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Meeting a growing market

By Paul Schembri, Chairman CANEGROWERS

As cane growers, our immediate challenges always lie with managing weather risks, production costs and regulatory compliance. Whilst these challenges are obviously our primary concerns, a larger world beyond our farm gate is just as important to our economic wellbeing.

Whether we like it or not we are inescapably part of the global sugar industry. The sugar price we receive is a global price and that price is the product of a myriad of policies and actions in countries far removed from ours.

That is why we, as Australian cane growers, need to know what is going on in the international sugar world.

I recently went to London to attend a meeting of the World Association of Beet and Cane Growers which represents 4 million farmers in 32 countries.

A second meeting was the International Sugar Organisation of which the Australian Government is a member on behalf of the Australian industry.

The final meeting was of the Global Sugar Alliance, a group of countries including Australia, Canada, Brazil, Thailand and South Africa that relies on accessing a world price that is not the product of export subsidies.

Of all the themes at these forums, the one most frequently discussed was sustainability. Consumers worldwide are demanding that their food is produced and manufactured in an environmentally and socially sustainable way.

While we are well placed to ensure we meet these market demands, we can't rest on our laurels. We have high standards of social and environmental behaviour, but our competitors are catching up.

That is why programs such as Smartcane BMP are so important. Smartcane BMP is not just about meeting an environmental requirement, it may be the difference between customers buying our product or turning away.

I encourage you all to get involved. Success is the sum of all the parts and it may be your involvement in Smartcane BMP that ensures our product has access to markets ahead of our competitors.

This edition of *Australian Canegrower* is the last for 2017. It is impossible to condense the trials, tribulations and good and bad fortunes that have played in our lives over the past 12 months.

Weather has been a huge factor. Tropical Cyclone Debbie, drought in southern Queensland and late season rain have tested our patience and resilience.

Despite all this volatility, Australia will produce around 34 million tonnes of cane this year, down by 3 million tonnes on 2016 but commendable nonetheless!

Importantly, we have shown again that by standing shoulder to shoulder as CANEGROWERS we can achieve great things like the realisation of a Code of Conduct to ensure fair marketing arrangements for farmers.

The challenge for 2018 is to ensure that the grower choice legislation is maintained under the new ALP Queensland Government.

Whatever happens, CANEGROWERS and growers will rise to the occasion to ensure commercial fairness for farmers.

I wish all of our members a happy and peaceful Christmas and a rewarding 2018, with good weather and high sugar prices. ■



"Smartcane BMP is not just about meeting an environmental requirement, it may be the difference between customers buying our product or turning away."

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Law and Code protect growers as miller bypasses consultation

The value of the farmer protections written into the *Sugar Industry Act* in 2015 and the Sugar Code of Conduct have been proven by Mackay Sugar's disappointing and surprise decision to exit its Raw Sugar Supply Agreement (RSSA) with Qld Sugar Ltd in June 2020.

"This sudden announcement was made without the company consulting its shareholders, including growers supplying cane to its mills," CANEGROWERS CEO **Dan Galligan** said.

"This is essentially the same approach taken in 2014 by Wilmar Sugar, Tully Sugar and MSF Sugar when they withdrew from their RSSAs. The difference now is that the Act and the Code provide a necessary safety net for stability in the industry.

"By making an announcement in this way, Mackay Sugar has chosen to ignore a process of good faith negotiations in which grower representatives had been working with the company to make grower choice in marketing work under the existing structures," Mr Galligan said.

With this decision, Mackay Sugar has ended its 100-year association with QSL and its predecessor organisations as a central marketing authority. CANEGROWERS believes this history should've provided for better consultation with key grower representatives prior to the announcement.

CANEGROWERS now urges Mackay Sugar and QSL to work quickly and collaboratively with growers to finalise a new On-Supply Agreement under the terms of the *Sugar Industry Act* mindful that the Code of Conduct requires all parties to negotiate in good faith and work reasonably, fairly, honestly and co-operatively.

"This season, growers supplying Wilmar Sugar, Tully Sugar and MSF Sugar mills have had access to mechanisms to exercise choice from a competitive field of marketing options put forward by the milling companies and QSL," Mr Galligan said

"Although Mackay Sugar is sending a message that QSL is no longer its preferred marketer, CANEGROWERS reassures its grower members that the provisions of the Act and Code and indeed Mackay Sugar's public commitments to date should ensure they continue to have fair and competitive access to QLS's industry-owned marketing pathway for their economic interest sugar." ■

CHANGING OF THE GUARD AT SUNSHINE SUGAR



The 2017 Annual General Meeting of Sunshine Sugar and its Grower Members in Ballina saw the retirement of **Ian Causley** from the Board and position as Chairman.

"It is with somewhat of a heavy heart I step down from the Board. I was first elected to the Clarence Sugar Executive in 1966 and have served on industry committees ever since. I thank all of the growers and staff for their support and confidence," Mr Causley told the meeting.

Chief Executive Officer, **Chris Connors** said Mr Causley had contributed not only years of farming and industry experience, but his distinguished career in politics saw him inject a very high standard of chairmanship to the Board.

He acknowledged a solid crushing performance and industry-leading pricing for growers amidst fluctuating and at times volatile market conditions.

Mr Connors said the focus for the next 12 – 18 months was to optimise the business through good management of the core raw and refined sugar business in conjunction with development of strategic diversification projects which were showing great promise, and would be assessed for commercial viability over the coming months.

Incoming Chairman of the Sunshine Sugar Board, **Jim Sneesby**, acknowledged that the cane industry was facing pressure from horticulture for land, but he said he was confident that sugarcane would remain the most suitable crop for the floodplains across the northern rivers region of New South Wales. ■

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Australian Canegrower strives to meet your needs for sugarcane industry news and information. To keep us on track, we're asking readers to complete a short online survey.

Pop in your CANEGROWERS membership or subscription details and you'll go into the draw to win a CANEGROWERS prize pack of umbrella, polo shirt, pen and bucket hat!

Find the survey here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/5TLFG85>

Facing a New Year with new ministers



With the confirmation of Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk's ministerial team for the next term of the ALP Queensland Government, CANEGROWERS is preparing to brief the MPs given responsibility for the areas that most impact on members and the future of the entire industry.

As many of the ministers are from urban or South East Queensland electorates, priority will be given to inviting them to visit district offices and, most importantly, get some cane farm soil under their feet and meet members face to face.

Only one minister has retained the portfolio he had in the previous government, so it is important those taking on new responsibilities are quickly brought up to speed with our sugarcane industry issues, challenges, opportunities and achievements.

The Ministers who will be getting special CANEGROWERS attention are:

- Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries **Mark Furner** (Ferry Grove)
- Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts **Leeanne Enoch** (Algeria)
- Minister for Transport and Main Roads **Mark Bailey** (Miller)
- Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy **Dr Anthony Lynham** (Stafford)

CANEGROWERS CEO **Dan Galligan** said positive, early engagement with political leaders was important to establish the credentials and ground rules upon which further policy negotiation can take place.

"Our focus initially will be to ensure they understand our industry from the grower perspective before working with their respective departments and agencies to ensure they too have a good grounding in the policies relevant to us," he said.

CANEGROWERS will bring to the table the enormous contribution that farmers make to the state in terms of industry development and export returns.

"Our now globally-recognised high standard for environmental management and sustainability secures our place in the market and that is thanks to the hard work of growers," Mr Galligan said. "Our farm leaders have shown tremendous innovation in demonstrating solutions to difficult problems around energy prices and transport movement.

"We will be ensuring those MPs new to the state's political leadership are aware of these achievements."

The first benchmark of success for any new government is a preparedness to listen, engage and learn.

"While this benchmark was never achieved by many of the Ministers in the previous ALP Government, we are encouraged by the Premier's commitment to work for all Queenslanders and to put Queenslanders first," Mr Galligan said.

"Our sincere hope is that 2018 will bring about a more sincere approach to collaborative policy-making for the benefit of all agricultural industries in our state." ■



Pictured: Tweet from Mark Furner MP, the newly appointed Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries.

