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Cotton and grains industries applaud launch of AgSkilled 2.0 training program

The launch of a multi-million-dollar training program for farmers in NSW has been welcomed by the cotton and grains industries.

AgSkilled 2.0 is a \$15 million, three-year NSW Government-funded, industry-led workforce development strategy. It aims to ensure the state's cotton, grains production, horticulture, viticulture and rice industries have a skilled workforce capable of meeting future challenges.

This major investment follows the success of the original AgSkilled program, which provided training opportunities for cotton and grains growers in NSW.

Cotton Australia CEO Adam Kay said the new program will boost the skills of farmers at a time when many are starting to recover from drought.

"The Australian cotton industry thanks the NSW Government for this valuable investment in our industry, and the other agricultural sectors involved in AgSkilled 2.0," Mr Kay said.

"The original AgSkilled program was a huge success and set a very high standard for the delivery of coordinated, high-quality training across agricultural sectors. I am excited about the opportunities this second investment will provide our farmers in New South Wales.

"Ensuring our growers are highly skilled and afforded training opportunities is a priority for our industry, and I'm confident that our growers will flock to AgSkilled 2.0 with the same enthusiasm and passion they showed during the original program."

Some of the courses to be rolled out through AgSkilled 2.0 will be advanced spray training, precision agronomy and work health and safety.

Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) Managing Director Anthony Williams said AgSkilled 2.0 would enable grain and cotton growers to continue to access industry-led, regionally located training to help equip agricultural workforces for the future.

"The initial AgSkilled program successfully identified and delivered a broad range of training courses – from machinery operation to risk management and innovation – to agricultural employers and employees across regional NSW," Mr Williams said.

"The GRDC congratulates the NSW Government on its decision to continue this important initiative, and we look forward to seeing AgSkilled 2.0 deliver for the rural sector.

"We believe this valuable, ongoing investment in education and training will further increase the capacity of agricultural workforces, allowing growers, on-farm staff and the broader industry to better manage current and future challenges.

"The project is an excellent example of cross-industry collaboration to leverage a government-funded project and ensured tailored delivery to industry, which the GRDC places enormous value on and is a major gain for Australian agriculture."





Interviews

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