



December 2019

Welcome to the December edition of the newsletter. In this edition:-

What do the reef regulations bring to here? Changes with Productivity Services and more....

CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE



*Merry Christmas from the Board & Staff of
Maryborough CANEGROWERS Limited.*

Hi All

What can we say about the rain other than there isn't enough.

The only bright light is that irrigation supply has held up to this point?

With the district now being drought declared in every part of the district, the picture for the bulk of the state now shows how poor the last twelve months has been.

The sugar price is finally showing at least a return for our effort, reaching \$440 /t Actual for 2020 this week. The Maryborough Collective was able to price bundles of sugar at \$440 for 2020 and the price has now dropped below this point.

The international forecasting is now firming on reduced production in all major countries which, in turn, is soaking up the world surplus of the last three years.

The mill remains committed to this District and all of the cane supply areas feeding to it. While we may not be searching for the million tonnes going forward, we can develop a consistent supply with some better positioned water assets in the area.

Updated Reef regulations came into effect from 1st December although, for us, record keeping is the sole impact until 2022. and an explanation of record keeping is on the next page.

With the uncertainty in the weather my Christmas will be quiet and probably at home. Might wash the car just to make it rain.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a merry Christmas and an improved 2020 season to come.

Jeff Atkinson, Chairman



MANAGER'S UPDATE

Our **“Reef Regulations”** information pack arrived this week with plenty of reading and you can access or request a pack on the Department of Environment & Science website: www.qld.gov.au/ReefRegulations.

The Queensland Government is offering drop-in sessions to discuss with growers one on one however the nearest location will be Bundaberg (so far).

The initial impact for our area is record Keeping. As of 1st of December we need to keep general records of our practices & activities. Records can be in any format but should be made within 3 business days, kept for 6 years and be available when requested by compliance (in the future).

What are General Records?

For sugarcane producers, records must include:

- Name of sugar cane producer (i.e the person(s) carrying out the activity)
- Name of person making record
- Company name (if applicable)
- Property address/es
- Postal address
- Farm identification number/s
- A list of lots included in all farms
- Records of agricultural chemicals (any pesticide, herbicide or fungicide applied to land or crops), fertiliser and mill mud applied & specifically:
 - Location of each application (farm number with block id or management zone).
 - Date of each application
 - Details of application with product name, application rate and for fertiliser products, the percentage of nitrogen (N) & phosphorus (P)

These records need to be supported by primary documents such as soil tests, fertiliser contractor print-outs, fertiliser or agricultural chemical invoices.



For our region, the minimum practice reef regulations will not come into effect until 1st December 2022.

This gives a window of time to take steps on completing Smartcane BMP as growers who are accredited with BMP will be deemed to have met minimum standards. Record keeping is the backbone of the program and Yolande & I are happy to work through the assessment & pre audit requirements with you.

What fills your time?

Wondering what the picture is on this page? It's a rowing boat for eight people and was the first one of its type back on the river in over twenty years. I keep myself busy when I'm not in the office and rowing sees me at the clubhouse at least three times a week. It's a great way to clear the head and socialise with a coffee after.

There are lots of sport, craft & community groups around and often not understood by the rest of the community. Thought we might highlight what's out there.

So my question is— What fills your time?

Office Christmas Closure Dates

The office will be closed on Friday 20th December & Re-opening Monday the 13th January 2020.

Safe travels over the Christmas period and see you all in 2020, Cam.



Activities from the Office

Meetings since last edition.

- * Canegrowers Board Meeting held 10/10/2019
- * Feral Pig control meeting 22/10/19
- * Meeting with MSF Sugar CEO Mike Barry. 25/10/19
- * Teleconference— Canegrowers submission to Reef Regulations 01/11/19
- * AGM & end of season meeting 07/11/19
- * SRA irrigation training 12 & 13/11/19
- * Canegrowers Policy Council meeting & manager Meeting, Brisbane 12 to 14/11/19

- * Grower Representative Pricing meeting held by Teleconference 28/11/19
- * MCPS committee Meeting 03/12/19
- * Smartcane BMP meeting 04/12/19
- * Canegrowers Board Meeting held 10/12/19
- * Feral Pig Strategy Meeting held 13/12/19