MPs in SUGAR SEATS

Seat	Member	Party
Cook	Cynthia Lui	ALP
Barron River	Craig Crawford	LNP
Cairns	Michael Healy	ALP
Mulgrave	Curtis Pitt	ALP
Hill	Shane Knuth	KAP
Hinchinbrook	Nick Dametto	KAP
Burdekin	Dale Last	LNP
Whitsunday	Jason Costigan	LNP
Mirani	Stephen Andrew	PHON
Keppel	Brittany Lauga	ALP
Mackay	Julianne Gilbert	ALP
Burnett	Stephen Bennett	LNP
Bundaberg	David Batt	LNP
Callide	Colin Boyce	LNP
Maryborough	Bruce Saunders	ALP
Hervey Bay	Ted Sorensen	LNP
Gympie	Tony Perrett	LNP
Ninderry	Dan Purdie	LNP
Nicklin	Marty Hunt	LNP
Noosa	Sandy Bolton	Independent
Coomera	Michael Crandon	LNP

CANEGROWERS Regional round-up

Mossman

All of the Mackay Sugar cane contracted to Mossman Mill has now been processed with the MSF Tableland Mill finishing the first week in December.

Mackay Sugar processed 875,963 tonnes of cane through Mossman Mill and had 302,637 tonnes of cane toll-crushed through the MSF Tableland Mill.

The Coastal contract farms supplied 604,943 tonnes of cane for an average of 12.86 CCS and the Tableland contract farms supplied 573,657 tonnes of cane for an average of 13.91 CCS.

While tonnages were less than 2016 they were still very good and with much better CCS results this year, it was overall a reasonable season for growers.

There was still too much down time which elevated the lost time hours and with the addition of some rain towards the end, crushing pushed into 24 weeks for Mossman Mill in 2017.

Growers attended the CANEGROWERS Mossman Company AGM, an End of Season meeting, heard an update on the Mill and about Cane Changer from John Pickering on Thursday 30 November 2017.



Innisfail

Crushing finished at South Johnstone Mill at 8.27pm on Sunday 10 December. 1,522,492.87 tonnes were crushed there with a further 279,631.05 of SJ contracted cane crushed at Mulgrave Mill. The total tonnes contracted to South Johnstone mill was 1,802,123.92. The seasonal CCS ended at a disappointing 12.02.

The impact of the catastrophic failure of No.5 Mill continued throughout the final two weeks of crushing with the crush rate lowered so that less than 89,000 tonnes were crushed daily and there were issues with the quality of the cane fibre causing chokes in the bagasse conveyor system and the snuffing out of boiler fires.

Another late finish to harvesting will again have an impact on the ratoons. To what extent will depend on weather conditions in the coming month. Innisfail growers have been very fortunate not to have experienced the

wet weather that many growers to the south have suffered.

South Johnstone growers have expressed their appreciation of the support and understanding of growers in the Mulgrave mill area who had their season length extended as a result of the transfer of tonnes from the SJ area to Mulgrave and the additional 16,000 tonnes that were transferred during the last 11 days of the season.

Despite the adverse conditions impacting on the cane quality, only 860 tonnes were condemned.

Growers have now turned their attention to the options under Grower Choice and finalising their nominations of their marketer of their GEI sugar. QSL and MSF Marketing have been providing assistance to growers. Growers have until 29 December to submit their nomination, but with Christmas New Year holidays, are being encouraged to complete their submissions by 22 December.

Tully

The crushing season was completed at the end of November and growers are busy completing all the jobs before the commencement of the wet season. The pressure is on given the climate predictions of above average rainfall for the coming months.

The Water Quality Workshop, sponsored by the Farmers Teaching Farmers Program, held on the 8 December was well attended by growers who were treated to quality presentations, as well as project and supplier displays.

There was a lot of interest in the Wet Tropics Report Card, and an explanation of how the Water Quality Monitoring is done and the results for the last year.

The new year is ahead of us, the crop prospects are good as there has been good amounts of rain and plenty of heat and sunshine. Although the mapping is still underway it is expected that there will be additional area for harvest in 2018.

Mackay

Coming into the season with standover from last year combined with the effects of Cyclone Debbie, growers had a crop to contend with that was always going to be difficult to harvest.

However good harvesting weather gave us an opportunity to harvest the bulk of the crop in the early months of the crush, meaning most of it was brought in across the region.

Unfortunately mill availability combined with wet weather put a dampener on the progress of the Mackay Sugar harvest, with a disappointing number of tonnes of cane left unharvested. This result has meant that there is again standover cane in the Mackay district. Mackay Sugar finished the crushing on Thursday 7 December, crushing in the proximity of 5 million tonnes of cane.

Burdekin

The 2017 Burdekin crush was completed at 12.10pm Tuesday 5 December, when the last cane was crushed at Pioneer Mill. A total of 269,000 tonnes of cane was crushed by Burdekin mills in the last two weeks of crushing. The total crop for 2017 is 8,120,850 tonnes at an average CCS of 14.00.

Best performing variety for 2017 was Q252 at 14.38 CCS with just 3.5 % of total supply closely followed by Q183 which was the highest supplied cane at 30% and a CCS of 14.24. Q240 at 22% of all cane supplied recorded 14.04 CCS for the season.

CANEGROWERS Burdekin directors, management and staff would like to thank all growers, harvesting contractors and Wilmar Sugar for their efforts throughout the 2017 crushing season.

Wilmar Sugar has said that over the next six months it will spend more

than \$51 million on capital works and maintenance at the Burdekin mills. There is to be a strong focus on reducing factory downtime as engineering teams have been analysing the causes of all the stops this season. The findings will be used to develop work plans aimed at improving reliability in 2018.

Burdekin Productivity Services Field Officer Ray Hildebrandt was celebrated at a farewell BBQ held by Inkerman growers on Wednesday 6th December. The growers showed their appreciation for Ray's 35 years of service. His experience and knowledge has been invaluable, with growers grateful for his tireless work and co-operation; he will be very hard to replace.

We hope the weather is favourable and everyone has a safe and happy period over the festive season and we look forward to sharing a successful 2018 season.

Bundaberg

The season is expected to end on Wednesday 13 December and, due to mill performance at Millaquin when the weather was ideal to harvest cane, there will be around 75,000 tonnes of standover.

The late finish due to the mill's reliability issues will have an impact on productivity in the 2018 season.

Extremely wet field conditions disrupted crushing operations at Millaquin Mill for the week ending 9 December. A total of 8,834 tonnes of cane were processed bringing the season total so far to 1,631,754 tonnes.

The weekly average CCS at Millaquin was 10.94 units. The season to date average CCS for the region is 13.86 units.

The highest average CCS for a variety for the week was 11.47 units from KQ228. The highest individual CCS of 13.70 units also from KQ228 was from old ratoon.

The major varieties supplied during the week were Q238 (30% of supply) with a CCS average of 10.92, Q208 (22% of supply) at 10.70, KQ228 (16% of supply) at 11.47 and Q240 (10% of supply) at 10.45 units.

Rocky Point

The Rocky Point Sugar Mill has finally had two very good weeks of crushing at around 22,000 tonnes each week.

At the end of Week 23 (3 December) 309,326 tonnes had been crushed at an average CCS of 13.08.

Due to recent rain, CCS has started to fall and harvesting has been hindered but the rain has been welcomed in terms of setting the scene for next year's crop. There is still standover cane to be harvested.

The mill had a three-day stoppage during week 24 but we are hopeful of seeing some more 22,000 tonne weeks leading up to Christmas. ■

Tully toasts top grower

The Tully district's Mangrove Jack Award has been presented to the Di Mauro family of El Arish.



For 17 years the Award has recognised farmers in the region who have helped the sugar industry grow while being mindful of and caring for the surrounding environment.

From Sebastiano (Ned) initially purchasing a home farm in 1954 with his wife Katarina (Katie), the Di Mauro family enterprise has grown to involve three generations farming across 489 hectares in the Al Arish, Riversdale, Murray and Kennedy districts.

They use Trimble GPS row guidance planting on 1.9 m row centres with 600mm spaced dual rows of cane. Fertiliser is applied sub-surface and due to the large area they're managing, they control grasses early and only spray later if needed with a hi-rise rig.

Paddock water run-off is controlled and improvements are ongoing as the family works through the requirements for Smartcane BMP.

The Di Mauros manage around 48 ha of fallow under legumes each year, grow small crops and also run a harvesting contract cutting 98,000 tonnes.

The Mangrove Jack Award is sponsored by Miriwinni Lime, CANEGROWERS Tully and Tully Cane Productivity Services Limited. ■

Pictured: Sam, Ned and Jason DiMauro.

