

# MORT AND CO LOTFEEDERS PTY LTD

*Monsanto Grower of the Year*



Mort and Co are best known for their beef feedlot operations, however Matthew Waye is helping to put their name on the map for their cropping enterprise. Matt and his team cultivate 3,500ha over two different farms 50km apart; "Grassdale" 45km south of Dalby and "Pinegrove" 15km North from Millmerran.

The soil types range from box gum through to belah and cypress pine and includes red ridges and flood country as well as areas of high chloride and sodium. This huge variability in soils means Matt's management style must be flexible, responsive and highly targeted.

Variable rate technology has proven to be effective in this environment of differences and the company has been receptive to the uptake of these new innovations. Mort and Co have invested in new summer planting equipment as well as the upgrading of their winter cropping and fertilising equipment to allow Matt to ideally match specific soil needs with inputs. This not only improves efficiencies but has also improved yield results across the operation.

This strategy has paid off particularly well for Mort and Co in the poorer quality soils of "Pinegrove" where increasing the plants stands has created an outstanding average yield of 12.3bales/ha in the 2015/2016 cotton season.

Matt's results in challenging circumstances were one of the reasons he was awarded the Darling Downs CGA Chesterfield High Achiever of the Year Award for 2015.

The enterprise also includes a cottonseed crushing plant that de-hulls up to 130T of seed per day in the quest to increase the utilisation of cottonseed. This level of production has necessitated the buying-in of cottonseed from across the Downs to supplement their own production.

The plant produces hulls for feed roughage, and cotton kernel for fat and protein to supplement the company's 50,000 head feedlotting operation. In turn, the feedlot provides manure to the cropping enterprise which is

## HOME PROPERTY

"Grassdale" and "Pinegrove" Dalby, Qld

## OWNERS

Matthew Waye

## TOTAL ENTERPRISE SIZE

3,500Ha

## AREA TO COTTON 2015/2016

900Ha irrigated

## YIELD TARGET

11 bales/ha Pinegrove-achieved 12.3 b/ha  
12.5 bales/ha Grassdale-achieved 16 b/ha  
4.5 bales/ha dryland-achieved 6.5b/ha

## WATER ALLOCATIONS

Overland flow and feedlot effluent only

## TYPE/S OF IRRIGATION

196ha pivot  
520ha flood siphon

## NO. STAFF

In the cropping section 6 FTE including Matt

## ENTERPRISES

Operates separately to feedlot; winter cereals & pulses, sorghum, corn, summer pulses and dryland and irrigated cotton





added at a rate of 10T/ha to fields after every cotton crop.

An important part of Matt's role is managing the addition of over 400ML of effluent water from the feedlot to the paddocks each year to satisfy regulatory requirements. To meet this demand and responsibly manage the soils and crops grown, Matt will install 2 more pivot irrigators, on top of the 2 pivots already irrigating 196ha of "Grassdale". Both farms also utilise flood irrigation sourced from overland flow water, varying greatly from year to year.

Whilst the operation farmed 630ha of dryland cotton this season Matt takes a highly cautious approach, having had some painful experiences. All dryland crops are planted on double skip formation to minimise yield and quality risks. This season he was forced to replant some areas within fields to achieve an acceptable plant stand but managed to pick an average 6.5b/ha.

With an approach of "drive it hard while you can" Matt

utilises EM surveys, soil tests, NDVI and petiole tests to determine nutrient needs. He compares this to extensive seasonal outlook data, accessible through the Company, to identify the ideal inputs. Matt has worked hard to shorten irrigation intervals at "Pinegrove" and has seen a resulting increase of up to 2 bales/ha on the highly chloric soils.

The cropping enterprise currently has a tight labour unit of 5 who work well together achieving very good results under Matt's leadership. His aim is to maintain this level of staffing, combined with a reduction in machinery, utilising technology to his advantage to continue to improve the enterprise.

**FOR FULL DETAILS PLEASE VISIT THE AUSTRALIAN COTTON AWARDS WEBSITE:**

**[WWW.AUSTRALIANCOTTONAWARDS.COM](http://WWW.AUSTRALIANCOTTONAWARDS.COM)**