Upcoming Events

- Christmas Day 25th December
- Boxing Day test & Start of Sydney Hobart yacht Race 26th December
- New Years Day Holiday 1st January 2020
- Productivity Services Field Tour of Tasmania 12th to 15th January 2020.
- Navigating Tough Times Workshop, Maryborough—3rd Feb & 7th Feb 2020
- Smartcane BMP Workshop -Wednesday 13th February 2020
- Regenerative cane Farming Forum in Cairns— 23rd & 24th March 2020
- Case IH Step Up 2020, Bundaberg—24th & 25th March 2020
- Tokyo Olympics 24July to 9th August 2020. No Russian athletes might help our medal tally!





2019 Crop Stats

Our season finished on Sunday 3rd November, with a total of 592,216 tonnes at a ccs of 14.32. Overall tonnage was down 5% on our pre-season forecast, however the ccs was above forecast.

Yield and productivity data is still being compiled as grower block survey returns are still coming in. Once these are all in and the database is updated, your individual Productivity Reports will be printed and distributed.

Area loss 2020

Next year will see a reduction in total area, which is against the trend we have seen since 2011. A combination of farm sales and several growers winding back production will result in an estimated loss of up to 990 hectares. The 5 year average production from these farms is around 43,000 tonnes.

It is important to put this into perspective - while the loss is significant, our mapped area remains similar to 2015 when we grew over 860,000 tonnes. In other words, we still have the potential to produce satisfactory crops under normal weather conditions.

Farm changes and Cane Supply Agreement updates

As well as a number of recent farm sales, over the years we have also had a number of business name changes and retirements from the industry. This leaves us with numerous obsolete CSA's which have never been officially terminated. We will be looking to clear these from our system, so may be writing to ex-growers to wind these up in the New Year. This will not affect any active supply Agreements; it is simply a matter of tidying up the loose ends.

2020 Mapping

Our 2020 mapping updates are now well underway, but we rely on your input to identify block changes and to advise us of planting and ratooning details. With about 270 maps to update, this can take several months so please send your data forms in as soon as possible if you haven't already done so.

Cane Supply Staff Holidays

Over the Christmas/New Year period our cane supply staff will be taking the following breaks:

	Last day	Return to work
Dannielle	Thur 19 th December	6 th January
Chris	Fri 13 th December	6 th January

chriscouttsmith@msfsugar.com.au and he will endeavour to respond.

And finally

All at MSF Sugar Pty Ltd would like to thank growers for their commitment to the industry in what have been very difficult times. Here's hoping you all have a well-earned break over Christmas, and that the 2020 season brings some welcome relief to both weather and sugar prices!

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.





Navigating tough times FREE WORKSHOP



**Do you want to learn how to identify, understand
and assist people experiencing stress?**

Maryborough

Date: Monday 3 February 2020
Time: 4.45pm for a 5.00pm start
Meal: Dinner will be provided
Venue: Cane Growers Association
106 Bazaar Street, Maryborough
Cost: FREE
RSVP by: 20 January 2020, Tierra Moore
0451164 383 or tierra.moore@rfq.com.au

Date: Friday 7 February 2020
Time: 10.45am for an 11.00am start
Meal: Lunch will be provided
Venue: Cane Growers Association
106 Bazaar Street, Maryborough
Cost: FREE
RSVP by: 20 January 2020, Tierra Moore
0451164 383 or tierra.moore@rfq.com.au

We are looking for farmers, community members, service providers and agricultural industry representatives who want to learn more about developing skills to equip them to better deal with the stressors of life and increase their capacity to help community members and farmers navigate ongoing seasonal challenges.

Suitable for adults who would like to learn some new skills to support family, friends, colleagues and clients experiencing stress.

