



CANEGROWERS
MARYBOROUGH

& MARYBOROUGH CANE
PRODUCTIVITY SERVICES

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2018

MANAGER'S UPDATE

Welcome to the February edition of the newsletter. In this edition, political influences, Productivity Services updates, Pricing updates.

Falls around the district for two weeks ago ranged from 70 to 90 mms and keeps us on track for a healthy crop for this season. A few more drops soon would be welcome...

At our end of season meeting we had representatives from Commonwealth Bank support the event and talk briefly of the finance support available for growers. Enclosed is a brochure covering equipment finance options that may be useful to you.

CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

The international sugar market has been very volatile since the middle of last year and sugar prices have remained poor over the Christmas period and beyond. An international surplus is the main influence but for those involved in the forward pricing pools we are able to weather this period having priced most of this year when the market was in the high \$400s and even over \$500.

Through last season the growers in the Yerra area had the unwanted problem of restricted road access off Biggenden Road. There has been progress on the problem with Transport & Main Roads confirming, in writing, the intersection is to be redesigned with expected completion mid-year. They mention passing lanes and moving the intersection to improve access. We look forward to seeing this issue resolved (hopefully) prior to our next harvesting season commencement.

With the Christmas break now well past it is again timely to bring to focus the water needs for this area. While we have support for the concept of improved water storage at a state level, financial backing is still needed from both state and federal governments. Submissions are due to be assessed fairly soon so we are very hopeful of a positive outcome.

At the MSF Sugar dinner conducted at the end of last season, estimates for the 2018 crop were optimistic for up to 900,000 tonnes. While the weather has played it's part so far we are again at the point of needing a good fall, a few times, to keep the crop progressing. It certainly would be fantastic for the local region!

Jeff Atkinson

Chairman



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Election outcomes and the future

The state election saw the returning of ALP's Bruce Saunders to the Maryborough Electorate

The impacts to the industry, with a return of the ALP, is likely to be on the following areas:

- **Water security**- ALP has supported the progression of the proposed Glendorff Water Storage to the federal government for assessing on funding prior to the election. We are still to hear of state funding, but Mr Saunders' office agrees this is a focus for the year ahead. Submissions to the Federal government were forwarded via Sunwater in October/November and due to be assessed in the next month(hopefully)
- **Reef Regulation**- Prior to the election the ALP state government had undertaken a review of the existing reef regulations. The implications to this area are that we could be added to the recognised impact areas and then required to conform to controls on nutrient run off, sediment controls, pesticide use and others. This proposed legislation change hasn't been passed and had to be deferred until after the election for further consultation. I now enclose a letter to the editor
- issued yesterday on recent news articles on scientific quality.

Reef science questions concern farmers

Sugarcane growers up and down the Queensland coast are concerned about the questions around the integrity of some of the scientific work done in relation to the health of the Great Barrier Reef.

Science, we have been assured, underpins government policy and strategy, both State and Federal, around the Reef.

These policies have direct impacts on CANEGROWERS members – in their day to day farming operations and in the long-term development of their businesses.

Our sugarcane growing industry is one of innovation and change. Our members have invested millions of dollars of their own money to work towards environmental goals and targets while also still pursuing the productivity gains which keep our export product world competitive.

Now, with a court case looming between James Cook University and one of its own professors, Peter Ridd, amid claims of censorship and allegations of flawed scientific process, the industry is understandably uneasy.

That Professor Ridd's plea for donations to fund his legal bill has raised in excess of \$100,000 in a few days is evidence of the community concern around this issue.



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The sugarcane industry urgently needs to be reassured of the scientific rigour surrounding the work on which government Reef policy is based and that the work has the confidence of the organisations and individuals responsible for publishing it.

Dan Galligan
CANEGROWERS CEO

09-02-2018

- **Electricity prices**- a very hot topic through out the election but unfortunately the ALP had only offered a small rebate to users which will do nothing to reduce the burden. There are, however, interesting trials running on alternate power sources to run pumps and currently under way near Bundaberg. Hopefully technology may help with reducing the bills.
- **Sugar Marketing Choice**- For the last 3 years we have been able to choose who markets our portion of sugar, which has meant a wider range of product offerings becoming available as well the ability to forward sell for greater stability and control of returns at the growers' end. The ALP stated they will repeal this legislation. Unfortunately, this would seemingly only cause expense and uncertainty for the industry. There is still some chance of the ALP not proceeding, however, it would take a lot of protesting from growers to have them back down. Locally, the Maryborough ALP member currently stands for repealing the legislation.

