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7 November 2016

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an evolving
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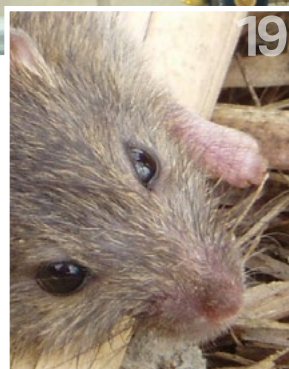
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Clock ticking on December cut-out

By Paul Schembri, Chairman CANEGROWERS

Queensland cane growers are battle hardened when it comes to taking on adversity. Once again we face a massive challenge — a race against the clock to get this year's crop in.

Normally at the end of October most mills would be looking at the finish line, but this year most mills are four to six weeks behind where we need to be.

It is a chilling thought that many areas face the prospect of 30 to 40% of the crop being crushed in November and December. It is also frustrating for growers that with sugar prices at five-year highs, the full potential of improved profitability may not be realised.

The Australian crop is forecast to be around 37 million tonnes in 2016. If we can crush it all, it will represent the eighth successive year of increased production.

However, the finish line is a long way off given that 15 of the 21 Queensland mills are set for a late-December and even January finish. Let's hope the weather remains on our side.

STL Board appointments

CANEGROWERS makes no apologies for its strong stand, questioning the motivations of Wilmar in taking over the two mill-allotted positions on the Sugar Terminals Limited (STL) board.

Wilmar, in discharging its weight of M class shares, is not doing anything illegal. Nevertheless, its decision to turf out the Mackay Sugar Chairman, Andrew Capello, is clearly not in the best interests of the industry.

Our sugar terminals are world class and were paid for over many decades by growers and millers. The industry has expanded on a regional basis in a large part due to having access on equitable terms to the terminals.

Should the terminals now be used to ensure competitive and low cost access for some and detrimental high cost access to others, it is certain to spark major unrest in the industry.

Wilmar says it will engage in the highest standards of corporate governance and ensure that all growers and milling companies are treated fairly.

I am sure just about everyone in the industry will be watching STL with great interest.

Reef Report Card

Another Reef Report Card has just been released and unsurprisingly some media has focussed on the D rating given to the sugar industry.

That rating is just a snapshot in time. I would defy anyone to convince 4,500 cane growers that the true reflection of our considerable effort over decades is a D. Little wonder that many feel despondent.

In the coverage, a very important set of statistics barely rated a mention. The report identified that there has been a 12.3% reduction of sediment loss from our farms and a reduction of pesticides of 33.7%. This is more than halfway to the 2018 targets.

Some will spend their whole lives dwelling on negatives. I, however, believe that these are positives for our industry, which continues its progress towards environmental sustainability.

We will face many detractors and obstacles, but what I know of our industry and its growers is that there is much to be pleased with on our journey. One report card does little to paint a true picture. ■

“The Australian crop is forecast to be around 37 million tonnes in 2016. If we can crush it all, it will represent the eighth successive year of increased production.”





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NEWS IN BRIEF

Ingham cane train derailment - man charged

A 19 year old man will face court in Ingham this month charged after allegedly causing the derailment of a cane train.

Police say a man broke into a Queensland Rail facility on a Sunday morning and undertook actions that caused a cane train carrying 96 empty bins to derail near the intersection of Cartwright and Lynn Streets.

No one was injured in the incident, but the derailment resulted in significant damage to the cane train track infrastructure and equipment and delayed harvesting and crushing operations.

A Cardwell man was arrested at the scene and charged with one count each of: wilful damage part of a railway, enter premises to commit indictable offence and endangering the safe use of transport infrastructure.



Fert bag recycling scheme picks up speed

October was a big month for the sugarcane industry's fertiliser bag recycling scheme.

90 tonnes of plastic bags were collected by waste transfer stations, fertiliser resellers and the Farm Waste Recovery trucks. They'll be processed into other plastic products.

That puts the industry well on target for 750 tonnes of bags collected by Christmas.

The effort of cane growers has caught the attention of other farmers who are now talking to the organisers about a scheme for their industries.

The scheme is operating from north Queensland into New South Wales this year. For further details visit the website www.farmwasterecovery.com



WILMAR INCREASES INFLUENCE ON STL BOARD

CANEGROWERS will keep a close watch over the management of Queensland's six bulk sugar terminals to make sure growers are not disadvantaged by Wilmar Sugar seizing increased influence over the vital industry infrastructure.

"Wilmar's decision to flex its majority holding of miller shares in Sugar Terminals Limited (STL) and put its own people in the two miller positions on the board has set alarm bells ringing in the industry," CANEGROWERS Chairman Paul Schembri said after STL's recent AGM in Brisbane.

"Wilmar is now the only milling company represented on the board. We're not suggesting that Wilmar is doing anything illegal, but we do not believe this action is in the best interests of the industry."

The five-member STL board also includes two grower representatives and an independent chair.

"Our very grave concern is around the level of influence Wilmar will now have, from the board, over terminal operation and pricing," Mr Schembri said.

"The bulk sugar terminals are currently managed for STL by QSL, an industry-owned and not-for-profit company. Wilmar has been publicly questioning QSL's role at a time when the contract is up for re-negotiation.

"And because profit is not a focus, the terminals are operated on an equitable cost basis meaning similar charges are applied at all terminals ensuring a level playing field for all stakeholders.

"It is important for the industry that these fair and equitable access arrangements continue. They have served growers and all milling companies well, helping us to together build a reputation as an efficient and reliable supplier of quality sugar to the world market."

The STL constitution does allow for an expansion of the board and Paul Schembri said CANEGROWERS would engage in an industry discussion to explore the possibility of appointing more independent directors.

"We need to ensure that all relevant industry voices are represented on this board so that its decisions are scrutinised to make sure they are in the best interests of the industry as a whole," Mr Schembri said.

Info sessions explain hard won road access rules

CANEGROWERS has secured public road access for growers needing to move wide farm vehicles and machinery.

A sustained campaign and negotiations with the Queensland Police and the Department of Transport and Main Roads secured two official notices which, provided the conditions are followed, mean growers do not have to apply for individual permits.

CANEGROWERS has published a grower guide and run a series of information workshops to explain the changes.

To access the guide (pictured right), visit the CANEGROWERS website at www.canegrowers.com.au

A long-awaited *Queensland Class 1 Agricultural Vehicle (Northern Coastal Zone 1) Dimension Exemption Notice 2016 (No. 1)* was gazetted on Friday 21 October to provide access to major and minor roads north of Rockhampton for agricultural vehicles up to 5.0 metres wide.

It followed an earlier *Queensland Class 1 Agricultural Vehicle (Coastal Zone1) Dimension Exemption Notice 2016 (No. 1)* allowing travel on critical roads (including the Bruce Highway) north of

Gympie for agricultural vehicles 3.5 – 4.0 metres wide and direct crossing of all roads for vehicles up to 5.0 metres wide.

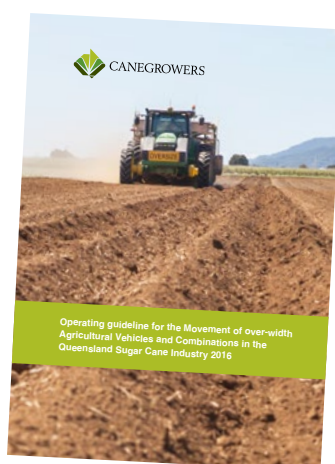
Growers are urged to comply with all conditions stated in the notices and use appropriate signage and pilots, where required.

Failure to do so could jeopardise the future of the arrangements and put the grower in a position of liability should there be an accident.

CANEGROWERS has made a member's only deal with Artcraft in Townsville for signs should they be required.

Your CANEGROWERS membership number must be provided to get the special prices.

The company can be contacted on 4774 5255 or by email at tnvsales@artcraft.com.au



Pictured: Attending a recent info session: from left, Acting Sergeant Michael Cox (Qld Police), Mark Mitchell (Dept of Transport and Main Roads), CANEGROWERS Mackay Chairman Kevin Borg, CANEGROWERS Manager – Industry Burn Ashburner and Graeme Hawes (Mackay Regional Council).