Spaces are limited - REGISTER NOW



INNOVATION STEWARDSHIP FARM BUSINESS

SAVE THE DATE
24 - 25
MARCH 2020

at
**BUNDABERG
MULTIPLEX**

Sport & Convention Centre
1 Civic Ave, Bundaberg West QLD 4670

REGISTER AT:
www.nextgenstepup.com

CASE IH
AGRICULTURE

Case IH StepUp!
FARMING IN A CHANGING CLIMATE 2020

**WELCOME FUNCTION
SPEAKER SESSIONS
TRADE HALL EXHIBITION
FIELD TRIP
CONFERENCE DINNER**
at the Bundaberg Rum Distillery

COME AND JOIN A
SHOWCASE OF INNOVATION
AND TECHNOLOGY FOR
NEXT GEN FARMERS IN A
CHANGING CLIMATE

CONTACT



Ainsley Gatley | **Conference Coordinator**
nextgenfarmers@gmail.com | 0488 197 400



Gerard Puglisi | **Next Gen Officer**
gtpuglisifarming@bigpond.com | 0428 988 136



**next
gen**

ACFA: Harvesting the Next Gen

REGENERATIVE CANE FARMING FORUM

2020
CAIRNS



SAVE THE DATE

**23rd & 24th
March 2020**

**Registration
opens** Dec 1st, 2019

Join us for this hands on forum where you will visit farms and see and hear from farmers in the Cairns region who are successfully changing their farming systems and from the extension specialists supporting them.

- Soil Health
- Controlled Traffic
- Permanent Beds
- Min & NoTill
- Cover Crops
- Composting
- Row Spacing



Contact:

Michael Waring - 0428771361
David Hardwick - 0409 646565

more info :
www.regencane.com.au

Useful Contact Information

Maryborough Cane Productivity Services

- Yolande Kliese— Mobile 0487 017 811

Maryborough CANEGROWERS Office

106 Bazaar Street, Maryborough Qld 4650

2020 Office Hours: (From 13th January 2020)

- Monday: 8:30am – 4:00pm
- Tuesday: 8:30am – 4:00pm
- Wednesday: 8:30am - 1:00pm
- After 1:00pm—Urgent matters call
Cam's mobile
- Thursday: 8:30am -- 4:00pm
- Friday: 8:30am – 4:00pm

Postal

PO box 172
Maryborough
Qld 4650

Cameron Waterson	District Manager	Mobile: 0427 577 557 Office: (07) 4121 4441
Email address:	cameron_waterson@canegrowers.com.au	
<u>DISTRICT</u>	<u>DIRECTORS</u>	<u>Contact Number</u>
Jeff Atkinson	Chairman	Mobile 0428 212 792
Ashley Petersen	Deputy Chair	Mobile 0418 787 032
Roger Bambling	Director	Mobile 0419 788 376
Adam Doyle	Director	Mobile 0407 627 424
Isaac Schmidt	Director	Mobile 0417 868 377