HAPPY WORLD SOILS DAY!



NQ Dry Tropics found a unique way to simultaneously celebrate World Soils Day, teach us something about what's under our feet and support the sugar industry.



Using 1kg of sugar, Sustainable Agriculture Grazing Field Officer **Linda Anderson** made a cake in which the sweet layers represented soil structure.

As the driver of the NQ Dry Tropics Saving Our Soils Reef Trust project, she wanted to create awareness about why soil health is important in a fun and engaging way.

A key message in the workshops Linda organises for Burdekin landholders is that the management of agricultural soils needs to consider the structural, biological and mineral health of the soil.

NQ Dry Tropics staff report the soil structure lesson was delicious!

Pictured above left to right: NQ Dry Tropics Sustainable Agriculture's Neil Cupples, Linda Anderson (the baker) and Waterways Wetlands Coasts' field officer Lisa Pulman. ■

Money Matters

with AustSafe Super

BEST GROWTH SUPER FUND

AustSafe Super has been announced the winner of Money Magazine's Best Growth Super Fund for 2018, as part of its annual Best of the Best awards.

We were judged the winner in our category at an awards ceremony in Sydney. The awards are designed to help consumers make more informed investment decisions across asset categories including super, cash accounts, funds, and home loans.

According to our chief executive, Craig Stevens, the accolade is testament to the fund's consistently strong investment performance and continued focus on delivering value to members.

"We're very humbled and proud to have been named as the winner of this award, particularly with the knowledge that it's regarded so highly by consumers who are working towards achieving financial security in their retirement," he said.

"Our members are employed in local industries and communities across the country and form the backbone of working Australia, so this award is both a win for the AustSafe Super business but also a win for our members," he said.

The Best of the Best celebrates Australia's pre-eminent financial products, services and investments, with leading research houses including Canstar, Lonsec, Morningstar, SQM Research, SuperRatings, WhistleOut and Zenith Investment Partners identifying the winners in more than 60 categories.

The Best of the Best win follows recognition in the Rainmaker Selecting Super Awards earlier this month when we were featured as a finalist in the Innovation Award for Millennial Superannuation. Our asset consultant, JANA, collected the Asset Consultant of the Year Award.

For more information, please visit austsafe.com.au

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Improving the nitrogen use **EFFICIENCY OF VARIETIES**

Research is underway to better understand whether nitrogen use efficiency (NUE) can be used as a trait in the breeding program.



Growers already have observations from the field about different varieties being more efficient users of nitrogen. This new research project is looking to capitalise on those observations with data to create useful outcomes for sugarcane growers and millers.

The project is called Licence to farm: nitrogen use efficient varieties to meet the future environmental targets, and is led by SRA Leader for Trait Development, Dr Prakash Lakshmanan.

The project has three main components.

The first is testing a range of clones in glasshouses at the University of Queensland for their NUE, to see if there is genetic variability. This work is currently underway, with early indications that there is significant variability.

The second component of the project is to take those observations from the glasshouse and to test them in the field.

"These two components of the project will allow us to identify potential elite clones and then take them further as breeding material to create better varieties, or deploy those clones as varieties to more nitrogen sensitive areas of the industry," Dr Lakshmanan said.

The third component of the project, which has not yet started, is to develop a system for screening potential varieties for their NUE by using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

These UAVs, also known as drones, carry sophisticated cameras and processing software to assess potential varieties in an efficient and reliable way. This process is in development as part of other research activities at SRA.

All this could eventually lead to improved NUE information on new varieties, such as from the online variety decision tool, QCANESelect®.

Dr Lakshmanan said that NUE continued to be a critical topic for the Australian sugarcane industry, so this project had significant potential to add to the profitability, productivity and sustainability of the industry. ■



Pictured: Dr Jaya Basnayake with the field trial in the Burdekin, assessing the nitrogen response of different sugarcane varieties.



by Mick Quirk
Smartcane BMP Manager

SMARTCANE BMP - RECOGNISING THE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES OF GROWERS



"Smartcane BMP is a pathway for growers to have their good farming practices recognised."

After nearly three years and with more than 1,600 farm businesses involved, it's a good time to take a look at the role of Smartcane BMP in the industry and where it's headed.

RECOGNISING WHAT GROWERS HAVE ACHIEVED

Smartcane BMP is a pathway for growers to have their good farming practices recognised. It provides a way for growers to 'set the record straight', a need that has been clearly expressed through the Cane Changer project being led in the Wet Tropics by John Pickering.

Our aim is to have recognition of BMP accredited growers by government, community and supply chains result in:

1. Reduced need to demonstrate compliance with government regulations;
2. Reduced government regulation of cane farming;
3. BMP-accredited growers readily meeting the on-farm requirements for markets sourcing sustainable sugar;
4. Greater appreciation by the wider community.

Reduced compliance has already been achieved, with BMP accredited growers not being the focus of Queensland Government compliance activities.

Reduced government regulation of cane farming is being sought by CANEGROWERS, but success depends on industry demonstrating its capacity for self-regulation. The primary evidence being used by government and others for

capacity to self-regulate is the number of growers and hectares accredited in BMP. The risk from not moving quickly is the increased likelihood of more onerous regulations, with elements of farming practice being reduced to a set of rigid prescriptions.

Meeting requirements for sustainable sourcing of sugar will be resolved during 2018. Apart from Bonsucro, there are several other global standards wanting to capture business in this space. The key for the Queensland industry is to minimise confusion and duplication of effort for growers.

Smartcane BMP has already achieved alignment with Bonsucro, with the inclusion of social sustainability practices related to labour management in the program, and Bonsucro has acknowledged that BMP exceeds its requirements with respect to crop agronomy and risks to water quality. BMP and Bonsucro will develop and test an integrated audit process in early 2018.

We will also work with Proterra, Proforest and other global standards to ensure they all see the role of Smartcane BMP for meeting their on-farm requirements.



It is significant that the Queensland Government has recognised BMP accreditation as the sustainability standard for biofuel feedstocks derived from sugarcane.

Greater appreciation of growers' sustainable practices by the wider community is something new for Smartcane BMP to focus on during 2018. This will be part of a refreshed communication strategy including web-based resources and greater exposure in local and city media.

TAKE-UP OF BMP

More than 1,600 farming businesses have taken the first major step, BMP self-assessment. This step allows each grower to tell his/her story of how they farm – how plant crops are established, how the nutrient needs of plant and ratoon crops are met, how soil constraints are managed, how weeds and any pests are controlled, and so on.

For each practice, growers can either select the wording of the standard that best matches what they do, or explain their specific practices and how it best suits their particular situation.

About 50% of the growers completing this step report a change in practice due to BMP, not just in record-keeping but also in management of soils, weeds, drainage or irrigation.

More 240 farming businesses have taken the next major step – Smartcane BMP accreditation, which allows each grower

to have independent verification that their practices meet industry standards or are better. Compared to self-assessment, accreditation requires more commitment from a grower. It requires farm records for the previous 12 months and an on-farm audit.

As with self-assessed growers, about 50% of accredited growers report a change in farming practice due to BMP. Importantly, more than 80% of these growers believe the accreditation process provides a robust means of demonstrating their stewardship of the environment.

WHAT TO EXPECT IN 2018

The Smartcane BMP facilitator in each district will continue to focus on assisting growers prepare for accreditation. This includes helping growers get started with record keeping using the type of recording preferred by the grower (eg map-based, diary, booklets or digital tools).

Facilitators will also organise for any support required to modify and refine practices so that they meet the BMP requirements. This can include documenting weed management, improving farm drainage, using the Six Easy Steps, and using tools to help schedule and monitor irrigation.

Many growers working with Smartcane BMP facilitators receive direct or follow-up advice and support to explore a farm practice improvement.

Growers do not always expect this to happen when they start in the program.

Smartcane BMP facilitators will also be offering self-assessment and certification in the additional BMP modules, including Workplace health and safety and Crop production and harvest management. This will link as much as possible with related workshops, shed meetings and field days being offered by partner organisations.