LANDMARK Harcourts

El Arish Area

Various Cane & Cane/Banana Farms
Parcel A - 53.6ha (132.6ac). Very large farm sheds and a bore. Power including 3 phase. Cane/banana farm
Parcel B - 19.2ha (47.6ac). Two x 3 BR homes and a farm shed. Town water. Cane/banana farm
Parcel C - 16.4ha (40.7ac). Adjacent to power. Cane/banana farm
Parcel D - 35.3ha (87.4ac) freehold + adjoining approx. 2.1ha (5.4ac) RL lease. Level to undulating with great rural views. Adjacent to power. Cane farm
Parcel E - 18.7ha (46.2ac). Cane farm

Parcel F - 5.2ha (13ac). Approx. 170 m frontage to Bruce Highway. Cane farm
Parcel G - 3.8ha (9.5ac). Cane farm
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CANEGROWERS Regional round-up

By CANEGROWERS district offices

Mossman

At the end of Week 20, Mossman Mill has processed a total of 742,685 tonnes of cane for a mill average of 11.5 CCS.

The Coastal total is at 547,754 tonnes of cane for an average of 10.84 CCS and the Mareeba total is at 194,931 tonnes of cane for an average of 13.37 CCS.

The estimate has risen to 905,000 tonnes coming to Mossman Mill and 410,000 tonnes going to Tableland Mill for toll-crushing.

The finish date, weather permitting, is projected for 14 November.

Cairns

Planting for both zones has now been completed.

The CANEGROWERS Cairns Region new mud spreader has been commissioned and despite some initial problems is running well.

The unit was purchased with assistance from the Reef Rescue Water Quality Incentive Grants Scheme.

Weather conditions are favourable for harvesting, however growers in the Cairns Region continue to be concerned about season length.

Our members continue to utilise grower choice with a lot of activity around the various pricing products.

Congratulations to the four growers that have recently achieved Smartcane BMP accreditation.

Tully

The harvest in Tully reached the 2 million tonne milestone last week (ending 29 Oct), with one third of the crop still to go. October was a good month for harvesting with only 56mm of rain recorded.

CCS is climbing slowly towards 12 units for the season and the final outcome

will be dependent on rain and the growth of suckers.

Planting has been completed and it is expected that the area under cane for 2017 will increase from this year.

Fertilising is in full swing and things are still very busy out in the paddock.

Herbert River

Weather conditions have been generally favourable for harvesting with few exceptions.

The mills have run consistently and have shown flexibility in scheduling cleaning work to minimise downtime when unforeseen mishaps have come up.

The derailment of a 40-tonne loco on Sunday 30 October caused significant damage and disturbed a day's harvesting for many groups, (a person has been

charged in relation to the incident – see page 4 for more).

Growers continue to hold firm in their calls for the implementation of Grower Choice in the Cane Supply Agreement under negotiation for 2017.

Members hold Wilmar responsible for the negative effect this is having on the local economy, which is being restrained by growers holding back on farm inputs while uncertainty exists around CSAs.

Innisfail

Perhaps it was an indication that the effort to crush this year's crop has taken a step up or that good fortune played a hand, but South Johnstone Mill achieved a record weekly throughput of 86,485 tonnes for the week ending 16 October.

The crop continues to cut-out at around 107% above pre-season estimate with a crop of around 1,750,000. The current indicative finish date is 22 December, weather permitting. To date there have been 620 hours lost due to wet weather, which is equal to about 25 days of crushing time (allowing for some factory down time for maintenance, etc).

Growers are continuing to take advantage of Grower Choice of their GEI sugar and are selecting pricing options for 2017. Support for QSL as their marketer of choice is strong.

Innisfail welcomes a new member to the team with John Tomlin appointed as an additional WTSIP District Extension Officer, based at the Innisfail office.

John has 'sugar in the blood' having worked previously in the industry as a Cane Inspector at Mourilyan and Mackay. He has also worked in a number of service industries associated with the sugar industry.

John will work alongside Bob Stewart who has been reappointed as a WTSIP District Extension Officer. Bob and John will be working closely one-on-one with many local growers helping them adopt and improve on best management practices aimed at improving on-farm water quality.

Their work will match in with the Smartcane BMP program which is facilitated locally by Deb Telford.

Burdekin

At the end of Week 21 (29 Oct) just over 6 million tonnes or 70% of the crop had been crushed, compared to 92% or 7.6 million tonnes this time last year.

The forecast has been revised up by another 50,000 tonnes to 8,750,000 tonnes, with a finish expected during the week before Christmas for the north bank mills (Invicta, Pioneer and Kalamia) and during last week of 2016 for Inkerman on the south bank - of course the usual caveats of mill performance, weather and estimate need to be applied.

Growers remain concerned that there will be standover.

The Burdekin has now been drought declared for 12 months and we have worked closely with our members to ensure they are aware of the Ergon drought relief package, which allows irrigators to utilise tariff 66 without paying the fixed charges. In addition, CANEGROWERS Burdekin has covered the financial costs associated with updating members' data on the BBIFMAC Energy Efficiency database and once the region moves out of drought declared status we will also cover the costs associated with group training to allow members to assess the impact of changing tariffs.

CANEGROWERS Burdekin continues to work with CANEGROWERS Bundaberg on the ARC Up program which is focused on reducing all regulated tariffs by 33% and has the support of MP Shayne Knuth to sponsor a Private Members Bill. ARC UP recently received a boost from the Local Government Association of Queensland's annual conference with a motion being carried to support the 33% reduction.

The critical focus point for CANEGROWERS Burdekin and our members is the negotiation of a CBL CSA for 2017 onwards. Growers continue to suffer mental stress and financial impact from being denied the ability to forward price due to Wilmar's actions in cancelling the long standing CBL CSA, particularly with very attractive prices on offer in 2017 and 2018 - prices growers are unable to lock in. We have made ourselves available 24 hours per day 7 days per week to move these negotiations to a mutually beneficial conclusion.

Mackay

Mackay Sugar reached just over 67% of the crush in the week ending 29 October, with a total throughput for the season now at 3,753,669 tonnes. The weekly crushing for all three mills totalled 230,340 tonnes, with a PRS for the week of 13.98 and season to date average of 12.80. Individual mill tallies for the week are: Farleigh 67,687, Marian 91,630 and Racecourse 71,023 tonnes.

Lost crushing opportunities during this week included repairs to the No. 3 intermediate carrier gearbox at Farleigh Mill and replacement of the No. 6 pan drain valve, as well as a bagasse system choke at Racecourse.

Plane Creek

Plane Creek Mill crushed 67,164 tonnes in the week ending 29 October, bringing the season to date to 904,781 tonnes - 65% of the revised 1.4M tonne estimate. CCS and bin weights improved slightly with weekly average at 13.47 units and 3.89 tonnes respectively. Season to date CCS average is 12.91 units.

This week was the third consecutive with no rain disruptions, however there were two stops - one planned for shredder tip replacement and the other to replace a bearing in an intermediate carrier.



Pictured: Debra Burden and Dale Holliss at the LGAQ annual conference.

Proserpine

Despite some recent storm activity, only 12 hours of crushing time was lost by Proserpine Mill during the past fortnight. While some areas received falls of up to 40mm, others were spared and resumed harvesting with minimal delay. Another 170,000 tonnes were crushed during the fortnight bringing the season to date total to just over 1.26 million tonnes.

CCS was creeping slowly towards 13.0 until the rain interruption and eventually retreated to 12.9 at the end of last week (ending 22 Oct). Average CCS for the season to date now stands at 12.64 and is unlikely to increase much further for the balance of the crop.

The warmer weather and intermittent showers have increased the size of this year's crop and the revised estimate of 1.8 million tonnes has come under a lot of scrutiny. The mill is expected to announce a further increase in the crop estimate in the coming weeks.

Bundaberg

Bundaberg Sugar mills crushed 97,209 tonnes of cane during the week ending 29 October, bringing total throughput for the season so far to 1,354,236 tonnes of cane or approximately 77% of the crop.

Weekly average CCS was 14.78. Millaquin's weekly average was 14.91, down by 0.10 on the previous week, while Bingera's was 14.60, up by 0.10 units. This brings the season to date average CCS for the Bundaberg mills to 13.90 units.

The highest individual CCS result was 17.40 for Q208A old ratoon at Millaquin. This variety also had the highest CCS average for the week, recording 15.40. Base CCS has been increased from 13.60 to 13.80 units.

The four major varieties were Q208A with 20.1% of supply and a CCS average of 15.20 units, followed by Q240A (18.2% - 15.13 CCS), KQ228A (17.0% - 14.63 CCS) and Q238A (11.7% - 14.91 CCS).