Smut loving the dry and hot conditions

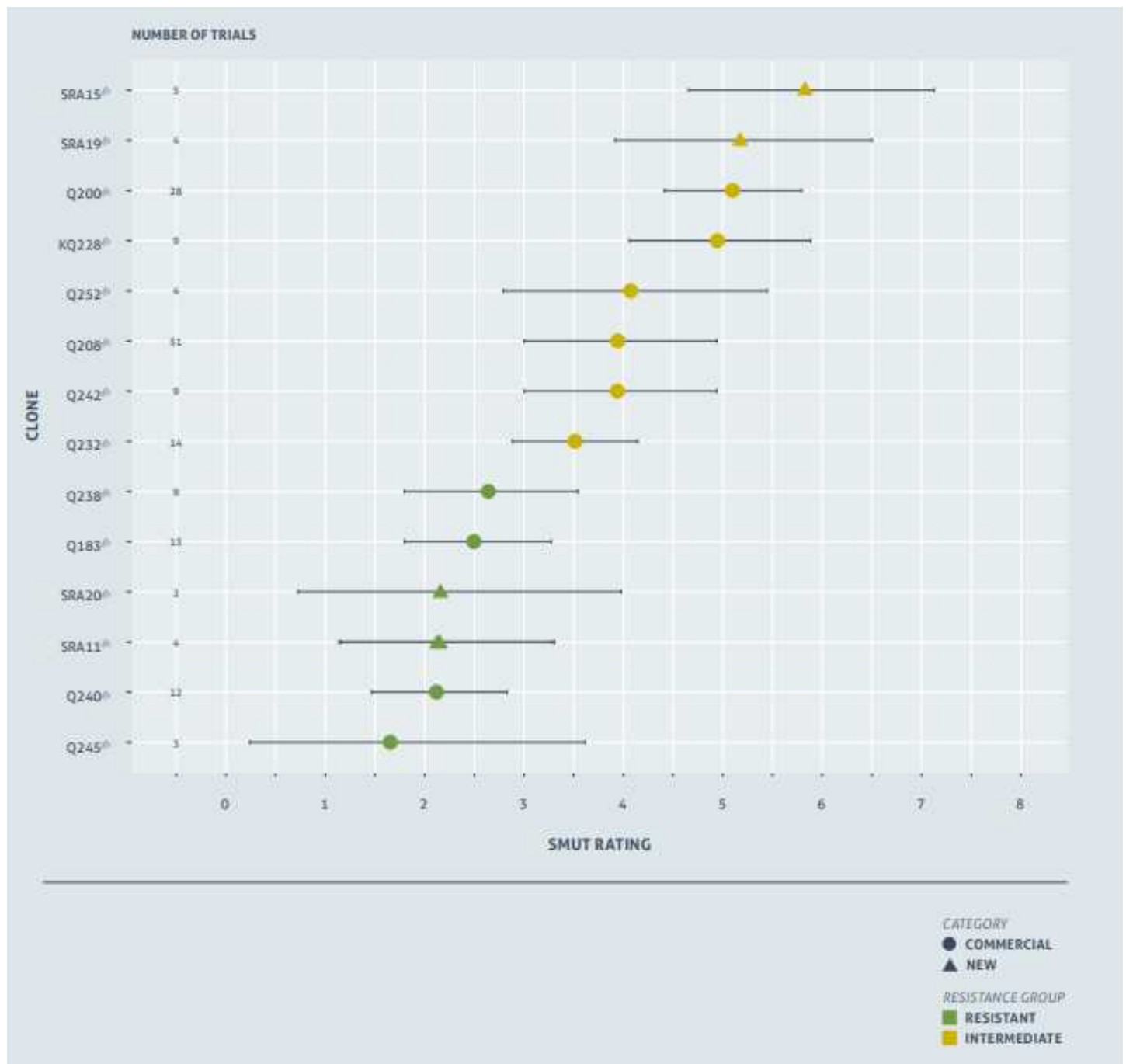
We are seeing a lot of smut, particularly in Q252, Q248, Q242—these are all intermediate resistant varieties for smut. Resistant varieties are the main method for managing sugarcane smut. In “normal” seasons that are wetter we tend to see less smut in these varieties even though they are rated intermediate. Page 7 of the SRA Variety Guide 2019/20: Southern Region has some of the smut ratings (this is the image below) or view it on the SRA website <https://sugarresearch.com.au/growers-and-millers/varieties/>

Varieties classed as resistant to smut are— Q240, SRA20, SRA11, SRA1, Q249, Q245, Q238, Q183.

Intermediates are—SRA19, SRA4, SRA2, Q252, Q242 (I-R), Q232 (I-R), Q208 (I-R), KQ228 (I-S).

Consider how much you have of each variety and the resistance rating to spread your risk of smut impact.

Ratoon or plough out? Monitor the level of smut and consider the pressure being placed on the rest of your farm when deciding what to ratoon after the 2020 harvest and what to plough out for fallow rotation.



Report any unusual plants you see on your farm

Early detection of exotic pests and diseases is critical and enhances the chance of effective control and eradication. Please contact me about any unusual plants you see.



A grower recently contacted me about unusual stunting of plants in ratoons. I worked with Rob Magarey from SRA to diagnose what was causing the stunting. We are 99.9% certain it is smut and will conduct follow up inspections in the new year. However, it was not easy to identify due to the age of crop and limited development of “whips”. If whips develop then it will confirm smut. If whips do not develop then we can conduct further diagnostic tests to work out what is causing the stunting. It is very important to monitor your crop development and keep an eye out for anything unusual. A quote I saw recently was —“It’s not the cost on production of doing better biosecurity, it’s the cost of not doing it” —Shane Templeton, Templeton Ginger (and canegrower). Taking the time to look at your crop is important as this is how we will detect exotic pests and diseases early. Know our biosecurity zone, map below and on SRA website, for machinery and plant movements.