The new Module 8 will also be offered – this covers the social sustainability requirements for global trading standards such as Bonsucro and Proterra. The goal for 2018 is for certification in both the core modules and Module 8 to be recognised by all market players as meeting the on-farm requirements for sourcing sustainable sugar. ■

Pictured: (left) Phil Deguara explains his farming system to BMP auditor, Lana Shoesmith; (top) Terry Granshaw with Burdekin growers going through spray rig calibration training; (centre) Brendan Montafia, son of Peter Montafia, reviewing farm records with Jasmine Connolly from Burdekin Productivity Services; (below) Growers attend a BMP Soil Health workshop on measuring soil health.





Ten months of Project Cane Changer

By the Cane Changer team

Since its launch in the Wet Tropics in February, Project Cane Changer has involved more than 170 growers – all motivated to ‘set the record straight’.

Cane Changer is designed to tell grower stories and recognise growers for their past innovations and ongoing efforts to protect the environment. The project also aims to pave the way for continued innovation and sustainable change into the future.

The offices and boards of CANEGROWERS across the Wet Tropics have been helping to lead and implement the project in their districts.

With that help, Cane Changer has been launched in all six districts, with the Tablelands lighting their torch at the AGM on 12 December.

2017 Highlights

The very first Cane Changer Commitments were signed on 23 February by the CANEGROWERS Innisfail board.

By July, the Minister for the Environment **Steven Miles** was joining growers and signing a commitment of his own recognising growers ongoing efforts in the challenges facing the industry, particularly in relation to the Great Barrier Reef.

At the signing, CANEGROWERS Innisfail Chairman **Joe Marano** said, “Having the Minister formally recognise growers for how far they have come is a significant moment for the industry.”

When the Reef Report Card was released, Mr Miles said the data on activity up to June 2016 showed particular improvement in reducing nitrogen runoff.

“Thanks to lots of hard work on the ground, we’ve finally got pollution falling,” he said.

“We’ve been working with cane growers so that they are part of the solution for water quality while also getting great results for their farms.

“And it’s working—farmers have made the most effective land management practice changes to date.”

Dr John Pickering, the Cane Changer project leader, believes this is a great result.

“We are really pleased to see growers recognised for their positive changes,” he said.

In addition to working to improve the positive recognition for growers, Cane Changer has been working with Wet Tropics Sugar Industry Partnership (WTSIP) Extension Staff and Smartcane BMP facilitators to streamline the data collection process for growers.

At recent events in Mossman, Tully and the Cairns Region, this group ran interactive workshops utilising technology to gather data about farming practices.

Growers were able to get real-time feedback about how their on-farm practices compared with other growers in the district, and discuss the short-term and long-term financial and environmental implications.

This data can also be used for reporting in a number of different programs such as Smartcane BMP and Paddock2Reef, and for many growers, these events providing them an opportunity to learn and join projects that benefit them and their farms.

“Growers are regularly asked to report this information about their farming practices across a number of different programs running in the industry,” Dr Pickering said. “By combining and



"We are really pleased to see growers recognised for their positive changes."

linking a number of these questions from programs we hope to make it easier for growers to provide an accurate picture of their practices and set the record straight for reporting on the district's impact on water quality."

In August, with the support of the CANEGROWERS Cairns Region office, two workshops were conducted with over 30 growers to trial a Family, Farm & Future strategy that aims to build on the important role that family has in the sugarcane industry.

As part of the program, participants had the opportunity to provide feedback on issues that they have found working on farms over the years.

Jinny Hong helped facilitate the workshops. "Growers told us that some of the major barriers over the years have been a lack of access to the right resources," she said.

"Record keeping can be time-consuming and a lot of growers don't have access to computers at home.

"By engaging family members in the process, many who are already involved in on-farm practices and decisions, we hope to overcome some of these barriers."

So, where to next?

As Cane Changer moves into 2018 you can expect to see the further roll out of the project into the Wet Tropics.

In the coming months Cane Changer will be bringing the Family, Farm, Future workshops to other districts. These will be co-designed with local CANEGROWERS offices and the wider community to ensure they are district specific.

We are also looking to rollout the data collection workshops that has been designed as part of Cane Changer. Initial testing in Mossman was well received with positive feedback and many growers calling on the wider district to participate to create a clearer picture of the industry.

A final note

The team at Project Cane Changer would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has taken the time to get involved in the project.

We have met many wonderful growers this year and been welcomed onto farms and into homes. We are extremely grateful for the support from all the CANEGROWERS offices and staff who have championed the project and spent their time developing and implementing the project in their districts.

To those of you we have not met we are looking forward to 2018 and having the chance to meet you with you all and continue to help 'set the record straight' about the sugarcane industry and the great work that it does.

The Cane Changer team wishes all growers a wonderful Christmas and a safe and happy holiday period. ■



Pictured: (top left) Sunset over Peter Jackson's farm; (far left) The Cane Changer & WTSIP Team in the Cairns Region; (above) Dr John Pickering learning about sugarcane from Rajinder Singh; (centre) Matt Kealley of CANEGROWERS, Dr Pickering and then Environment Minister Dr Steven Miles at the commitment signing; (right) Growers at a recent data collection workshop in Tully.

A make or break year comes to an end



By QSL CEO and Managing Director
Greg Beashel

"We'd like to wish you and your families a safe festive season and we look forward to working hard for you again in the new year."

When Queensland's Marketing Choice legislation came into place last year, we knew that 2017 would be a make or break year for our company. But as the end of the state harvest comes around, I think it's safe to say that we passed this challenge with flying colours.

Thanks to the fantastic support of growers throughout Queensland and our milling partners, we remained the largest marketer of Queensland sugar in the 2017 Season.

We contracted over 1,100 Wilmar Growers through new Grower Pricing Agreements and successfully implemented the QSL Direct online grower portal to facilitate these Growers' pool nominations, pricing orders and sugar payments. Despite the limited information provided by Wilmar making the payment process more complex than we would like, since kicking off in June we've already made 21,000 direct payments to Wilmar Growers and their nominated third parties, and filled over 1,000 grower pricing orders.

Although the QSL Direct portal has been a success, we appreciate that nothing replaces a face-to-face chat, and so we also opened regional offices throughout the state, staffed by a Grower Services Team focused on making sure all growers using our services have easy access to a helping hand when they need it.

And we did all of this while also delivering strong pool results in a tough market, once again proving that not-for-profit does not mean uncompetitive.

THE SEASON TO COME

As we head towards the new season, I'm pleased to announce that our 2018-Season GEI sugar tonnage is already shaping up to surpass our 2017-Season results, with increases in both our Wilmar and Tully Sugar GEI sugar tonnages and the number of growers using our marketing and pricing services next season. While the 2018-Season marketing nomination process for MSF Sugar Growers is still open until the 29th of this month, we remain optimistic that we will maintain our title as the premier marketer of Queensland raw sugar.

We appreciate there's plenty more work to do and we already have a number of improvements underway that we'll roll out in the new year, including new pricing products, extended nomination windows, and an expanded range of features for growers using QSL Direct.

As the QSL team prepares to take a brief break over the Christmas and New Year period, we'd like to wish you and your families a safe festive season and we look forward to working hard for you again in the new year. ■

QSL HELPLINE OPEN DURING CHRISTMAS CLOSURE

All QSL offices will be closed for the Christmas break from 5pm Thursday 21 December 2017 until 9am Monday 8 January 2018. The QSL Direct Helpline will remain open from 9am to 5pm for all working days during the festive season. For assistance, please call **1800 870 756**.

DISCLAIMER:

This report contains information of a general or summary nature. While all care is taken in the preparation of this report, the reliability, accuracy or completeness of the information provided in the document is not guaranteed. The update on marketing and pricing activity does not constitute financial, investment or product advice or a risk management strategy. You should seek your own financial advice. This report should not be taken to include representations as to future matters, and nothing contained in this report should be relied upon as a representation as to future matters. Information about past performance is not an indication of future performance. QSL does not accept any responsibility to any person for the decisions and actions taken by that person with respect to any of the information contained in this report.



2017 Sugar Market Overview

Current as of 12 December 2016



By Mark Hampson, QSL Executive Manager Marketing and Risk

THE ICE #11

The global sugar market is known for its volatility and 2017 was no exception, with considerable price variance and historical high prices all occurring during the past 12 months.

A global sugar deficit initially helped to boost the 2016-Season prices for growers, with hedge funds and speculators buying record amounts of sugar, exaggerating

the deficit and pushing prices above US21c/lb. Dry weather throughout Asia added fuel to the price increase and coincided with a relatively weak Australian Dollar, allowing Growers to price sugar above \$600 per tonne for a short period of time.