Continues page 8...

CANEGROWERS Regional round-up

Isis

The Isis Central Sugar Mill crossed the 1 million tonne milestone during Week 17. To top this achievement, our 100% Australian grower-owned mill processed a record weekly throughput of 72,950 tonnes of cane, the highest weekly throughput in the company's 120-year history.

As of the 28 October Isis Mill has processed 1,080,225. With the season estimate now at 1,333,350 tonnes, we have just over quarter of a million tonnes of cane to be harvested and remain on target for a mid to late November finish.

In Week 17 average CCS reached 14.88 units with a grower delivering 4th ratoon Q232 with a CCS of 17.23 units.

Despite some heavy falls of rain, the weekly CCS still managed to climb to 14.89 units in Week 18, bringing the season to date CCS up to 13.82. Notwithstanding the challenges of the weather, a Gin Gin grower provided Autumn plant Q208 with a CCS of 17.17 units.

The CANEGROWERS Isis board and manager met with the mill board and management team to discuss local industry issues. Following the meeting, mill staff kindly escorted the CANEGROWERS Isis board on a tour. This tour demonstrated the high standard of maintenance, professionalism of the staff and impressively clean condition of the operation, reminding our board of how proud the Isis growers can be of their mill.

Maryborough

As at 31 October, MSF had crushed 684,912 tonnes of cane at CCS of 13.82. During Week 17 the mill crushed 37,983 tonnes at CCS of 14.88. Highest CCS for the week was 17.50 from a block of Q208 plant cane from the Yerra district. Performance of major varieties for the week was: Q138 - 14.07 CCS, Q208 - 14.92 CCS, Q232 - 15.18 CCS and Q240 - 15.20 CCS.

Rocky Point

The Rocky Point Mill is operational once again and started crushing on Monday 31 October.

Rocky Point growers are hoping the mill has a dream run, free from breakdowns, allowing it to crush as much cane as possible, following the latest start in the history of the region.

At the end of Week 14 (week ending 22 Oct), cane sent to NSW totalled 20,518 tonnes, which is just over half of our estimated 40,000 tonnes of standover cane.

NSW

The 2016 crush is progressing well at all three NSW mills. The prevailing dry conditions is ensuring an uninterrupted harvest. However, with planting nearing completion, some rain is desperately needed on both plant and ratoon crops.

With the harvest approximately 80% complete, all three mill areas are expected to finish around the first week in December.

As at 23 October, Harwood mill had processed 552,535 tonnes of cane at an average CCS of 11.96. The crop forecast has been slightly downgraded to 710,000. Weekly CCS levels are now exceeding 13.

Broadwater Mill has processed 664,311 tonnes at an average CCS of 11.5. The crop forecast is 875,000 tonnes, with weekly CCS levels approaching 13.

Condong has processed 422,542 tonnes at an average CCS of 11.87. The forecasted crop is 585,000 tonnes, which includes approximately 20,000 tonnes of Rocky Point Mill area cane. The weekly CCS is hovering around 13.

Money Matters

with AustSafe Super

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Legume rotation boosts **CANE PRODUCTIVITY**

By Brad Pfeffer, SRA

With the planting window now open for many legume crops, sugarcane growers are being reminded of the benefits that legume rotational crops can offer in terms of increased productivity and improved soil health.

Senior Farming Systems Agronomist with the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Neil Halpin, said the practice of planting rotational legume crops at the end of the crop cycle is being embraced by sugarcane growers.

Research through the Sugarcane Yield Decline Joint Venture (SYDJV) has shown that a legume rotation helps to reduce the build-up of harmful soil biota, pests and diseases, increases yield in the following cane crops, and improves soil properties.

Legume rotations are also well known to increase nitrogen levels and can assist with weed management.

Trial results from the SYDJV showed that the difference in tonnes of cane per hectare when comparing a legume rotation with plough-out/replant averaged 20 tonnes per hectare, varying between region and crop class.

There has been extensive research in the past into the role of legumes via activities funded by both the sugar industry and the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC).

The GRDC is currently investing in a grower solutions project with grain legumes that is led by Mr Halpin and has hubs in the Burdekin, Bundaberg, Kingaroy and Grafton.

The work looks at broader agronomy research into legumes and assesses how different strategies may perform in different districts, providing locally-relevant data.

"We sit down each year and look at the constraints and what work is required to resolve those issues," Mr Halpin said.



"Through our work we are looking at factors such as nutrition strategies, weed control, row spacing, and plant population."

"Through our work we are looking at factors such as nutrition strategies, weed control, row spacing, and plant population.

"For example, on the Darling Downs we have seen legume yield improvements with narrow row spacings of mungbean and soybean, but we haven't seen that in Bundaberg.

"So, while narrow rows may be a valid option for weed control, we are finding it is not a yield improvement strategy here.

"The groups are also keen to learn more about how mill mud or biochar may impact a legume crop."

He said there was now an opportunity to link the GRDC grain legume work into the subsequent productivity and profitability of the sugarcane crop cycle.

A proposal has been submitted to the current SRA funding round in order to do this, with a focus on the southern region.

Sugarcane grower **Graham Webb**, who farms at Farnsfield in the Isis district, has seen significant benefits to sugarcane crops that followed a legume rotation, including improved productivity and ratoon life.

He places a priority on ensuring that he is able to plant soybeans before the next crop cycle.

To ensure that this occurs he typically aims to have sugarcane blocks that will go to soybeans harvested early in the season, in June.

This allows sufficient time to prepare the blocks and have a fallow before planting in November or December.

It also means there is less chance that early summer rainfall will delay plans for preparing paddocks.

"We find that if we plough out blocks that are cut in November, there is a real risk we won't have our ground ready in time for soybeans," he said. ■

Pictured: Isis district grower Graham Webb has seen significant benefits from planting a legume rotation crop.



Matt Kealley

Canegrowers Manager -
Environment

“Government recognises that all industries, communities and stakeholders on the land next to the Great Barrier Reef must play a role.”

REEF REPORT CARD 2015

– an old snapshot of a rapidly changing industry

The Great Barrier Reef 2015 Reef Report Card was released on 20 October 2016. The main message to come out of this report was the need to accelerate the rate of change and drive innovation to meet the ambitious targets. The good news is, that's exactly what cane growers have been doing.

CANEGROWERS acknowledged the D grade that the industry received in the 2015 Reef Report Card for its progress towards targets for nutrient, chemical and sediment runoff.

However, numbers and not letters paint the clearest and most up to date picture of what is happening in the sugarcane growing districts of Queensland. And the simple truth is, this report bears little resemblance to the realities on the ground today.

This Report Card is a snapshot in time, offering a conservative estimate of the progress that the sugarcane and other agricultural industries had made towards achieving these targets 19 months ago, in June 2015.

It doesn't reflect all of the hard work and positive changes growers have undertaken on their farms since then - commitments that have helped make the Australian industry a world leader in sustainable sugar production.

PROGRESS AGAINST TARGETS

The results of the Reef Report Card showed progress against the targets:

- 23% (D) of sugarcane growers used best practices (These are water quality improvement practices not Smartcane BMP practices and are based on the cane water quality risk framework which is also known as the ABCD practice framework)
- 18.1% (E) towards the 50% reduction in Dissolved Inorganic Nitrogen (DIN) target by 2018
- 12.3% (C) towards the 20% reduction in sediment target by 2018
- 33.7% (C) towards the 60% reduction in pesticides target by 2018

As outlined in the Report Card, not all of the activities undertaken during the reporting period are included, so the results are considered a conservative estimate of progress.

POSITIVE ENGAGEMENT BY GROWERS

Over the past year the involvement of sugarcane growers in the industry's best management practice program, Smartcane BMP, has risen dramatically, demonstrating a huge commitment to water quality outcomes for the Great Barrier Reef.

When the current Reef Report Card figures were compiled in June 2015, just 144,994 hectares (36%) of cane farming land had been benchmarked in the Smartcane BMP program.

Today, 19 months on, that figure has almost doubled and currently sits at 256,086 hectares or 65% of cane land benchmarked.

Similarly, the number of fully accreditation cane farms has jumped from just 8 in June 2015 to 153 in Oct 2016, representing an almost 2000% increase, and the numbers are continuing to grow.