SRA website has Biosecurity information <https://sugarresearch.com.au/growers-and-millers/biosecurity/>



- All appliances (harvesters and other sugarcane machinery) moving between sugarcane biosecurity zones must:
 - > be free of cane trash and soil
 - > be inspected by an authorised inspection person who will issue a Plant Health Assurance Certificate (PHAC)
 - > be accompanied during transportation by the PHAC.
- Machinery inspections can be arranged by contacting the local Productivity Service organisation.
- To move sugarcane plants (stalks, leaves, potted plants, etc) between biosecurity zones contact Biosecurity Queensland (13 25 23).

Reef protection regulations

New Reef protection regulations took effect from **1 December 2019**. What does this mean:

- **Record keeping— all sugarcane producers must keep general records from 1 December 2019**
- Comply with minimum practice agricultural standards for Burnett Mary Region by 1 December 2022
- Implement a farm nitrogen and phosphorus budget for Burnett Mary Region by 1 December 2022
- **New or expanded cropping activities for Burnett Mary Region 1 June 2020**—obtain an environmental authority (permit) for areas greater than 5 hectares that do not meet the cropping history test.

Greater detail can be accessed on the Queensland Government Website, link below -

<https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/agriculture/sustainable-farming/reef/reef-regulations/producers/sugarcane>

From the Queensland Government website above— “Agricultural producers that are accredited under a recognised program and continue to meet the terms of accreditation will be deemed to have met the minimum practice agricultural standards. Producers accredited against a recognised program will not be the focus of compliance activities. “

Smartcane BMP

A lot of growers are already registered for Smartcane BMP. If you have forgotten your login details please contact me and I can assist. Otherwise you can Register or Login at <https://smartcane.com.au/>

There is a lot of useful information on the Smartcane BMP website.

When you complete 3 modules you can become accredited -

Module 1—Soil health and nutrient management

Module 2—Irrigation and drainage management

Module 3—Weed, pest and disease management



Smartcane BMP workshop Thursday 13th February 1:30pm Canegrowers Maryborough

We will go over Modules 1 to 3 and present examples of what is required for each of the modules.

Steps to become Smartcane BMP accredited are:

- 1) Register for Smartcane BMP online if you are not already registered <https://smartcane.com.au/>
- 2) Benchmark online—answer questions about your current practices (I can assist with this if you like)
- 3) Pre-Audit checklist— I come on-farm and do a pre-audit checklist to help you to prepare for an audit
- 4) Collate information required, you can start this process prior to the pre-audit as well
- 5) Audit— an independent auditor will conduct an audit to verify you meet BMP requirements

Please contact me if you would like any assistance with Smartcane BMP.

MCPS Committee—expressions of interest from growers to be on the Committee

We are calling for expressions of interest from growers who would like to be on the MCPS Committee as Allen Birt is stepping down. Craig Mellor and Leyton Petersen will remain on the committee. We meet quarterly, 4 times per year for about 2 to 3 hours per meeting. Our next meeting is in March. Please let me know if you are interested. I would like to thank Allen Birt for his valued contribution to MCPS over the years.

Soybeans:

With the weather not being so kind people have held off planting soybeans due to lack of rain and high temperatures. Hopefully we will get some rain over the Christmas and New Year period to provide moisture to plant soybeans into. Later planting should mean they flower and pod set in lower temperatures.

Soil pH: Ideally 6 to 6.5—apply lime to raise soil pH (adds calcium as well)

Variety choice: **Planting pre Christmas to early January** — Fernside or A6785

Planting mid January onwards — Hayman or Kuranda

Andrew James, CSIRO plant breeder, has some information on the Pulse Australia website about varieties

<http://pulseaus.com.au/blog/post/improved-soybean-varieties>

Fertiliser: 265kg/ha Legumemax will provide 50kg K/ha, 10.6 kg N/ha, 23.1kg P/ha and 13.8kg S/ha. Can also use CK44S. Chasing about 50 kg K/ha as normally little potassium left after cane and soybeans need K.