However, the market eventually began to reflect the generally regarded market structure of two seasons of deficit followed by three to four seasons of surplus. As the year progressed import requirements for the Asian region did not materialise and the speculators dramatically sold their position, taking prices below US13c/lb and moving into a net-short position. The sugar market was now focused on the surplus, with recoveries experienced in all producing regions. This, in conjunction with a strengthening US Dollar, culminated in lower prices for a number of commodity markets, with sugar being the hardest hit.

Towards the later part of the year a weaker Brazilian Real, a new gasoline pricing policy and lower prices closed the gap on ethanol parity and the Brazilian harvest focused on producing sugar, all of which added to the forecast surplus. This was

further exacerbated by varying levels of official support for domestic prices in many large sugar-producing nations, such as the EU, which ignored the signals of falling world prices and continued to produce large crops.

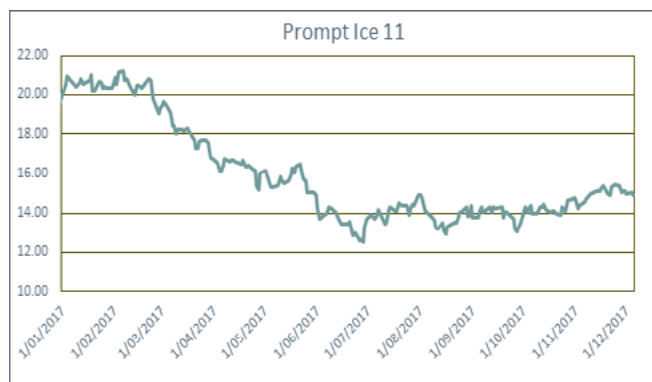
As we head into Christmas, the market fundamentals are generally encouraging a bearish outlook for 2018, and the QSL pricing team is hoping Santa brings some opportunities to price into near-term rallies.

CURRENCY

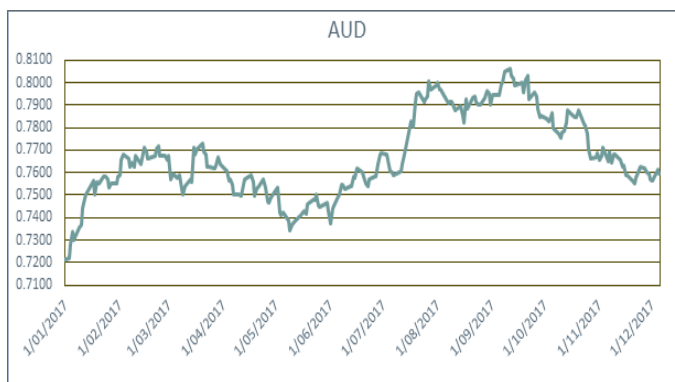
The Australian dollar (AUD) proved to be relatively stable during the year, trading in a 0.72-0.81 US cents range. This contradicted most analysts' predictions in early 2017, as they were expecting it to push towards 0.70 US cents. In the early part of the year the AUD/USD (US Dollar) exchange rate was supported by relatively strong commodity prices as well as the general weakness of the USD and concerns about the US economic recovery under the new Trump administration. While Trump has delivered on a few of his 'make America great again' policy platforms, as we head into 2018 the US economy is finding its feet and the outlook remains positive for USD strength.

Looking ahead, it appears likely that economic conditions will favour the devaluing of Australian dollar. With the US economy continuing to recover, their interest rates are set to increase and we expect to see a broadly stronger USD. The RBA has continued to keep rates on hold and looks to do so for the foreseeable future, citing on-trend growth, a cooling off of metropolitan housing prices and benign wage growth.

While not offsetting the full effects of the global surplus, the currency move has provided some relief to Australian commodity exporters. QSL considers levels under US74 cents likely in 2018, as the Australian economy continues to struggle against the stronger USD. ■



Source: Bloomberg. Published at www.qsl.com.au as at 7.12.2017



Source: Bloomberg. Published at www.qsl.com.au as at 7.12.2017

LIGHT AT THE END OF THE POWER PRICE TUNNEL

By Wayne Griffin

At a time when skyrocketing power prices are crippling farming businesses across Queensland, one Childers cane grower has managed to slash his quarterly bill through a shift to solar-powered low pressure irrigation.

John Russo knows a thing or two about the financial pressures facing farmers. A third-generation cane grower, John has been farming in the Isis region for more than half a century.

Today he operates a 280-hectare cane farm at Farnsfield, 10 minutes north of Childers, with his son Matt.

"I left school at a young age to help my father and my older brother Joe on the farm," John said, when *Australian Canegrower* visited the Russo Family farm recently.

"I'm one of six boys in the family – five ended up on the farm and one is a teacher. I've also got three sisters."

The Russo boys farmed together for decades, keeping the family business going following the death of their father Harry in 2003.

But when their mum Rose died in 2012, the brothers, all of whom had adult children of their own by then, decided it was time to go their separate ways for the sake of the next generation.

"We'd done very well as a partnership, but we accepted the challenge of moving

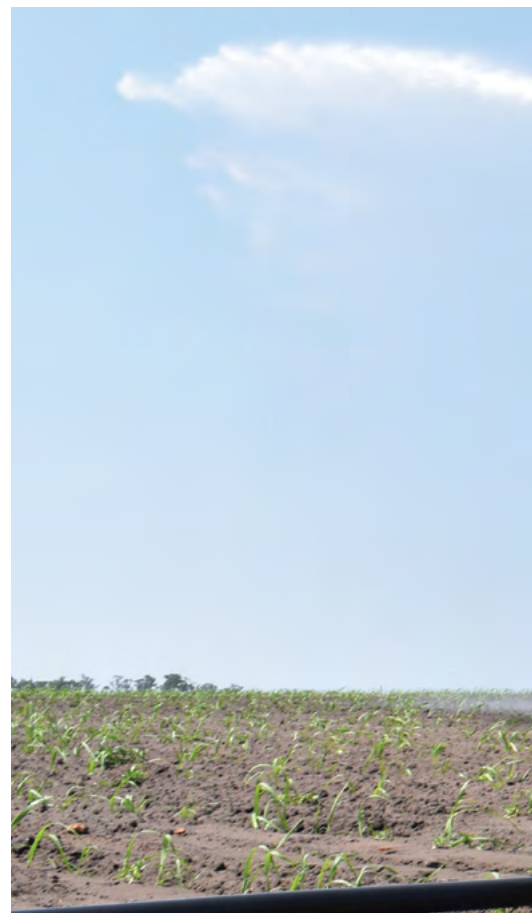
forward on our own. This year marks the three-year anniversary of going our separate ways," John said.

"The thing about a partnership is you don't always get your own way. Now we're the masters of our own destiny. The down side to that is you have to take all the responsibility – the buck stops here.

"I wouldn't change it, though. It's great to be working together with Matt."

One of the first major decisions that John and Matt made after striking out on their own was to tackle the problem of the farm's crippling power bills.

As is the case for countless growers, the cost of running high-pressure traveling irrigators was rapidly cutting into their operating budget. With no end to the soaring electricity prices in sight, John decided on the financially risky move of purchasing two new centre pivots and





installing a 30KVA solar array to power one of them.

"We realised that we just weren't going to be able to keep going with the high pressure irrigators," John said. "We had something like 11 irrigators on the farm and the power bills were enormous and getting bigger all the time.

"We'd got to a stage where we were paying \$9,500–\$10,000 a quarter for power on a single irrigator.

"Then there was the price of water and the cost of labour to operate the traveling irrigators, it was just unsustainable.

"In the first year we bought a centre pivot and then last year we bought another one.

"We're now in the process of putting a lateral irrigator over two other farms. Once that's complete, half of the whole farm (140 ha) will be under low pressure irrigation.

Continues page 16 ►

"The payback time is only four or five years then power bills beyond that should show significant savings hopefully."





"We'll still have to use high pressure in certain areas, but with these two centre pivots and the new lateral we've probably saved in excess of five traveling irrigators."

John and Matt control the whole system through a mobile phone app, which allows them to direct the pivot irrigation and see how much power is feeding in from the array.

"It's saved us a massive amount of time and labour. You just switch the pivots on and let them do the work."

