

COMMINS PARTNERSHIP

AgriRisk High Achiever of the Year



Brothers, Tim and Roger Commins and their families and staff of over 35 run a highly enterprising operation near Whitton in the Murrumbidgee Valley of NSW. The range of enterprises they either run or have a partnership stake in include; steel manufacturing, a mandarin orchard, vat storage for wine, biochar briquette production, Murray Cod production, forestry plots, and cotton ginning as well as the logistics needed to support many of these enterprises.

Cotton is a vital enterprise for the Partnership and provides the basis for much of the vertical integration with their other businesses. In particular, the Commins', along with 3 other families, established the Southern Cotton Gin in 2012 to service growers from across the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area. In their fourth year of operation, in the 2015/2016 season they processed more than 800,000 bales. This achievement saw the Gin take out the National Telstra Business Award in 2015.

The Partnership has acquired smaller holdings over time, converting much of the land from contour rice fields to bankless irrigation for cotton. Their development program has so far achieved the conversion of about 60% of their land into bankless with the aim of 100% over the next few years. Following systems developed by others and fine tuning them for their own situation, the Commins' now utilise two types of bankless systems.

The introduction of bankless allows them to farm odd-shaped areas, improves the infiltration of crop additives (particularly nitrogen), reduces watering times (down to on/off in 6 hours), reduces labour for watering, reduces the hassle through the lack of channels to act as barriers to equipment movements and reduces stress levels and sleepless nights in summer. Bankless also improves the ability to set up automation of watering in the future. All these labour and machinery efficiency gains have also

HOME PROPERTY

"Tiralee", Whitton NSW

OWNERS

Tim & Roger Commins

TOTAL ENTERPRISE SIZE

2,500Ha

AREA TO COTTON 2015/2016

1,500Ha

YIELD TARGET

12 B/Ha

WATER ALLOCATIONS

8,072 ML River

4,000 ML Bore

TYPE/S OF IRRIGATION

Bankless

Flood Siphon

NO. STAFF

Approx. 35 FTE plus partnerships

ENTERPRISES

Cotton gin, wine vat storage, steel manufacturing, cotton, summer crops, forestry, logistics, fish, biochar and mandarins (in partnership).





resulted in good yields of over 15 bales/ha in some fields.

Tim believes the bankless is a “no-brainer” allowing one labour unit to easily manage 1,000 ha of watering, with automation bumping that up to 2,000ha.

The operation relies on a large staff however; Tim and Roger are very hands-on in the management of all aspects of the varied business. Their innovative thinking and ease of adoption of new technologies continually puts them at the forefront of agriculture.

Cotton fields across “Tiralee” lie adjacent to industrial infrastructure such as the cotton gin, the fish farm, the biochar plant and the fertiliser plant etc in a patchwork of clever vertical integration and diversification.

The 2015/2016 season was the ninth year that the Commins’ grew cotton, picking 1,500ha; 75% of which

was back to back, securing a high yield average of 12 bales/ha across their farms.

Tim and Roger work very well together with an ability to bounce ideas off one-another and come to decisions quickly and efficiently. They are dynamic advocates for the cotton industry, hosting more than a dozen farm tours and countless gin tours every year. Their ability to work with each other and with other partners has not only benefited their own business, it has also helped to build the whole industry base and employment levels of the Whitton area.

**FOR FULL DETAILS PLEASE VISIT THE
AUSTRALIAN COTTON AWARDS WEBSITE:
WWW.AUSTRALIANCOTTONAWARDS.COM**

