

## **Protecting Australia's Cotton Reputation: The Fight Against Contamination**

Would you believe human hair is a source of contamination in cotton and is near impossible to remove? Or that our competitors in the synthetic world produce a fibre with zero impurities?

For Australian cotton, low contamination levels are our greatest strength. As a global leader in premium cotton production, our reputation depends on consistently delivering fibre that exceeds expectations. However, contamination remains an ever-present challenge and right now, plastic module wraps pose a significant threat to our hard-earned status.

Australian cotton is renowned globally for its low contamination levels—a reputation everybody in our supply chain works tirelessly to uphold. This commitment to quality is why Australian cotton remains in high demand across global markets.

The Australian Cotton Shippers Association works tirelessly to promote this message to the global textile chain. Our fibre's low contamination levels give us a competitive edge, but recent developments could put this advantage at risk.

The Australian Cotton Shippers Association has become aware of inferior quality module wraps currently being used in the Australian market.

These wraps are degrading in the field, in module yards and when modules are unwrapped, posing a significant risk of bale contamination and jeopardising Australia's reputation as a reliable supplier of contaminant-free cotton. Plastic contamination has far-reaching consequences for our industry, affecting our standing in global markets and the confidence of our buyers.

For spinning mills, plastic contamination is a costly problem, requiring manual or robotic systems to detect and remove foreign materials. Mills working with Australian cotton, however, often avoid these issues, allowing for faster, more efficient operations. This differentiates Australian cotton and drives global demand for our bales, leading to higher returns for growers.

But if plastic contamination increases, we risk losing this advantage—and our reputation as a supplier of contaminant-free cotton.

### **How You Can Help?**

To maintain Australia's reputation for high-quality cotton, we all have a role to play in minimising contamination.

- Choose good quality module wraps – durable, UV resistant wraps that resist degradation and tearing in the field
- Mark damaged or suspect modules – if you suspect there is plastic within the module or the wrap has torn or is deteriorated, mark the affected modules and inform your ginner
- Ensure your contract picker uses good quality module wraps

The stakes are high. Plastic contamination has far-reaching consequences for the entire industry. It leads to customer complaints and claims; shipment rejections; reduced confidence in Australian cotton and the devaluation of our cotton in global markets.

Protecting Australian cotton's reputation is everyone's responsibility. By working together and making informed decisions, we can ensure our fibre remains the benchmark for quality and purity worldwide.

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