"You don't have to spend hours every day dragging winch irrigators around, which frees up time for other jobs," John said.

And it's not just time that John and Matt are saving. They're also saving money and increasing productivity.

They were able to exchange a power hungry 60hp motor required to run the high pressure irrigator for a much more efficient 37hp motor needed to power the centre pivot.

With their 30kVA solar system providing more than enough energy to power one pivot, they are now outputting energy back into the grid.

"Since we've put the solar plant in we've brought our power bill for that motor down from over \$9,000 a quarter to under \$4,000," John said.

"To be honest, I'm hoping to get to a stage where, with what we're putting back into the grid, we may not have to pay for power at all on that irrigator. We hope it will be cost neutral."

John credits the system with getting them through some tough dry spells over the past two years.

While it was expensive to install, he's confident the solar will quickly pay for itself in savings.

"The payback time is only four or five years and then power bills beyond that should show significant savings hopefully."

John also believes that government needs to step up, at state and federal level, and take significant action to reduce out-of-control power prices - instead of waiting until hundreds of farmers have gone out of business.

"The power prices we have now are unsustainable and are going to send a lot of farmers broke, but from what I can see, the government has no real plan to fix the problem," John said.

"Planning a \$50 or \$100 cut to household bills is all well and good, but when you're an irrigator paying over \$50,000 or \$60,000 per quarter for electricity, saving \$100 won't make a bit of difference."

"Most people in the cities probably don't understand the true cost of power for farmers. The government knows but doesn't really care, because there aren't too many votes in the regions. They're only focused on cutting residential bills and winning votes."



"If getting accredited in BMP helps show that farmers are doing the right thing and helps avoid more restrictions and regulations, well that can only be a good thing."



Changing times

While the solar irrigation system is proving to be a good investment, it is only one of the innovations that have contributed to the success of the Russo Family farms.

John, who has been around long enough to remember the days when "you'd be planting 4ft 8in rows and burning," believes the adoption of controlled traffic has played a huge part in improving the farm's productivity and yield.

"We've put a massive outlay into machinery. We've had to buy new tractors and fit them all out with GPS, but it's been worth it," John said.

"We've found with a 1.8m row system, on controlled traffic, your stool formation stays intact, especially with the wider machinery there is today.

"Our production figures have gone way up and we're seeing big advantages in our ratoons. We used to only get third and fourth ratoons, but now we're successfully getting seventh and eight ratoons, just through control traffic and managing the grubs."

Last year was a good one for John and Matt, with the farm averaging over 120 tonnes of cane per ha, despite the dry.

"We were pretty happy with that. The mill target is 100 tonnes per ha but they were only managing 85-90.

"We also averaged about 5-6 tonnes of peanuts per ha over about 50ha. That's not ideal, we'd like to be getting 7 tonnes, but we're still learning with the peanuts."

The Russos plant peanuts not only as a cash crop, but also as part of their fallow management plan, which together with

irrigation, pest and weed, and nutrient management plans, forms the basis of their Smartcane BMP accreditation.

"We're in the process of getting ourselves BMP accredited," John said.

"Farming life is hard enough as it is without governments and other agencies putting restrictions on you and trying to tell you what to do.

"If getting accredited in BMP helps show that farmers are doing the right thing and helps avoid more restrictions and regulations, well that can only be a good thing.

"We're only here a short time and we like to think we leave the soil to the next generation in a good state. No one is so stupid that they want to vandalise their soil or they want to leave it in a worse state than they found it.

"That's why growers are taking on a lot of these practice changes like break crops, trash blanketing and controlled traffic.

"Personally, we've noticed huge improvements since taking on these practices and, to be honest, I don't know if we'd still be farming if we weren't making changes." ■

Pictured: Previous page, John Russo watches his electricity consumption. Matt sets one of the irrigators. This page, John and Matt discuss their plans. The new bank of solar cells providing power to the farm.

Policy Update

Environment with Matt Kealley

Industry with Burn Ashburner

Economics with Warren Males

Where did the year go?

To round out another busy year, here are the top issues on this portfolio agenda:

Reef Regulations – The Queensland Government has proposed to broaden and enhance existing regulations to include minimum practice standards for all reef catchments. CANEGROWERS has provided feedback and will continue to be involved.

Reef Trust – This program from the Australian Government is up to its sixth phase. Phases 1 to 5 have supported growers with on ground practice change to improve water quality and there's more to come in 2017.

Nitrogen road map – SIX EASY STEPS works and is the backbone of nutrient management. Industry has collaborated to help develop further guidelines to improve profitability and reduce water quality impacts. It's a win-win.

Project Cane Changer – Sometimes all it takes to change is a positive message and acknowledgement of what's been happening. This program looks at the barriers to change and is now operating across the Wet Tropics with full support from CANEGROWERS.

Smartcane BMP – 15% of the cane area is now accredited and 70% is benchmarked. The program links to extension, training and grants and accredited growers meet reef regulation requirements. We are committed to providing a market pathway for sustainable sugar - watch this space.

Rats – We are working on the aerial application of baits to manage rats in the Mackay and Ingham regions.

Fire ants – We've been able to move cane to NSW for crushing when the Rocky Point mill broke down. ■



NFF members' council

CANEGROWERS is a member of the National Farmers Federation and recently I went to the members council meeting and AGM. What struck me was the potential disconnect between what NFF does and farmers. Do farmers see value in what NFF does when it acts at an international and national level and across all of agriculture?

Among the many issues covered were policies around trade, electricity, water and climate change. However, a few issues were a bit outside what I expected.

One of these was the emergence of Agtech, the use of digital technologies in agriculture. A number of real policy issues were highlighted with regard to data. Who owns it and do farmers unknowingly sign away their data when they agree to small print when signing up to use an app? NFF will be working to get sensible policies and regulations to protect farmers who may never realise that NFF made a difference.

Another issue was the Primary Industries Education Foundation which is supported by NFF. It influences school curricula and provides material on agriculture for teachers. This helps educate the community about agriculture, but the individual farmer may not necessarily know this.

My point is that it may not always be easy to see the full benefits of representative organisations. Many benefits are heading off issues before they become problems. There may

be room for improvement but but where would agriculture be without them? ■



The frog in the pot

You've probably heard the story - in blissful ignorance a frog swims around a pot, tolerating small increases in temperature until, the water boils. His froggy mate outside the pot dips a toe in the water, senses danger and safely hops away.

Like the frog, we operate in an ever-changing environment. The change is incremental, often unnoticed until a tipping point is reached. Then it's a scramble to deal with the new environment.

The frog's lesson is that there are dangers in getting caught up in our own sphere and there is value in taking a step back, to look at the big picture.

Parallels to the frog can be drawn in the sugar world.

To pick one, Smartcane BMP is a proactive way of dealing with the ever-increasing environmental regulation and customer-driven sustainability pressures. I encourage growers to scan these outside pressures on our industry and embrace BMP before the water boils.

The water temperature is also rising in Australia's electricity market as electricity companies continue to squeeze every dollar they can from the regulatory framework.

James Fazzino of Manufacturing Australia writes, "Governments don't provide investor certainty, customers do".

Slowing the pace of price increases won't fix the problem. A sharp reduction in electricity prices is being demanded.

CANEGROWERS will keep turning the temperature up - that frog is still in the pot! ■





Important Notice for CANEGROWERS Cairns Region Members By-Election 2018

CANEGROWERS Cairns Region will be running a by-election early 2018 to fill a current vacancy that now exists on the Board.

If you are interested in nominating, or you know a grower who would make a great contribution to the CANEGROWERS organisation in that role, please contact the Company Secretary – Sarah Standen on 0418 726 831 or call into the District office to pick up the relevant paperwork.

Nominations open on 12 January 2018 and close at 5pm on 31 January 2018. If an election is required, ballot papers will be posted on 2 February 2018.