Both levels of government acknowledged the contribution that farmers are making. Specifically, the Report Card mentioned the 836 sugarcane growers engaged in Smartcane BMP in June 2015. Today, that number has risen to almost 1,500.

Government also recognises that all industries, communities and stakeholders on the land next to the Great Barrier Reef must play a role.

HOW ARE WE GOING AGAINST DIN CATCHMENT LOADS?

As you are probably aware, the catchment pollutant loads target in the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan 2013 is: *At least a 50% reduction in anthropogenic end-of-catchment dissolved inorganic nitrogen loads in priority areas by 2018.*

The estimated annual average dissolved inorganic nitrogen (DIN) load leaving catchments reduced by 18.1% to June 2015, which means very poor progress. That being said, there are some great regionalised reductions in DIN occurring.

The greatest annual reduction was from the Burdekin region at 4%, for a total of 20%.

The reductions in DIN in the Burdekin were predominantly due to improved nutrient management in cane, resulting in reduced DIN losses.

The greatest cumulative reduction was in the Burnett Mary region at 31.5%.

As explained in the full report card (see link below) modelling of pollutant load reductions is based on reported improvements in management practice systems.

Results are an estimate of the annual average reduction in human caused (anthropogenic) pollutant loads at the end of catchments between 2009 and 2015.

The targets are based on the estimated load reductions that can be achieved through delivery of best management practice systems.

The exception is the dissolved inorganic nitrogen target, which remains ambitious and may not be achievable using current best practice alone.

The catchment loads targets are reported as cumulative progress since 2009.

This year, the media around the release of the Report Card was subdued compared with previous years.

There have been some great regionalised reductions in Dissolved Inorganic Nitrogen loads. The greatest annual reduction was from the Burdekin region at 4%, for a total of 20%. The greatest cumulative reduction was in the Burnett Mary region at 31.5%.

CANEGROWERS published a media release on the Report Card with comments from Chairman **Paul Schembri** and CEO **Dan Galligan**, which acknowledged progress towards the targets and focused on grower

engagement in the various reef programs such as Reef Programme and Reef Trust, as well as the industry-led Smartcane BMP.

The Federal Environment Minister **Josh Frydenberg** acknowledged there was significant work to do, but said there were some improvements under Reef 2050 Plan to improve the reef health.

WWF said scoring D five years in a row was not good enough and more money was needed, with Australia due to report to UNESCO by 1 December 2016 on the progress being made to rescue the Reef.

Queensland Environment Minister **Steven Miles** said the report showed parts of the Reef are suffering because historically there had been a failure to address run-off pollution and climate change.

Dr Miles directed poor results in the report card at the former government and its failure to make progress on reef protection. The Queensland Government is also pushing for additional federal funding.

So, the indicators for industry are:

1. Continued engagement in Smartcane BMP and reef programs.
2. Continued use of best management practices and innovation.
3. Work around fertiliser, its efficiency and application is continuing.
4. Reef protection is a tool being looked at by the Queensland Government.
5. More funding is being asked for to address reef health and targets. ■

Dissolved inorganic nitrogen

Confidence indicator

Reduction in annual average dissolved inorganic nitrogen between 2009 and 2015.

Target: 50% by 2018.



Region	Result
Great Barrier Reef	E 18.1%
Cape York	NA
Wet Tropics	E* 14.7%
Burdekin	D* 20%
Mackay Whitsunday	C* 25.1%
Fitzroy	NA
Burnett Mary	B 31.5%

* Priority pollutant for region.

The Great Barrier Reef 2015 Reef Report Card was released 20 October 2016.

The report card can be viewed here: <http://bit.ly/2fkYwkK>

Further information is available on the Queensland Government's Reef Plan website: <http://bit.ly/2etSxoq>

The full report card and detailed results can be found here: <http://bit.ly/2f3znY0>

A video has also been produced that explains the report card outcomes <https://youtu.be/uoUi7fpTSCO>





By Bryce Wenham
QSL Finance Manager
Supplier Relations

"If the expected Harvest Pool tonnage were to fall significantly due to increased levels of standover cane or a late-season weather event, then even if the sugar price remained similar to current levels, we could see an adjustment in the Harvest Pool's final price."

The Harvest Pool and what lies ahead

QSL's 2016 Harvest Pool is currently in a strong position, with an indicative price of \$554 per tonne IPS gross as of 14 October 2016, reflecting an improved ICE 11 price on those experienced last season.

But many growers who track this result on our website will note that this indicative price reflects the pool at just 52% priced, with plenty more pricing to be done before this pool can be finalised and reach price certainty.

So as we face an increasing crop and extended harvest in many areas due to wet weather interruptions, just what are the implications for the Harvest Pool? To answer this question we first need to revisit how the Harvest Pool works and what it aims to do.

THE HARVEST POOL – THE BASICS

The QSL Harvest Pool is designed specifically to manage a certain amount of production risk and aims to achieve this in a number of ways.

All growers supplying raw sugar to QSL's pools are required to earmark at least 35 per cent of their expected production tonnage to the QSL Harvest Pool.

This initial attribution is used to help create a buffer tonnage – that is, a portion of the crop that is not priced or sold until it is received at the bulk sugar terminals.

This buffer is designed to absorb possible fluctuations in production that may occur during the course of a season and is essentially a stockpile of sugar kept on hand until late in the season to help our industry meet its sales and pricing commitments.

At an individual level, a grower's final production is used to fill their Committed Sugar allocations first (i.e. Individual forward pricing, QSL's Committed Pools), with any production variations applied to their Harvest Pool allocation.

Each grower's allocation to the Harvest Pool is considered to be Uncommitted Sugar and so, outside a Production Buffer failure, the final amount delivered to the QSL Harvest Pool can vary without cost implications for that grower – they are just paid for the final amount delivered.

The production buffer provided within the QSL Harvest Pool is designed to withstand a significant in-season crop decline. However, if the export sugar supply from all suppliers of QSL-marketed sugar declines by more than the Production ►





Buffer (e.g. following an extreme weather event during the harvest), depending on the circumstances, there may be costs to correct the export sales program to support the pricing undertaken for the actual raw sugar delivered in all remaining pools.

CROP VARIATIONS AND THE HARVEST POOL PRICE

The current Harvest Pool indicative price is calculated on a mark-to-market basis, which is a combination of the pricing already achieved (a known figure) and an estimate of the value of the remaining unpriced sugar based on the current sugar price.

As a result, changes in the sugar price or the amount of sugar to be priced will ultimately affect the earnings secured for the pool.

Many growers are already aware that because the production buffer is priced after the crush concludes (against the March and May ICE 11 contracts), the Harvest Pool is particularly exposed to the prices that are experienced at this time.

However, the amount of sugar to be priced can also impact the Harvest Pool's final result.

If the expected Harvest Pool tonnage were to fall significantly due to increased levels of standover cane or a late-season weather event, then even if the sugar price remained similar to current levels, we could see an adjustment in the Harvest Pool's final price as opposed to the pool's current indicative price levels.

This is because less sugar would be priced as opposed to the current mark-to-market estimate.

This could be a negative or a positive for the pool price, depending on the sugar price at that time.

Crop scenarios when crush stops due to rain	Production finishes on 15/11/2016	Production finishes on 15/12/2016	No Stoppages
Current Harvest Pool price (\$A/mt IPS)	\$554	\$554	\$554
Sugar production change under scenario - QSL (mt)	- 443,100	- 183,607	+29,843
Current Production Buffer size (mt)	463,040	463,040	463,040
Estimated Harvest Pool price after crop change (\$A/mt IPS)	\$489	\$538	\$557
Harvest Pool price change (\$A/mt IPS)	-\$65	-\$16	+\$3

The table above shows the potential impact on the 2016 Harvest Pool should the current harvest finish early and a variation in production be experienced.

As you can see, production changes between now and the end of the season would impact the Harvest Pool price, but to what extent will be largely driven by a combination of the tonnage change and the sugar price secured.

It is also important to remember that, based on the current size of the Production Buffer, the Harvest Pool could absorb a decline up to 463,000mt from current levels before the Production Buffer was exhausted.

This potential for price variation until a pool is finalised is why QSL recommends that all pool participants look beyond each QSL pool's indicative price to consider just how much of the pool has been priced.

Generally, the higher the percentage priced, the lower the risk of significant changes in pool price.

FACTORING IN VARIABILITY

QSL provides a price matrix for each pool on its website to help flag the impacts to the pool price caused by variations in the combinations of ICE 11 price and the AUD/US exchange rate.

