BCI's Large Farm Programme

The Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) is the world's largest cotton sustainability programme. With an extensive network of members, our mission is to help cotton communities survive and thrive, while protecting and restoring the environment.

BCI works with programme teams and partners around the world in both smallholder and large farm contexts. Large farms play a significant role in the future of the organisation, as improvements at such a scale make a notable difference across the programme.

Who are BCI's Large Farm countries?

As of 2026, BCI's Large Farm Programme, which includes our Benchmarking Countries, comprises nine regions spanning the continents. Learn more about our work in each country by following the links below:

- Australia
- Brazil
- Greece
- Israel
- Pakistan
- Spain
- Türkiye
- United States
- Uzbekistan

What does BCI consider a Large Farm?

Large Farms, as defined in the BCI Standard System, constitute farms with a size typically above 200 hectares (~500 acres) of cotton which either have mechanised production or are structurally dependent on permanent hired labour. Large Farms participate with BCI on an individual basis or, in some contexts, through a Large Farm Group Model.

In general, BCI Large Farms have higher investment and higher yields, are better connected to markets, and have impact at scale. They are a broad range of sizes, from less than 200 ha up to 50,000 ha, and include small family businesses along with multinational companies.

Large Farms production represents a significant portion of BCI cotton production. In the 2023/2024 season, we worked with over 1100 Large Farms that produced 69% of BCI cotton lint on 46% of the programme acreage.

Season 2023/24	LFs/PUs	Area (ha)	Production lint (MT)	Yield (MT/ha)	Average cotton field size (ha)
Large Farms	1,123	244,283	3,909,626	1.77	1,957
% BCI		46%	69%	1.5x higher	

BCI uses differing field-level implementation models to foster and drive sustainable cotton production while promoting better livelihoods for farmers. BCI has two main implementation or production models:

1. Direct Implementation Model (BCI Standard Country)

2. Recognition Model (BCI Equivalent Standard Country)

Both implementation models work with large farms:

2024/2025	Australia	Brazil	Greece	Israel	Pakistan	Spain	Türkiye	USA	Uzbekistan
LFs/PUs	157	457	77	60	17	25	23	316	8
Area (ha)	214,508	1,663,538	204,367	5,240	40,242	25,612	10,870	255,490	10,970
Production lint (MT)	481,482	3,321,108	232,677	8,582	63,654	21,515	24,999	332,531	10,014
Yield (MT lint/ha)	2.24	1.99	1.13	1.63	1.58	0.84	2.29	1.3	0.91
Average farm size (ha)	1,366	3,640	2,654	87.3	2,367	1,024	472.6	816	1,371

The BCI Growth and Innovation Fund (GIF) Large Farm Fund has invested over 2 million Euros over five years in projects that support regenerative cotton production systems in Australia, Brazil, Greece, Israel, and the US. Many are focused on developing strategies to reduce reliance on Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs).

How does the Large Farm Programme function?

BCI facilitates connections among these regions, convening the group on an annual basis as well as through dialogues throughout the year to share challenges and innovations while identifying opportunities for collaboration.

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In 2021, BCI began hosting its annual Large Farm Symposium. The recurring virtual symposia highlight innovative research and projects that are improving large-scale cotton production throughout the world. The following year, BCI held the first of its Large Farm Dialogues, inviting Programme Partners, producers and researchers to exchange updates, insights and questions through an informal online platform following the Large Farm Symposium.

As of 2024, BCI has also initiated its annual in-person, multistakeholder convening: Large Farm Week. This immersive, weeklong event brings together BCI staff, Programme Partners, farmers, agronomists and other agricultural professionals from across the Large Farm countries to meet in person, visiting farms, gins, and textile production facilities while gaining a better understanding of all that they have in common.

What are some shared focal areas and priorities across the Large Farm countries?

- **Crop protection**: Minimising usage of synthetic inputs and phasing out HHPs, while seeking alternatives for farmers and promoting control frameworks such as integrated pest management (IPM) as well as the implementation of regenerative practices and the use of biological inputs.
- **Raising the market value of cotton**: Working together to build a stronger case for cotton as a natural fibre amid the rise of synthetic textiles.
- **Advancement of research and technology**: Exploring and utilising technology such as precision agriculture equipment in tandem with regenerative practices to address impact areas such as managing irrigation water usage, more targeted input application and reduced usage of fossil fuels.

Recent Large Farm Programme updates and activities from BCI:

- Brazil's Cotton Multistakeholder Dialogue sets up governance structure and announces public event plans for 2026
- Better Cotton Initiative partners with Uzbek government agency to offset certification costs
- BCI's 10-Year US Impact Report Shares Key Data Insights and Promotes Cross-Sector Collaboration
- Large Farm Week 2025: Representatives From BCI's Large Farm Countries Come Together in the Vast Cotton Fields of Brazil