 the cotton area had increased more than fivefold. One strong focus was assisting growers to manage compaction in cotton soils, a major issue in the industry at the time. Adam joined Cotton Seed Distributors (CSD) in 1996. At that time the extension challenge for the organization was the introduction of GM insect and herbicide traits to the industry. As General Manager under Adam, CSD grew and developed to the stage where they were recognized as an integral conduit of information between researchers and growers, using innovative extension techniques.

Adam Kay long profile

Adam graduated from the University of Sydney in 1983 with an agricultural science degree specializing in crop agronomy and subsequently received a diploma in education from Sydney Teachers College in 1984. During his time as an extension officer, Adam also initiated the Industry Development Officer (IDO) concept and secured funding for the first IDO. The success of this position, under his management, led to a significant expansion of the IDO network across the industry. Recognizing the need to share knowledge and experiences in a relatively new industry, Adam ran the Macquarie Cotton Field Days through the late 1980's and early 1990's and these were widely known as the industry's best, and are still emulated today. Whilst employed by the Department of Agriculture, Adam received an Award for Excellence and Outstanding Contribution for Services to the Cotton Industry, presented by the Minister for Agriculture. He won a Churchill Fellowship in 1990 to study soil management in the USA and Europe. As a result of this study, he set up, through the Department of Agriculture, the state's first Soil Management Service. This assisted growers to manage compaction in cotton soils.

Adam joined Cotton Seed Distributors (CSD) in 1996 particularly to extend information for the introduction of biotechnology to the industry. In 1999 he was appointed as a Director to the Cotton Research and Development Corporation (CRDC), a position he held for 6 years and was responsible for the People and Knowledge Program (including extension), the Soils Program and has been on the Strategic Planning and Audit Committees. In 1996 Adam became a Graduate of the Australian Rural Leadership Program, and is also a Graduate of the Cotton Production Course run through the University of New England (UNE). During his 31 years in the industry, Adam has demonstrated a philosophy of working for the 'greater good' of the Australian cotton industry. Often going beyond his job description, he has initiated and developed a range of innovative and successful projects that have brought many sectors of the industry together for its long term gain.