Underneath each matrix you'll also find details of how much of each pool has been priced.

You can access each matrix by clicking on the pool prices featured on our homepage.

While these matrices should be read with caution and not interpreted as a forecast, they illustrate the potential impacts of variability on each pool.

In short, it should always be remembered that QSL's indicative pool prices are just that – indicative – until pricing is complete and the Shared Pool element is finalised and applied to each pool at the official end of every season on June 30 each year. ■

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FAMILY HAS 91-YEAR HISTORY WITH 100-YEAR-OLD SOUTH JOHNSTONE MILL

By Jann George, courtesy of MSF Sugar



One hundred years ago, the then government controlled South Johnstone Mill crushed its first cane, producing 4,729 tonnes of sugar. One hundred years later, the Mill processes around 1.5 million tonnes of cane each season, producing about 230,000 tonnes of raw sugar.

In those 100 years, much has changed in the MSF Sugar-owned mill, not only in terms of production and technology but also in the way sugarcane is farmed, produced, processed and exported. No such enterprise would survive without the core of its business, its heartbeat – the growers who farm the cane to send to the mill.

Migrants from Italy and other European countries arrived in Australia early in the 1900s, seeking a better life for themselves and their families. Many arrived with little but hope and a willingness to work hard. Large numbers took up backbreaking jobs in Queensland's sugarcane fields, some eventually earned enough to buy their own small farms – many growers are descendants of these early cane cutters.

For four generations, cane farming has been the lifeblood of the Cecchi family whose ancestry, like so many other farmers in the region, derives from Italy. For the past 91 years, the family has supplied cane to South Johnstone Mill from the original 32 hectare farm on the Palmerston Highway at Coorumba.

Arthur Cecchi's grandfather, Vittorio Torre, emigrated from Lucca, Italy in 1925 and joined his brother Primo who grew cane at Kalbo, Pin Gin Hill with his farming partner Ferdinando Cecchi. About a year after his arrival, Vittorio purchased a cane farm at Corumba in partnership with Salvatore Lorenzetti.

A cyclone had destroyed the farm house and much hard work had to be done to clear the land for farming. Vittorio and Salvatore cut timber for sale with axes

and cross-cut saws, large tree stumps were blown out with dynamite – a skill Vittorio had acquired during the war in Italy. As sections of land were cleared, sugarcane was planted.

Horse drawn implements were used to prepare the ground, and plant and cultivate the crop. Cane was not burnt prior to harvesting until the 1930s when it was realised burning could prevent the potentially fatal illness Weil's disease spread by rats.

"My grandfather often said that the horse was rested, fed and watered after a few rows and a fresh horse brought in to continue the work – but the poor farm hand had to continue working without a rest," Arthur said.



In 1946, Vittorio sold his farm to his daughter Lea and her husband Giorgio Cecchi. Born in Italy in 1910, Giorgio had emigrated to Australia in 1937 to join his brother, Athuro, at Coorumba. Lea, with her mother and brother, came to the region from Italy in 1929.

With the outbreak of World War II and the intense climate of suspicion and fear at that time, Italian migrants found themselves interned in Allied Labour Camps. Giorgio was one of the 1,573 Italian-born residents incarcerated in Queensland. Italian wives had no option but to run the sugarcane farms without their husbands or face starvation.

By the 1950s, Giorgio and Lea's sons, Arthur and Robert, had started farming with their parents. Cane farming remained labour-intensive – it was hard, heavy and dirty work. Cane supplied to the mill was burnt and cut by hand. Although burning of sugarcane was a

Featured photos kindly supplied by The Cecchi Family.
 Page 14: Giorgio Cecchi, back row third from right.
 Page 15: Giorgio Cecchi (left); Arthur Cecchi (below).
 Page 16: Arthur Cecchi in the field; 'new' harvester; Arthur, David and Paul Cecchi; Arthur on the Don Mizzi harvester (1968)

spectacular sight, it was a dangerous operation carried out nightly. A gang of five men could cut, top and load about 10 – 18 tons of cane daily.

Each day during harvesting, a steam locomotive would deliver empty trucks. The farmer then moved the empty trucks into the paddock with a tractor using a portable line laid by the gang. It was the responsibility of the gang to shoulder-load all the trucks throwing a chain over the cane to indicate that the truck was fully loaded.

As the pile of cane grew higher, it was necessary for the cutters to load the trucks using a ladder. The farmer then tightened the chain, hooked up the trucks and pulled them back to the main line from where the steam loco transported the cane to South Johnstone Mill for crushing.

Cutters were all on contract and the more cane they cut and loaded, the more money they earned. When the gang moved to the next farm to harvest, it was their job to pick up the portable line and load it onto an open wagon, called a bogie. It was then taken to the main line by the farmer using his tractor for the loco to deliver to the next farm.

When the loco arrived nearest to the next farm, the portable line was again transported by tractor to the paddock,



re-laid and the next farm's harvest got underway.

Early operations at South Johnstone Mill were significantly more labour-intensive than they are today. All work was done manually by a large workforce of seasonal labour which was mostly unskilled.

Raw sugar was bagged in hessian which was clamped to a chute, filled to the correct weight and dropped onto a conveyor belt, moving along to the next process, stitching the bag closed. Bags were manually loaded onto open wagons for transportation by rail to Mourilyan Harbour to be loaded onto ships for export. Some bags were also stored at the Mill.



Featured photos kindly supplied by The Cecchi Family.



Industry pioneers in many ways, the Cecchi family was among the first to own and operate a cane harvester in the South Johnstone Mill area. Arthur purchased a Don Mizzi harvester in the early 1960s and began offering contract harvesting, a business which continues to this day with son David as operator. A proud achievement for the business was being awarded Top Harvesting Group for the 2014 season.



Their strong links with South Johnstone Mill started in 1925 and continue as the Mill approaches its centenary.

From 1997 to 2000, Arthur and Gladys's son, Paul, was employed as a mechanical apprentice at the Mill and in August 2000, Paul was named as the Outstanding Final Year apprentice at South Johnstone Mill by the Far North Queensland Institute of Sugar Mill Engineers.

When, in 2006, David and Paul began farming with their father, Arthur Cecchi, it marked the fourth generation of the family to supply cane to South Johnstone Mill.

The family still farms in the Coorumba/ Nerada area as well as Innishowen.



With modern farming technology, rate control of fertilisers and herbicides, GPS systems driving tractors, harvesting and farming equipment, cane farming has become much more efficient and less labour intensive.

Raw sugar produced at South Johnstone Mill is exported through the bulk sugar terminal at Mourilyan Harbour, mainly to countries in Asia.

And families like the Cecchis continue to supply their farm's sugarcane to a South Johnstone Mill, the 100-year-old focus of celebrations. ■



GENERATIONS FARM SUGAR CANE

Cane farming was in her blood before Gladys Cecchi married Arthur in 1975.

The daughter of Peter and Lucy Valeriano, Gladys was raised on the family's farm at Japoonvale from where they supplied cane to South Johnstone Mill from 1937 to 1954. When they sold that farm in 1954, they purchased another farm on the Bruce Highway, 5km south of Innisfail.

This second farm is on the site of one of the first sugar mills in the district, on the banks of the South Johnstone River and known as Innishowen at Comoon Loop. The mill commenced crushing in 1883 and ceased in 1891.

Owned since 1974 by Gladys and husband Arthur and sons David and Paul Cecchi, the farm supplied cane to Mourilyan Mill until its closure due to extensive damage from Cyclone Larry, and the harvested cane is now crushed at South Johnstone Mill.

In events mirroring that of Arthur's family, Gladys' parents emigrated from Piemonte, northern Italy. Her father, Provino disembarked in Brisbane in 1924. He travelled to Ingham where he cut cane for three years before moving further north to Mourilyan.

Gladys' mother, Lucia, came to Australia with her mother and siblings to join her father who was cutting cane at Mirriwinni. The family moved to Tully where they purchased 16 hectares of land which they cleared and planted with sugarcane for Tully Mill. This farm was later sold. ■

All in it together to **PROTECT THE REEF**

By Sophie Volker

Farming alongside the Great Barrier Reef has come under intense scrutiny in recent years for its potentially harmful impact on water quality. However, a teamwork approach between farmers, industries and government can make it possible to have a healthy Reef and successful farming coexisting in 2050.