Planting Density: 300,000 to 325,000 plants/ha irrigated, consider 200,000 plants/ha for dryland

kg seed/ha = planting density / (Seed count/kg x Germination % off the bag x emergence -most assume 90%)

Eg. 325,000 density / (5000 seed count/kg x 92% germination x 90% emergence) = 78.5 kg seed/ha

Inoculation: inoculant is a living thing so keep it cool. Nikki Seymour's information on inoculation is on Pulse Australia website <http://pulseaus.com.au/blog/post/nitrogen-management-legumes>

Make sure your tank is clean before using for inoculant, ie. fungicides you may have used for planting cane.

Feral Pigs:

Feral Pigs continue to be an issue. We are in the process of developing a Wide Bay Regional Feral Pig Management Plan and this will take time to complete. In the mean time the thing I have learnt most is no one is going to control feral pigs for us. It is a matter of knowing our neighbours and working together with coordinated control efforts to have the largest impact on the feral pig population.

No one management tool is going to solve the problem and we will need to use trapping, baiting, hunting to keep the population at a level where impact to the sugarcane crop and other crops is minimised.

I also understand some of the landholders do not get impacted as much by feral pigs as sugarcane growers and have large areas of land. These large landholders rely on neighbours to communicate with them about where hotspots of feral pig populations are and are willing to coordinate control efforts when they are made aware. I have contacts for Fraser Coast and Gympie Regional Councils, Qld Parks and Wildlife, Unallocated State Land (DNRME), HQ Plantations. I have maps showing the various landholders in google earth and think formation of groups for communication and coordinated control would be a step in the right direction. If you would like to look at maps of your area and obtain contact details please let me know.

African Swine Fever remain alert as this serious disease of pigs continues to spread in neighbouring countries. Queensland's widespread population of feral pigs presents a challenge. Information on Queensland Government website -

<https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/farms-fishing-forestry/agriculture/land-management/health-pests-weeds-diseases/livestock/african-swine-fever>

African swine fever

Information for feral pig hunters

About African swine fever

African swine fever is an infectious viral disease of domestic and feral pigs. It can result in a very high mortality rate in infected pigs and no vaccine or treatment is available.

People cannot be infected.

Australia is free from African swine fever.

If it were introduced to Australia, African swine fever would significantly impact pig health, production and the feral pig population.

It's important to remain on alert for African swine fever as this serious disease of pigs continues to spread in neighbouring countries.

How pigs can become infected

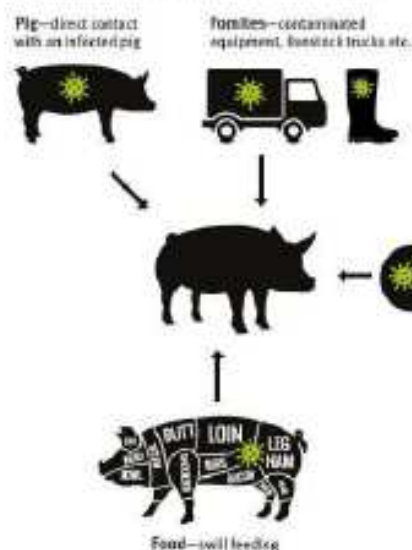
Feral and domestic pigs can become infected with African swine fever virus by:

- eating contaminated pork products and feed
- close contact with infected pigs
- contact with contaminated equipment.

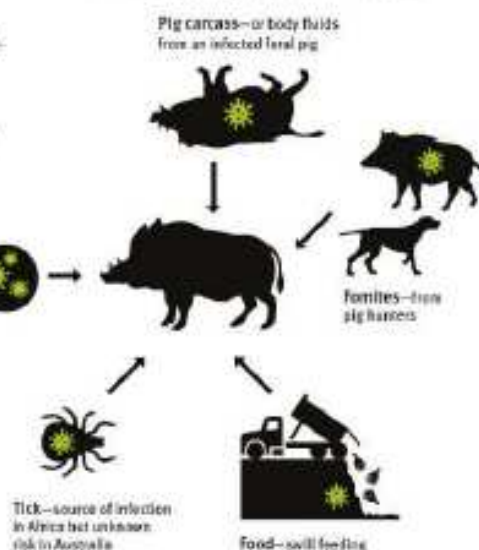
The greatest risk of introduction is from visitors and residents illegally bringing pork or pork products into Australia from overseas and the products being fed to or eaten by pigs. The virus can remain for long periods in blood, faeces and tissues, particularly in chilled and frozen meat.