Irrigation Water Use Rebates

On the 25th January MSF sugar Mill wrote to advise that the existing water rebate scheme has now been ceased.

Talks will be undertaken by the Canegrowers Board with MSF Sugar in the coming months on what is a worthy option to replace this scheme.



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MSF Sugar

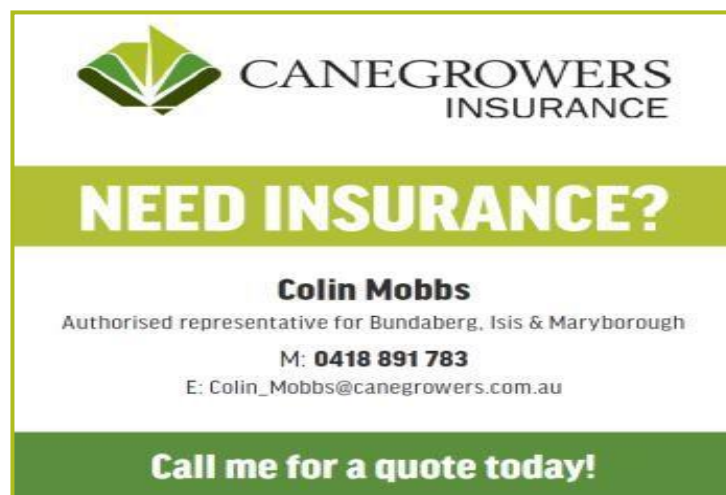
Cane Supply Contacts (estimates, mapping etc):


Chris Coutts-Smith..... 0409 269 189

Dannielle Nitschinsk..... 0417 247 020

Don't forget that "moogle" will give you access to your specific farm data and results.

Workshops are currently being organised to explain and improve grower knowledge of "moogle"!



 CANEGROWERS
INSURANCE

NEED INSURANCE?

Colin Mobbs
 Authorised representative for Bundaberg, Isis & Maryborough
 M: **0418 891 783**
 E: Colin_Mobbs@canegrowers.com.au

Call me for a quote today!



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Upcoming Cane industry & Local Events

February Events-

20th- Bundaberg Field Day- Adaptive Renewable Energy Concepts to irrigated Sugarcane Production. Please RSVP to BRIG@bdbcanegrowers.com.au or 07 41512555 by 12 noon Monday 19th February.

Please note attendance is by RSVP only.

The banner features a dark blue background with white text. On the left is the ARENA logo (Australian Renewable Energy Agency) with the Australian Government coat of arms. On the right is the Bundaberg Regional Irrigators Group logo. The central text reads: "Bundaberg Sugar Industry Renewable Energy Project" and "Adapting Renewable Energy Concepts to Irrigated Sugarcane Production at Bundaberg".

- **27th - SRA Southern Region Grower Update 2018 in Bundaberg. No bus this year - car pooling is best! Invitation enclosed.**

March Events-

- **2nd – Grower meetings for MSF season pricing. 9AM meeting in Maryborough- canegrowers Hall, 2 PM meeting in Nambour – Research centre.**
- **26th to 28th - Next Gen Case IH Step UP! Conference in Mackay. Details in the canegrowers Magazine (12/02/18)**
- **TBA- Grower information sessions- Chain of responsibility for cane supply 2018 and beyond. Dates to be advised. Lots of changes and lots to be understood before the start of crushing for 2018.**



Maryborough Cane Productivity Services

Pest & disease-SRA Pathology

- Yellow Canopy Syndrome (YCS) - This phenomenon of sugar cane with an as yet unknown causal agent has again been detected in the area. SRA pathologists are conducting experiments locally in the on-going work to develop a diagnostic tool and to also try and discover the cause



Priya-SRA researcher discusses leaf symptoms with grower.