This was the sentiment expressed by Reef Alliance Chairwoman, Ruth Wade, when she addressed the Rural Press Club recently.

The Reef Alliance brings together agricultural industries, including CANEGROWERS, and environmentalists to work together towards a common goal of ensuring that farming beside the Reef is sustainable and provides a future for successive generations.

Ms Wade says the key is a sense of trust and teamwork between all stakeholders.

"It's about more than graphs and numbers - it's about people that can make the change that will protect it (the Reef)," Ms Wade said.

"We're all part of the solution and I have a real sense that there is commitment from all sectors to ensuring that a healthy and resilient Reef can coexist with productive and prosperous industries that enhance the social and economic health of the Reef."

"I think it's safe to assume that Australians share a vision for the Reef in 2050 - that it continues to improve each decade between now and 2050, and remains a natural wonder for successive generations," she said.

The long-term goal of protecting the Reef relies on simplified and strengthened governance arrangements from policy to on-ground delivery, according to Ms Wade, who took on the leadership of the Reef Alliance after many years in agriculture.

"Agreement on objectives, alignment of programs, clarity of roles and responsibilities, and accountabilities must be resolved," Ms Wade said.

"The Reef is blind to which government, industry, or catchment community is doing what on a day-to-day basis. It's time for us to work together."



"We all share a passion for our industries, our regions, and the Reef, and I'm absolutely sure that collectively, we will deliver much more than any one of the members could achieve separately."

The argument surrounding the topic of farming on the Reef often positions the farmers as the scapegoat to blame, or the 'bad guys', however Ms Wade says this is just not the case.

"Farmers are not recalcitrant and unwilling to change - they are innovators and tomorrow's solutions will come from them trialling new practices today," she said.

Ms Wade said that Best Management Practices (BMP) programs, including Smartcane BMP, have been the main response to meeting targets and adopting improved farm management practices since 2008.

"A common characteristic of the BMP programs is that they are voluntary, industry-led processes which help farmers and graziers to identify improved practices that will improve the long term profitability of the enterprise, and demonstrate good environmental management to the wider community," said Ms Wade.

"Better management in many of these areas is essential if our industries are to improve water quality in Reef catchments while maintaining viable, productive, and profitable business."

"BMPs are not a one-size-fits-all option - it does not mean everyone has to farm the same way, just so long as they farm within the BMP guidelines," she said.

While progress has been made to improve water quality in Reef catchments since 2008, it had not been rapid or widespread enough.

Ms Wade said the issue of funding is still one of the most significant factors inhibiting the collective vision for 2050.

"Current funding is inconsistent, short-term, and uncertain; we have a long-term plan for the Reef in 2050 but absolutely no plan on how to fund the management actions required to deliver that plan," said Ms Wade.

"We need to build a narrative and gain broad community support so governments will allocate long-term funding that is not subject to electoral cycles and ensures success of a 2050 plan."

"The Reef is priceless and none of us will ever be able to truly estimate what it's worth in terms of dollars," she said.

Despite this hurdle, Ms Wade said the Reef Alliance members were determined that together they could achieve a positive outcome the nation's greatest natural wonder.

"I simply will not accept that we cannot have a healthy Reef and thriving agricultural industries in Reef catchments, so let's all work together to achieve the vision of 2050," she said. ■



PANAMA DISEASE

AWARENESS CAMPAIGN URGES RENEWED COMMUNITY VIGILANCE

It has now been more than 18 months since Panama disease tropical race 4 was confirmed on a banana plantation in the Tully Valley.

To combat any growing complacency, the Panama TR4 Program has developed a community awareness campaign to remind growers and the public to maintain their vigilance to help control and contain this potentially devastating disease.

The campaign was launched by Agriculture Minister **Leanne Donaldson**.

"It is a testament to all involved that there have been no further cases confirmed," the Minister said.

"But we can't relax our guard. Panama disease remains the biggest threat to an industry so many Queenslanders rely on for their livelihoods.

"We still don't know how it arrived here and we still can't say for certain if it has spread to other farms, which is why everyone must stay alert and maintain strict on-farm biosecurity controls.

"Panama disease remains the biggest threat to an industry so many Queenslanders rely on for their livelihoods."

"The disease could be lying dormant somewhere in the region."

Minister Donaldson praised growers, plantation workers and banana growing communities for their response to the



disease and the way they had adapted to the threat.

"It has been an essential part of the success of the containment program," she said.

Panama TR4 Program Leader **Rebecca Sapuppo** said she was ecstatic at how the community had embraced the new campaign.

"The television advertisement alone has reached over 18,000 people on Facebook which is impressive. There has also been a spike in interest on our call centre hotline seeking more information about the disease."

Ms Sapuppo said the industry has come a long way since the disease was first detected.

"Strict decontamination procedures and the 'come clean, leave clean' motto has become entrenched in farm personnel and contractor work routines.

"Raising awareness of Panama disease and urging members of the public, growers and the wider industry to report suspect plants, to come clean and leave clean, not to enter farms without permission and to keep up on-farm biosecurity are some of the ways we

can work together to protect the banana industry in far north Queensland.

"Prompt reporting of plants with symptoms of Panama disease is a legal requirement and critical to the successful containment of any future outbreaks.

"Early detection and destruction of infected plants slows down any spread of the disease."

The awareness campaign uses television, newspaper advertisements, social media and billboards to remind banana growers and Far North Queensland communities to remain vigilant in the fight against Panama disease tropical race 4.

Panama disease tropical race 4 is a fungal disease that can be transported through soil, mud, plant material and on dirty machinery and equipment.

The fungus lives in the soil and inhibits the plant's vascular system, causing it to wilt and eventually die. Fungal spores can lie dormant in the ground for up to 40 years without a host plant.

If you suspect Panama disease in your plants, report it immediately to Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23. More information is available at www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au ■

New workshops to help cane growers

TACKLE FERAL PESTS

Wide Bay and North Queensland cane growers can learn about the latest tools and techniques to tackle feral pests on their land at workshops being run by AgForce Projects in November.

AgForce Projects Vertebrate Pest Officer **Damien Ferguson** said landholders attending the no-cost workshops in Childers and Ayr would be trained in chemical handling safety and the use of new baits and tools.

"Feral animals cost the Queensland agriculture industry hundreds of millions of dollars each and every year so producers need to know how they can efficiently and successfully control these risks to their businesses," Mr Ferguson said.

"The workshops are tailored for producers in a range of sectors, including the cane industry, with the training to cover best practice control methods for rats and feral pigs.

"In the upcoming North Queensland workshops, leading specialist on feral pig management, Dr **Jim Mitchell**, will be delivering the training.

"The new service is aimed at ensuring landholders get ahead of the game and access the most-up-to-date tools and techniques to manage pest animals and reduce losses."

Eligible producers will qualify for a chemical accreditation card for nationally recognised units of training, as well as a certificate of participation for the pest animal management training.

In addition, the training offered through this project will provide the community and government with the confidence to support and appreciate the role landholders play in producing food and enhancing the environment. Over the next 12 months, 50 one-day, no cost workshops will be rolled out right across Queensland with workshop locations in November to include:

- Childers, 17 November 2016
- Ayr, 22 November 2016

For further information and to register for the workshops, visit www.agforceprojects.org.au or call (07) 3238 6048.

The workshops are being delivered by AgForce Projects with Australian Government Agriculture White Paper funding administered through the Queensland Government, and with the support of the Queensland Farmers Federation. ■



Rattus sordidus



Rat damage



Feral pig

Do you see it?

This picture was taken by **Jason Sou** who was amazed to see the crocodile sunning itself by a creek a long way inland but only 200 metres from the Bruce Highway in the Innisfail district.

Taken from one of the South Johnston mill's cane trains, Jason's snap is a reminder to everyone living and working in croc country to take care!

The Queensland Government says it will commit \$5.8 million over the next three years for crocodile management, including a survey and monitoring program.

So far this year, 65 crocodiles deemed to be dangerous have been removed from the wild to farms or zoos, compared to 37 in 2015. ■

FORWARD-THINKING APPROACH LEVERAGES ON-FARM EFFICIENCY

By Carly Lubicz, NQ Dry Tropics

The improvements Burdekin Delta cane grower Mark Castelanelli is making to the family's 400-plus hectare farm in the name of increasing productivity are as constant as they are varied.

By drawing on the knowledge and science available and using grants to add further weight to his on-farm investments, the second-generation farmer is embracing practice change as a way to boost business efficiency while reducing environmental impacts.