Important Information

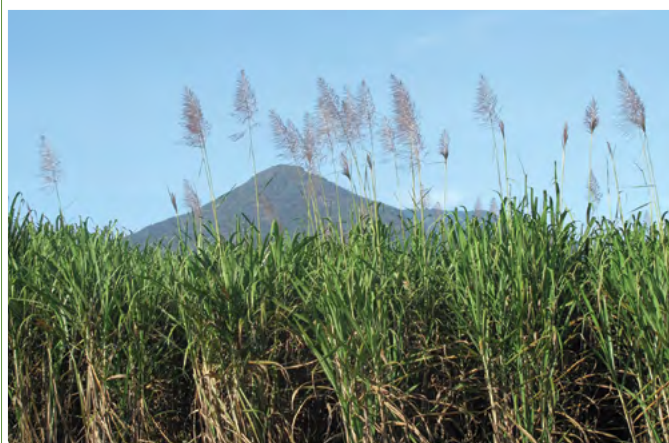
- Nomination forms must be signed by the eligible nominee and not less than six (6) Members as defined in the Constitution.
- A candidate must be the Authorised Representative for the Member.
- Nomination forms and full particulars regarding appropriate qualifications of nominees can be obtained from the CANEGROWERS Cairns office or direct from the Returning Officer, on application to jodie_mittelheuser@canegrowers.com.au or by telephone 1800 177 159.

Jodie Mittelheuser

Returning Officer

jodie_mittelheuser@canegrowers.com.au

GPO Box 1032 Brisbane Qld 4001



Important Notice for Tableland CANEGROWERS Members By-Election 2018

Tableland CANEGROWERS Ltd will be holding a by-election early 2018 to fill a board vacancy following the resignation of Director and Chairman Thomas Maisel.

Nominations open 12 January 2018. You can pick up a nomination form from the local office or contact the Returning Officer.

Nominations close at 5pm on 31 January 2018. If a ballot is required, ballot papers will be posted on 2 February 2018.

Important Information

- Nomination forms must be signed by the eligible nominee and not less than six (6) Members as defined in the Constitution.
- A candidate must be the Authorised Representative for the Member.
- Nomination forms and full particulars regarding appropriate qualifications of nominees can be obtained from the Tableland CANEGROWERS office or direct from the Returning Officer, on application to jodie_mittelheuser@canegrowers.com.au or by telephone 1800 177 159.

Jodie Mittelheuser

Returning Officer

jodie_mittelheuser@canegrowers.com.au

GPO Box 1032 Brisbane Qld 4001



Festive food and drinks

By the Australian Sugar Industry Alliance Nutrition Team.



The National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC) safe drinking guidelines recommend:

- No more than 2 drinks daily is safest.
- No more than 4 drinks on any one occasion. (A standard drink is 100ml wine, 285ml beer, 30ml spirits; check the label)
- No alcohol for children, pregnant & breastfeeding women

Find out more at
www.alcohol.gov.au

Do you find your waistband a little tight every January? It is possible to enjoy festive foods and drinks without having to move up a size – we tell you how.

STAY IN CONTROL

One of the fun parts of the festive season is enjoying special food and drink - the hard part is not overdoing it. If your indulgent fare is limited to Christmas Day you can throw caution to the wind, but aim to eat slowly and feel pleasantly full, not overstuffed. If your party food-fest lasts a month, you may need to limit the fall-out with lighter choices, smaller portions and extra exercise.

Tips on portion control

- At buffets, fill your plate once only
- Aim for half of your plate to be vegetables or salad
- Serve yourself smaller amounts, or be prepared to leave some uneaten
- In restaurants, have a main course only, or two entree-sized courses
- Share desserts

CHECKS AND BALANCES

Festive treats are some of the good things in life. If you overdo it on one day, just eat less the next day, and try to fit in an extra walk. This give-and-take will help you maintain your weight.

Whatever you do, don't give up totally because you broke a dietary rule; all-or-nothing thinking is not helpful.

THINK ABOUT DRINKS

Alcoholic drinks are high in kilojoules. Add to this the fact that alcohol tends to make you feel carefree ("sure, I'll have another party pie") and this is a risky combination for overeating and weight gain.

Tips for limiting alcohol

- Choose light beer
- Limit spirits to half-nips
- Use small wine glasses, or try a wine and mineral water spritzer
- Count your drinks and stop at 3–4, tops
- Alternate alcoholic drinks with water or mineral water
- Avoid creamy cocktails (an alcohol and kilojoule bombshell)

MOVE IT

Sitting at the table for hours after a big meal is not ideal; you've filled your tank and now you need to burn the fuel. Carving up the dance floor is great exercise, as is playing with the kids or going for a mind-clearing walk – you'll feel better for it. After the decorations are packed away, get out and about and enjoy active recreation like walking, swimming or ball games.

GO LIGHT AND FRESH

Light and fresh foods like seafood, salads and fruit desserts work really well for a summer Christmas. If you do enjoy rich traditional foods (such as plum pudding and brandy butter), enjoy small portions.

Lighter, healthier festive fare

- Vegetable sticks with hummus, tzatziki, salsa or guacamole
- Sushi platter or wholemeal bruschetta with vegetable toppings
- Mixed nuts (serve in shell to slow down)
- Cold seafood (e.g. prawns, oysters, octopus/squid)
- Lean meat or chicken and vegetable kebabs
- BBQ/grilled seafood and vegetables like corn, zucchini, mushrooms
- Cold turkey or chicken with colourful salads
- Salads with wholegrains (e.g. quinoa, brown rice, cracked wheat) and legumes (e.g. chick peas, lentils, kidney beans)
- Fruit salad, or fruit kebabs with yoghurt dip
- Pavlova with Greek yoghurt and fruit
- Trifle made with cake, jelly, yoghurt, fruit and nuts. ■

FIRST 5 LINES FREE* FOR CANEGROWERS MEMBERS!

Book online anytime of the day or night at www.canegrowers.com.au or email us at ads@CANEGROWERS.com.au

Next deadline is **8 January 2018**.

* 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.

Beaulieu R.U.M.

Attention Canegrowers

The first step in achieving a high yielding cane crop is a good strike and vigorous growth in the early stage of your crop.

This can be achieved easily by simply adding 5 litres of R.U.M per acre to your dip water.

**For a cost of around \$25 per acre
Can you afford not to give it a go?**

For further information contact –

Burdekin & Northern Region call Wally Ford 0417 937 722

Mackay Region call Noel Jensen 0438 595 325

Childers Region call Peter Irwin 0428 427 212

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Happy New Year to all
my loyal customers*

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350 HP Iveco engine. STD Topper, 15"x 8 blade chopper. D5 type tracks as new. Well maintained machine.

2 x CARTA 14 tonne elevating cane trailers

One fitted with JD 7710 4 WD tractor 40 K gearbox tractor, one trailer no tractor. Immediate delivery in Mackay.

CUMMINS QSL 8.9L Eng.

325 HP @ 1900 RPM. 750 Hrs.

NEW ! BILLET PLANTER 2500

Rubber belt cane feed, Immediate Delivery. In Mackay NOW.

New 18" curved GROUSER PLATES

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Used 10,000 series

CHAR-LYNN MOTORS 40 cubic inch.

Used 2 x 6,000 series

CHAR-LYNN MOTORS 60 cubic inch.

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OMNITRAC Full Track walking gear

complete with 24" rubber belts. Hi-Track drive. 5 roller suit Case or JD.

USED BIG ERNIE or walk down front roller suit Case or JD as used in NSW.

Used D4 Track Rollers double flange three quarter bolts.

NEW ! 4 SLAT OPEN BUTT ROLLERS

Suit JD 3510/20 and CASE. Helps Drop Dirt. Enquire NOW!

HARVESTER PARTS CAMECO 1996.

Crop lifters, 8 blade diff chopper drums, various hydraulic valves and hydraulic motors.

IN STOCK NOW — 12, 10, 8 & 6 blade

DIFFERENTIAL CHOPPER DRUMS, suit '05 Cameco to JD 570.

Tungsten hard faced on wear areas.

New seal plates, clamping bars & dowels with kit.