- MCPS agronomy has been working closely with SRA to collect soil samples – the aim of this work is to look at soil pests and diseases as a combined effect on yield, as opposed to each as individual problems.
 - Nematode base level survey- an effort to determine the extent of the levels of plant parasitic nematodes (PPN)-the bad guys, and free living nematodes (FLN) the good guys, in the Maryborough soils. Earlier BSES work conservatively estimated cane yield losses from nematodes at 10-15%.
 - Pachymetra base level survey- as discussed above, at the same time MCPS has worked with SRA to collect soil samples to again determine levels of this potential problem. Penny, the previous MCPS agronomist conducted an in-depth survey, with results showing low levels of pachymetra, of little concern, especially with resistant varieties.
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RSD

- RSD- Collection of juice samples for autumn plant is in progress. We are hoping to start the RSD testing for spring plant in the 1st week April, so I ask if growers can consider which blocks are to be tested. We try and start early so as to finish prior to planting as there are always some blocks which test positive, requiring alternate tests be taken which all takes time. The SRA lab in Brisbane is always very busy by that time of the year.

Varieties:

Dryland variety demonstration block:

- Unfortunately, the excessive spring rain caused the loss of this planting for a 2018 bus tour stop. We will have another go this coming spring plant, for 2019. There will also be an opportunity to look at the clone QS05-6092 and SRA 4 as plant and 1st ratoon.



Irrigation text messages:

- I hope growers find the regular crop water use (CWU) text messages useful. While generally a short message, the weekly CWU numbers are taken from both a sophisticated irrigation modelling tool (IrrigWeb) and the MSF crop agronomy network of moisture probes. A lot of technology is employed and while the region has enjoyed the recent, much needed rainfall, it won't be long before irrigation systems are back in use-regular irrigations are important to maintain the benefit the summer rain delivered, with our shallow soils unable to hold a great deal of readily available water (RAW) and plant available water (PAW)-I can explain these terms!



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Smartcane BMP:

- There have been several recent inquiries regarding BMP and the accreditation process. It is encouraging to see the renewed interest and both Cameron Waterson at Canegrowers and myself are ready to assist as required. Cameron has had very useful record keeping booklets printed (irrigation, nutrient management and cultivation) and the Canegrower produced spray record book is also available from the Canegrowers office. All a source of joy! There are of course questions regarding future reef legislation covering all of Queensland- I can only suggest you discuss this topic with Cameron.

The subject of Chemical storage is always interesting with BMP and, understandably, making changes with minimal cost to the growers is ideal. In doing some investigating we came across a business supplying a range of different sized shipping containers which can be modified for many uses. Sizes range from 10feet to 40 feet.

Details and web page link are below. The business is based at the sunshine coast.

“ The 10' containers, with a single container door only are \$2,200.00+gst plus delivery (usually about \$400.00+ for delivery for a 20' to Maryborough, so would be practical to bring 2 x 10' up together, if possible.). 10' containers, watertight, vermin proof, with the conventional double container doors are \$2,700.00+gst and delivery.”

Kind Regards, Evelyn McCorkell

Phone 0407 624 532 ABN 12613238469 www.accesscontainers.com.au

Access Containers - Australia-wide - Thinking outside the Box Shipping Containers - 20 ft, 40ft, 10ft

Modified Units - Solar Panels - Portable Composting Toilets

Credit cards not accepted. NOTE: Prices may fluctuate.



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Project Uplift:

- This project is progressing well in the Maryborough and southern region.
- For more information don't hesitate to call Barry Callow on 0487017811

Until next time!



A clean harvester



Useful Stuff

Maryborough Cane Productivity Services

- Andrew Dougall - mobile 0408 740 891
- Barry Callow – Mobile 0487 017 811

Contact Canegrowers

<u>Maryborough Office</u>		<u>Postal</u>
106 Bazaar Street, Maryborough Qld 4650		PO box 172
<u>2017 Office Hours:</u>		Maryborough
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monday: 8:30am – 4pm ○ Tuesday: 8:30am – 4pm ○ Wednesday: 8:30am - 1pm ○ After 1pm Urgent matters call Cam's mobile ○ Thursday: 8:30am -- 4pm ○ Friday: 8:30am – 4pm 		Qld 4650
Cameron Waterson	Manager	Mobile: 0427 577 557 Office: 07) 4121 4441
Email address:	Cameron_Waterson@canegrowers.com.au	
	<u>DIRECTORS</u>	<u>Contact number</u>
Jeff Atkinson	Chairman	Mobile 0428 212 792
Allen Birt	Deputy Chair	Mobile 0428 118 053
Ashley Petersen	Director	Mobile 0418 787 032
Allan Otto	Director	Mobile 0409 632 656
Roger Bambling	Director	Mobile 0419 788 376