Born and bred in the Burdekin, Mark went straight from school to working on the family's 77 hectare Maidavale farm.

By the time he had taken over full-time management of the property in 1985 from father Joe, the farm was 157 hectares – it now sits at 415 hectares, with average farm production increasing annually.

Mark now runs the enterprise with his 32-year-old son Andrew (who also operates and manages their harvesting operation) and a single worker, so they rely heavily on finding efficiencies to keep the business as productive as possible.

"I've got confidence in the choices that we've made in terms of our cane and reducing nitrogen. I'd encourage other farmers to look at it."

"You can either stagnate, or move with the times," says 62-year-old Mark.

He recycles 80% of the farm's runoff to irrigate 84 hectares, and has started electromagnetic (EM) mapping of the farm to identify areas of high salinity for variable rate gypsum application.

Mark's spray and fertiliser equipment are fitted with GPS guidance and rate controllers for accurate product application and record keeping, and his future plans include adopting automation within his irrigation management.

Mark has also put his nutrient application under the microscope for the past two years, taking part in the NQ Dry Tropics Sugar Innovations Programme - Enhanced Efficiency Fertiliser trial with the aim of reducing nitrogen inputs, while maintaining production.

Results from the 2015 harvest season showed no difference in productivity, the outcome giving Mark the confidence to reduce his nitrogen application over the entire farm.

"I'm averaging about 200-210kg N/ha across the farm, and aiming for an average reduction of 20kg per hectare," Mark says.

"Some of the applications I'll be doing this year will be down to 160kg N/ha, but only on specific blocks.

"My nitrogen application will be driven by my cane varieties and crop class, which is better practice than applying the same amount across the whole crop and then losing it to drainage."

Mark's approach has been assisted by the support of the Reef Trust Tender – Burdekin, a project that was launched

**"YOU CAN EITHER
STAGNATE, OR MOVE
WITH THE TIMES."**



last year by the Australian Government and delivered through not-for-profit NRM organisation NQ Dry Tropics.

The 2015 innovative Reef Trust Tender gave Burdekin growers the chance to access funding of up to \$500,000 to help improve nitrogen and irrigation management practices.

"I was mindful that I wanted to reduce my nitrogen application, but the tender made it more attractive as a business decision and it has given us the ability to make positive changes," says Mark.

"We are spending the money on a real problem block, making six blocks into one, taking advantage of slopes and making drills longer; which is all about optimising our farm and making it more efficient – this money gives us the potential to make this change.

"We have already invested a lot of effort into improving irrigation and enhancing our farm layout over the past few years."



He says weed management and irrigation are critical and fertiliser is an important part of the mix.

"I've got confidence in the choices that we've made in terms of our cane and reducing nitrogen," he says.

"I'd encourage other farmers to look at it and I think the tender provides a great opportunity."

The Australian Government has committed to delivering a further competitive tender under the next phase of Reef Trust investment.

For more information about this project see www.nqdrytropics.com.au/reef-trust-tender/ ■

Pictured above: Mark Castelanelli and NQ Dry Tropics Project Officer Luke Malan.

Herbert River community mourns loss of much-loved local figure

The sugar industry, particularly in the Herbert River district, lost someone very special with the untimely passing of 55-year-old Steven Chiesa on 22 September.

As a cane farmer, laser and harvester contactor, family man, sports enthusiast and community leader, Steve's life touched many people in many walks of life.

Steve and his family operated ASM earthmoving, a Herbert River-based company which grew out of the cane farming enterprise and became innovators in laser levelling operations in both the Herbert and North Queensland from the late 1980's.

He also ran a successful harvesting contract business and developed several cane farms with a passion and drive unparalleled in any industry.

Apart from his involvement in the sugar industry, Steve was a massive sports enthusiast. After a lengthy time playing both cricket and rugby league, he moved into club administration and coaching.

His time as President of the Herbert River Rugby League club yielded the club's first ever premiership in the Townsville and District competition in 2006, which gave the local community a great sense of joy and achievement.

Steve's enthusiasm was infectious and he was inspiring to those around him as he led by example in everything he did, whether it was driving a harvester, developing farms, running a sports club or bringing up his family. Steve gave his very best every time.

Steve is survived by his parents Bino and Ines, his brother Mark and sister Louise, his wife Jo-Ann, four sons Gregg, Sean, Kyle and Brad and granddaughters Alexa and Evie.

Steve's funeral at St Patrick's was one of the largest ever held in Ingham, such is the love and respect in which he and his family are held throughout the community. ■

By CANEGROWERS Herbert River



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HEALTHY FAMILY, HEALTHY LIFE — IT'S ALL ABOUT **BALANCE**

By the Australian Sugar Industry Alliance Nutrition Team



Trying to keep your family happy and healthy can be stressful when juggling the many demands of a busy lifestyle. A nutritious diet is an essential part of healthy living, but with so much conflicting information available about so-called 'good' and 'bad' foods, maintaining a balanced diet can feel like a major challenge.

Ensuring a healthy diet doesn't have to mean excluding certain ingredients like oil, salt or sugars, but rather learning to use them in moderation as part of a healthy balanced diet.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY A 'BALANCED DIET'?

The Australian Dietary Guidelines stipulate that a healthy, balanced diet includes plenty of veggies, wholegrains, lean meats, fruits and dairy, with limited amounts of sugar, saturated fat and salt.

A nutritious, balanced diet can look different for every individual and there is no reason why most people can't enjoy a delicious treat on occasion.

Many food and nutrition experts now advocate for moderation, and learning to savour and appreciate food as key ingredients in a recipe for healthy eating. Food trends are definitely going back to basics, with a return to nourishing home cooking using whole ingredients and a move away from highly processed foods. Who wouldn't rather a homemade wholemeal blueberry muffin over a mass-produced version?

It is important to remember that sugar itself is not the core issue of why obesity and illness occurs. More often, the cause is a combination of many things including: convenience eating, a diet high in 'junk' foods, a lack of connection to food as nourishment, a lack of nutrition education and a lack of physical activity.

While an excess of any food type can result in health problems, moderate

amounts of natural flavour enhancers like sugar can actually make it easier to eat well. Using a little sugar to satisfy your sweet tooth and improve the taste and texture of your home cooking might improve your overall nutrient intake and make you, and the kids, less likely to crave processed treats.

EDUCATION IS KEY

Helping your children to understand what a balanced diet looks like is a gift to them and to you and something which will stand them in good stead for a lifetime. As part of an active lifestyle, there's no need to panic about what foods are 'good' or 'bad'.

Plan a weekly menu that includes a wide variety of foods, let the kids get hands-on in the kitchen and reap the benefits of a healthy, harmonious household. After all, eating well should be something that enhances your life, brings satisfaction and nourishment, not something that creates anxiety or worry. ■

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*As a FREE service to CANEGROWERS members, Australian Canegrower will print suitable classified advertisements **UP TO 5 LINES FREE, FOR ONE ISSUE ONLY**. A charge of \$5.50 will apply for each extra line or part thereof. A charge will apply for advertising of non-cane growing activities. Advertisements must relate exclusively to cane farming activities, e.g. farm machinery etc. Advertisements from non-members are charged at \$11 per line incl GST. Only pre-paid ads will be accepted.