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Classifieds

Mossman-Tully

BSM Hi-Strider High rise spray unit. G.C.\$60,000 neg. Ph. 0417 987 228

Ford 8210 4WD air cab, low hours excellent condition. Fiat F140 4WD, excellent condition. Ph. 0417 717 013

97 T7700 Harvester. Half electric half cable, excellent condition for age. 8500 engine hours. Ph. 0417 717 013

For Sale 7 Tyne Lely Ripper & Roller Drawbar. Ph. 0427 327 977

CanAm 500 dps 2014 700 ks 72 hours as new, always been shedded \$8,500 o.n.o must sell so make an offer, call Mandy on 0408 880 724 (situated Mossman)

98 Cameco CHW 2500, VGC, Westhill Half Tracks, POA. Mulgrave Area: 0407183680

8240 New Holland Ford with or without GPS. New rear tyres with Air-Cab, GC. Ph. 0418154557

Herbert River-Burdekin

Rotary Ground Cutter KT 2400B. Great for irrigation/comms/water/drainage installations. Spoil is stacked to the side for back fill. Cut Depth 330mm - Variable Width to 120mm. Purchased new paid \$14,500 ex + Shipping replacement cost. Near new \$9500 ono Ph. 0418 720 553 or 0417 778 547 www.littlebeaver.com/products/kwik-trench-mini-trencher/

Portamole Directional Boring Unit. Boring Head 2 1/2 inch Soft rock, Dirt, Clay. Carbide tip 3x5ft Lengths boring rod, 3x10ft Lengths boring rod. Great for boring tasks up to 10 M up to 330mm diameter. Purchased new paid \$14,000 ex + Shipping replacement cost. Near new \$ 9500 ono. Ph. 0418 720 553 or 0417 778 547 www.portamole.com/videos.html | portamole.com.au/machines.html

Mackay-Proserpine

International b 414 rops, canopy, new paint, runs very well, hyd, arms, pto, hand brake and brakes work, good winch or beach tractor, needs new water pump \$2,500 ono 0409 342 123

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AND PHOTOS?

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** CLEARANCE **

BELLOTA Sugar cane wear parts to suit John Deere & Case harvesters

- Base cutter blades @ 3.90+ ea
- Chopper blades @ 24+ ea
- Primary extractor blades @ 39+ ea
- Secondary extractor blades @ 21+ ea

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WILL NOT BE REPLACED

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JOHNNY FARMING COMPANY

New Hydraulic Heavy Duty

OFFSETS

3 metre width, 28 discs,
All bath bearings

\$11,000 plus GST (\$12,100 incl GST)

Other size offsets available are 1.8m, 2.2m,
2.5m, 3m & 3.4metres.

3 point linkage offsets available also



New Heavy Duty SLASHERS

2.1 metres width \$3,300 incl GST

Other sizes available are 1.2m, 1.5m & 1.8m

Johnny Farming Company

Phone (07) 4952 2577 or 0412 535 887 (John)
or 0407 638 674 (Andrew)

133 Schmidtke Road Mackay Qld 4740



Rainfall Report

brought to you by AustSafe Super

Location	Recorded rainfall (mm)		Average rainfall (mm)	
	7 days to 9am		January–December	
	04.12.17	11.12.17		
Mossman	15	0	2073	2249
Mareeba AP	2	11	731	911
Cairns	3	19	1681	2001
Mt Sophia	1	21	3252	3346
Babinda	0	0	3191	4236
Innisfail	4	0.6	2957	3559
Tully	0.9	0	2420	4082
Cardwell	10	0	1864	2116
Lucinda	0	0	1788	2101
Ingham	16	Tce	1568	2032
Abergowrie	2	0	1233	1790
Townsville	2	0	745	1117
Ayr DPI	0	0	863	932
Proserpine	58	7	1555	1379
Mirani	24	13	1337	1493
Mackay	6	23	1990	1562
Sarina (Plane Ck)	8	0	2653	1725
Bundaberg	0	57	1150	1007
Childers South	0.2	21	1071	875
Maryborough	0	30	990	1153
Tewantin	4	74	1545	1697
Eumundi	0	79	1411	1668
Nambour	5	90	1279	1694
Woongoolba	0	49	1007	1342
Murwillumbah	4	28	1575	1573
Ballina	98	20	1958	1770
Woodburn	71	21	1737	1358



**AustSafe
Super**



The industry super
fund for rural and
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.

55kW teco hollow shaft elec motor fitted to 55 foot 9 stage bore pump 35000 gallons/hr. Pump needs reconditioning. \$2,000 ono 0409342123

2010 Ritchie Hi-Rise Spray Rig fitted with Kubota M7040 tractor. Boom is fitted with 7 row octopus legs, 13.2mtr boom spray, 1200ltr & 600ltr water tanks, 2 diaphragm pumps & Spray-mate controller. VGC \$95,000. Ph. 0407 407 672 or 0407 302 651
New Holland 7030 2008 model long-wheel-based tractor with 10t carta bin \$100000 plus GST. Ph. 0407 140 699

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. 0438 606 578 (Mackay)

Sprayrite Tempo 1200 Spray Tank, Brand New, 1200L Capacity UV resistant tank, 170LPM PTO driven Pump feeding a 5 section electric controlled spray controller, Heavy Duty 3point Linkage carry frame, \$15,200 Inc. 12m or 15m boom and Hyd. Mast can be added. Ph. 0428 236 165

DitchWitch R100 trenching machine with back hoe attachment. F10 Volvo 10-tonne tipper with tagalong trailer used to transport trencher. Ph. 4959 2260

Parts available for Howard AR & AH Rotary Hoes from \$50 to \$500. McLeod slasher 6 foot heavy duty in good condition \$4,000. Ph. 4959 5883 or 0407 643 441

Earthmoving tyres brand new 14.00R25, \$550 each. Ph. 0488 300 361

AR 80" Howard Rotary Hoe fully reconditioned, new galvanised doors and gear box panel, good blades \$6,600. Other fully reconditioned AR & AH Rotary hoes also available in different sizes. Ph. 4959 5883 or 0407 643 441

Bundaberg-Rocky Point

Bonel plant cane cutter w/topper in good condition. Best offer. Ph. 0402 085 833

High rise hooded spray unit, 2 independent tanks. Ph. 0428 578 234

John Deere 6125R Premium 1255hrs 2013 model owner operator well maintained machine VGC Retired - no further use \$70,000 incl GST negotiable. 0439 930 455
MF35X Tractor. Good Condition. \$6,000 + GST. Ph. 0427 597 363.

Wanted

GROUND WATER WANTED to purchase and permanently trade in the Mulgrave Russell Groundwater Zone 1A, 1B, 1C or 1D. Up to 60 megalitres. Please phone Darryl 0417 776 870

STL shares wanted. Genuine grower. Pay market price. Let's keep STL shares in the hands of non-miller growers. Ph 0419717006 or 0408448227

Looking for offset disk harrow on wheels. Herbert River Area. ph. 0417617954

Tractor tyres - BUY & SELL. All sizes. Ph. 0418 775 698

Positions Vacant

Harvester Driver Wanted for 2018 season. 70,000tonnesplus. Isis Mill Area. Expressions of Interest to corfieldharvesting@gmail.com or call 0467598644

Property

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

Cane farm Tarakan Road ABERGOWRIE 270 acres freehold. Genuine enquiries pls phone 4777 4633 or 0408 608 664

CANE FARM FOR SALE \$750,000. 507 Eton-Homebush Rd, OAKENDEN (Mackay Region, Central Qld). 6brm home and sheds. 65.58ha (162 acres), 2 freehold titles, WIWO. Irrigated, close cart, flat, no rocks, good soil, 25 mins to town. Ph. Pauline 0428 575 787 or Kent 0427 877 874

WANTED Cane farm up to 30mins from Mackay 5000t +. Genuine buyer 0407 629 940

iFIT ENGINEERING

29 Richardson St TULLY

CHOPPER DRUMS

- Clean efficient cutting with minimal losses
- Use 95mm blades
- Heavy duty
- Not prone to crossing over
- Proven conventional clamping (Bisalloy clamp bars optional)
- Good blade life
- Thrower mounting bars standard on 4, 6 and 8 blade drums (Optional on ten blade)
- Available in 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 blade, 15" and 12" to suit Case and John Deere harvesters
- Very competitively priced

EXTERNAL CHOPPER ADJUSTERS

Maximize your chopper performance and blade life with our chopper adjusters.

- Very easy to use
- Proven over the last three seasons in a wide variety of conditions
- Available to suit Case and John Deere harvesters

CHOPPER IDLE BEARING FOR JOHN DEERE HARVESTERS

Our bearing modification kit uses an economical spherical roller bearing in a housing that allows end float when the machine flexes.

CHOPPER DRUM RECONDITIONING AND MODIFICATIONS

We modify existing drums to provide similar cutting geometry to our new drums for improved cutting, and add gusseting for extra strength.

For further information on these and other products and services, contact **Ian or Brenton Fagg.**

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THE HEART OF FARMING BEATS RED