Transmission of African swine fever

How do domestic pigs become infected?



How do feral pigs become infected?



If you suspect the presence of African swine fever, you must report it to **Biosecurity Queensland** on **13 25 23** or contact the **Emergency Disease Watch Hotline** on **1800 675 888**.



Queensland
Government



Report signs of African swine fever

Early detection is vital.

The signs of African swine fever in pigs can include:

- death (possibly before other signs are noticeable)
- blotching/reddening of the skin
- high fever
- lack of coordination or stiff gait
- difficulty breathing
- abortion
- diarrhoea
- vomiting.

Inspect carcasses for:

- pinpoint reddening in organs such as heart and kidneys
- reddening of the skin
- excess fluid around the heart
- enlarged lymph nodes resembling blood clots
- enlarged, fragile and/or dark-coloured spleen.

People food is not pig food

The international spread of African swine fever has been linked to feral and domestic pigs eating food waste.

You can help protect against African swine fever by:

- always disposing of food waste and scraps properly so pigs can't access and eat them.
- never feeding pigs swill, which is food or food scraps that has come into contact with or contains animal matter such as meat and meat products.

Swill feeding is illegal in all states and territories of Australia, including Queensland. If you suspect swill feeding, report it to Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23.

To prevent the spread of disease:

- wear disposable or washable protective clothing (aprons / gloves / overalls) when dressing feral pigs
- inspect all carcasses and carcass parts for evidence of disease or illness
- clean and disinfect all equipment on site
- respect all quarantines, biosecurity plans and restrictions that are in place
- only hunt on one property each night
- thoroughly clean and disinfect vehicle after each night's harvesting.

Do not

- have contact with domestic pigs if you hunt feral pigs
- move live animals (including piglets) to new locations
- keep feral pigs at home
- use swill to feed or trap feral pigs
- leave leftovers from your meals in the hunting area
- feed raw feral pig meat to dogs.

What should I do if I notice unusual clinical signs

If you suspect African swine fever, you must immediately contact Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23 or the Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline on 1800 675 888.

More information?

For more information on African swine fever call 13 25 23 or visit qld.gov.au/AfricanSwineFever

Subscribe to the biosecurity alerts at daf.qld.gov.au/alerts

If you suspect the presence of African swine fever, you must report it to **Biosecurity Queensland** on **13 25 23** or contact the **Emergency Disease Watch Hotline** on **1800 675 888**.



**Queensland
Government**

Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee (MRCCC) - reducing sediment loads

The Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee (MRCCC) is a not-for-profit integrated catchment management group which has been operating in the Mary River catchment since 1994. Over the last several years their project work has been concentrated at Kenilworth in the Upper Mary River catchment, where several large scale river bank stabilisation projects have been undertaken with the aim of reducing sediment loads in the river to improve water quality.



Before and After Photos - January 2019 sheer banks and September 2019 bank re-profiled and pile fields and rock armouring to slow flood waters. Native trees and shrubs planted to further stabilise the bank.

MRCCC would like to connect with canegrowers who have land with frontage to the Lower Mary River to stabilise eroding river bank areas. The project grants they currently have available are funded by the Australian Government's Reef Trust program.

If you are interested in participating please contact Sarah sarah.grimish@mrccc.org.au or Belinda belinda.wedlock@mrccc.org.au at MRCCC, Phone 07 5482 4766, Website www.mrccc.org.au

History of the Australian Sugarcane Industry

"They're all half crazy"

When I visited the Australian Sugar Heritage Centre, Sugar Museum, at Innisfail recently they had the DVD playing "They're all half crazy". I know a lot of you might have seen it as it was produced in 1995. But for those who have not seen it or would like to watch it again it chronicles the mechanical cane harvesting in Australia and there is a youtube link or simply Google "They're all half crazy sugarcane" to watch the 20 minutes of great memories and to remember what Australia did for mechanical harvesting

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c6RdZ9x7Q4>



Thank you for your support in 2019

***Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and
a Happy and Wetter New Year!***