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*For further information contact the manufacturer

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Mossman – Tully

2015 John Deere 3520 track harvester with about 3500 hrs @ end of the 2016 season in VGC, \$450000 plus GST. Ph. Matt 0419 779 549

Santarossa 10 ton high and low lift side tipper with ram and pump \$11,000.00 Ph: 0418 793 590

STL shares for sale. Grower class shares in reasonable quantity. Ph. 0400 883 805

JD 3520, 2012 model, adjustable powerfeed roller, elevator extension, GPS, well maintained, selling at end of 2016 crush. Ph. 0427 667 694

Toft 5000 swinging knife wheel machine plus extra parts. Ph. 0418 154 557

Herbert River – Burdekin

2011 Toyota Hilux dual cab, turbo diesel, new tyres, two-way, rego Feb 2017. \$27,500 + GST ONO. Ph. 0427 772 101

2500 Cameco Full Track Harvester, C12 Cat engine, all piston and vane pumps, 4 blade chopper, two speed track drives, can cut two rows at a time up to 1.7m row spacing, plus extras. POA. Ph. 0417 710 544

Brand new never used LS Heavy Duty 4 pin final drive hub to suite Cameco harvesters. \$10k Ph. 0417 710 544

Howard Rotary Hoe 90" Heavy Duty with steel wheels. GC. \$6,500 Inc GST Negotiable. Ph. 0458 776 187

Rainfall Report

brought to you by AustSafe Super

Location	Recorded rainfall (mm)		Average rainfall (mm)	
	7 days to 9am		Year to date	
	24.10.16	31.10.16		
January–October				
Mossman	0.2	3	1673	1897
Mareeba AP	0	0	416	751
Cairns	0	0	1179	1729
Mt Sophia	1	1	2162	2894
Babinda	0	0	2844	3753
Innisfail	18	3	2865	3135
Tully	0	0.1	3021	3647
Cardwell	2	0	1870	1807
Lucinda	18	0	1844	1831
Ingham	2	Tce	1726	1717
Abergowrie	0	0	1143	1561
Townsville	8	0	955	933
Ayr DPI	18	0	559	780
Proserpine	15	0	1314	1136
Mirani	4	0	1287	1252
Mackay	0	0	1455	1293
Sarina (Plane Ck)	6	0	1661	1423
Bundaberg	23	0	788	795
Childers South	33	0	777	687
Maryborough	14	0.2	749	940
Tewantin	14	0	996	1425
Eumundi	11	0	921	1383
Nambour	10	0	931	1376
Woongoolba	12	0	459	1088
Murwillumbah	12	0.4	1269	1284
Ballina	6	0.4	1123	1510
Woodburn	5	1	728	1161



**AustSafe
Super**



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regional Australia.

Zero indicates either no rain or no report was sent. These rainfall figures are subject to verification and may be updated later. Weather forecasts, radar and satellite images and other information for the farming community can be accessed on www.bom.gov.au. Weather report provided by the Bureau of Meteorology's Commercial Weather Services Unit.

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3000L Fire Fighting Cart. Galvanised tank Davey fire fighter Pump 6.5 HP Honda on an old single bin trailer with dual wheels. Good wheels. GC. \$6,000 INC GST Negotiable Ph. 0458 776 187

New Holland M100 1996 model 4007 hours. Tyres 60% Front 50% Rear. GC. \$24,000 INC GST Negotiable. Ph. 0458 776 187

Fiat 880. GC. 5000 plus hours. Motor just rebuilt \$10, 000 INC GST Negotiable. Ph. 0458 776 187

Howard 6 Foot Slasher. Reasonable Condition. \$2,000 INC GST Negotiable. Ph. 0458 776 187

24 Plate John Shearer Offset. Reasonable Condition. Front dishes 90% back dishes 50%. \$3,000 INC GST Negotiable. Ph. 0458 776 187

Back Blade \$500, Bag Lifter \$2,500, MIG 200 AMP Welder \$300, Ph. 0458 776 187

Single Row Billy Roller on 3 point linkage \$250. Ph. 0458 776 187

200L Silvan Spray Tank with electric pump 14ltr/min on trailer or standalone \$300. Ph. 0458 776 187

Mackay – Proserpine

1996 Cameco full-track harvester with Cat 3306 motor, 8 blade Westhill chop with adjuster (used for billet planting last six years) \$ 65,000. Ph. (07) 4959 7080 (Mackay area) or 0438 789 106

2x Deutz DX90 tractors. New rear tyres. One with gear box problem other ok. Make good beach tractor or for slashing etc. \$6000 for both. Gargett area. Ph. (07) 4958 5762

1997 Cameco 2500 harvester, full track, Cat 3306 engine completely overhauled at start of 2016 season, hydraulic pumps in good condition, 15' choppers with Westhill adjuster. Machine is in VGC. POA. Ph. (07) 4958 8264 after 7PM

12T SELF-PROPELLED 6x6 elev infielder VGC. 6t side/tipper on Leyland tandem GC. Don Mizzi 741 model on Fiat 750 special turbo plus MF102 half-tracks to suit. Mason 9550 4-row precision vacuum seed planter GC. Ph. 0438 606 578

Bundaberg – Rocky Point

1 Tonne Bag lifter \$1200, 6ft Slasher F/c \$1000, 4 row Janke Precession Planter with fertilizer boxes for planting soy beans, peanuts etc, comes with

assortment of plates chain & sprockets \$6250, 24 plate Rawlings offsets 24" discs \$4250. J I Case 1194 tractor 49hp 2 speed PTO 12 forward & 4 reverse \$8250 Ph. 0418 874 615

John Berends TH100 44 Plate offset in VGC. \$16500 ono Inc GST. 2 x 4 Tonne Newton Tipper bins for planting \$3300 each inc GST. Ph. 0428 221 850

International 856 Tractor + Loader; International 766 Tractor; David Brown 990 Tractor + Loader; S Tyne Cultivator; 1 tonne bag lifter-3 point linkage; 5 Tyne Ripper. Ph. 0419 577 110

766 IH Tractor \$5500, Hilder Bulk Potato Digger, heaps of spare parts, \$11000. Price incl GST. Ph. 0409632656

Set of half tracks to suit Toft cane harvester. Ph. 0419 717 006

Drop-deck, tautliner and flat top extendable for hire. Ph. (07) 4159 8174 or 0417 004 717.

Michelin Agribab radial tyres on rims to suit Massey Ferguson. Rear 18.4/34, 90% tread. Front 14.9/24 on rims, 90% tread. \$3500 inc gst. Ph. 0407 699 779

Wanted

Extra cane to cut on present 24,000 tonnes for 2017 season onwards. Prefer Farleigh & Marian Mill areas. Ph. 0419 688 592

Wanted cane to harvest in the 2017 season and beyond in Marian/Mirani district. Photo 0427 593 883

Wanted to lease cane farm Plane Creek mill area. Experienced farmer. Ph. 0428 880 771

Wanted. Two leg ripper with coulters or trash incorporator, without fert bin. Bundaberg area. Ph. 0428 535 385

Wanted to buy. Tip truck, 7-9 tonnes or similar. Ph. 0428 761 549

TRACTOR TYRES of all sizes. Ph. 0418 775 698 all hours.

Positions Vacant

OAKENDEN – Contractor wanted to harvest and plant small cane farm. Flat farm, close cart. Ph. (07) 4958 5224 or 0428 575 787.

Property

BUNDABERG AREA: Wanted to lease cane farm. Ph. 0429 026 690

MACKAY-PROSERPINE: 870 acre farm approx 220 acres under Cane 85 meg Dam two points of power on the block. Frontage to Carmila creek. Ph. 0488 003 153 for more enquiries.

INGHAM: Cane Farm for sale. Hawkins Creek. Total area 48.3ha. CPA 46.6ha. Shed, Electricity and water. Genuine enquiries Ph. 0407 635 175.

OAKENDEN: Cane farm for sale. Irrigated, flat, no rocks, good soil, close siding for carting, close to town. Call (07) 4958 5224 or 0428 575 787.

MACKAY: 1750 Acres, seven lots, Coastal flat freehold property. South of Mackay supplying Mackay Sugar. High rainfall area and endless potential for diversification. House and garage, equipped irrigation system, shed, machinery and equipment. Ph. 0407 157 792

MACKAY: 422 hectares, cattle and cane. Huge supply of water, absolutely drought-proof property, 120 megalitre water license, right on the coast. Ph. 0407 157 792

HERBERT RIVER: Cane farm 60.73ha with machinery and 4 bedroom dwelling at 194 Lannercost Ext Rd, Ingham Ph. 4045 4321

WALKERSTON AREA: Cane farm for sale, fully irrigated, 42.5ha cane 3.6ha grazing Ph. 0418 185 663

WANTING TO LEASE cane farm, any size, from Mirani/Dows Creek area. Ph. 0411 811 768

FOR SALE: 64ha cane farm, flat freehold country, partly laser levelled, 32km by road south-west of Mackay supplying Racecourse Mill. A tramline siding is adjacent to the property which has 202 megalitres / annum from Kinchant dam irrigation scheme. A single outlet is provided and equipped with 125mm centrifugal pump driven by 75HP electric motor. Water is reticulated throughout by underground class six 150mm PVC piping and with sufficient hydrants to flood irrigate the farm. A small tailings dam at front of farm collects excess water as a supplementary supply. A primary school is situated 1km from property and school buses provide transport into Mackay. POA. Ph. 07 4959 7080 or 0438 789 106 or 0459 607 444



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