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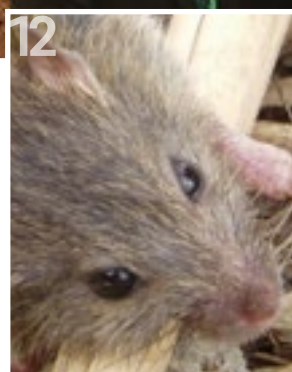
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# CONTENTS

27 March 2017



## Features

- 4 WABCG forum an eye-opener for Australian delegates
- 5 Farmers lead with plan to fix electricity mess
- 10 Tully growers controlling canegrubs without the chemicals
- 12 Death from above –permit approved for aerial baiting of rats
- 16 SRA's canegrub trials assess new generation insecticides
- 18 Feral pig management in Queensland's cane industry
- 22 Weeds – is your strategy up to the challenge?

*COVER IMAGE: Tully pineapple and cane growers Peter and Michael Ottone have been successfully using a home-brewed microbe tea to combat canegrubs and other pests.*

### Also inside:

- 2 CEO's comment
- 4 News in brief
- 6 Policy update
- 8 QSL report
- 13 Smartcane BMP
- 23 Classifieds
- 24 Rainfall report

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# There's a spark, but will the electricity debate fire up?

By Dan Galligan, CEO CANEGROWERS

It has taken almost five years, but it seems the rest of the country is finally starting to understand the impact of the unfolding crisis in energy policy. For years, CANEGROWERS, along with almost all other irrigated farming groups, has been raising concerns, making the arguments and pleading the case for greater clarity in long-term energy policy. And it's no wonder, with electricity prices rising by over 120% since 2010.

Following the announcement late last year of plans to close the Hazelwood power plant in Victoria, the Commonwealth and affected states - largely Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales - have been scrambling to make contingency plans to cover the shortfall that this piece of infrastructure will leave behind when it stops delivering its 5% of total power production to the national grid.

The decision to close the plant was made by Hazelwood's foreign-based owners. While the federal and state governments can legitimately claim that they were not party to nor can they influence the decision, they cannot shirk their responsibility for apparently having no contingency plan to stabilise the national power grid in such an event.

This recent development has simply been the catalyst that has exposed the dire state of national energy and electricity policy.

State and federal governments have been left completely exposed and the resulting national furore must yield more than noise and chest beating - it must yield results and these results must see a reduction in power prices.

As policymakers search for ways to achieve this, the excellent work done by the CANEGROWERS Economic and Trade Committee in developing our electricity policy positions is primed for promotion and advocacy.

CANEGROWERS has developed a very succinct five-point action plan to fix this mess for irrigators, which is outlined on page 5 of this magazine.

## GLOBAL ISSUE

The need to better manage the costs of electricity within an overall national energy policy is not an issue isolated to Australian farmers.

I recently attended the World Association of Beet and Cane Growers (WABCG) forum in the Ivory Coast, where the issue of electricity prices

was raised by every country that has irrigated production as part of its supply chain.

Brazilian, European, Mexican and English representatives all reported challenges in managing the costs of energy in their production systems.

The WABCG, with its 33 member nations, represents growers responsible for over 60% of global sugar production.

So, while it's comforting to know that we share in the pressures felt by other sugar-producing nations, the issue of rising power prices is possibly more concerning for Australian farmers. Our members, unlike many of our colleague industries around the world, operate in a completely unsubsidised environment and are fully exposed to the world sugar price.

Australian farmers have all the exposure but none of the protection afforded to some of our competitors.

It is time for governments to step up to the plate with policy settings that fix this mess.

While we have positioned ourselves well to identify solutions and make the case for change, the most important task remains - collaborating to see implementation and immediate results.

The future profitability of our production systems rests upon it. ■



"It is time for governments to step up to the plate with policy settings that fix this mess."

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# NEWS IN BRIEF

## WABCG forum an eye-opener for Australian delegates

CANEGROWERS Vice-Chairman **Kevin Borg** and CEO **Dan Galligan** represented Australia at the World Association of Beet and Cane Growers (WABCG) bi-annual member engagement forum in the west African nation of Cote d'Ivoire this month.

Mr Borg provided representatives from the WABCG's 30 member nations with the Australian industry seasonal update, while Mr Galligan gave a presentation on the status of Australia's Smartcane BMP program.

The three-day forum also included a tour of local cane farming and milling operations, which proved an eye-opening experience for delegates from some of the larger cane-growing nations.

"While this was an opportunity to learn more about how industries from other countries operate, it was sobering to witness firsthand some of the living conditions of these people and a realisation that in Australia we have a lot to be grateful for," Mr Borg said.



The forum gave delegates an opportunity to network with representatives from other countries and discuss issues facing the sugar industry globally.

"There are similarities between the issues we face in Australia as an industry and those in other countries, including environment, markets, and financial and production sustainability," Mr Borg said.

"It also very quickly became obvious that our Australian industry can proudly boast being innovative with ever-increasing efficiencies in our operations from the paddock to our bulk handling ports."

*Pictured: WABCG Australian delegates, Kevin Borg and Dan Galligan.*

## NO FARM FORECLOSURES WITHOUT MEDIATION

Banks will no longer be able to foreclose on Queensland farming properties without offering mediation from July 1.

The Queensland Government's *Farm Business Debt Mediation Bill 2016*, which passed in Parliament this month, requires financial institutions to offer debt mediation to farmers who are in arrears.

The Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (the new name of QRAA from July 1) will oversee the process and accredit mediators.

Farmers have an option to decline the offered mediation.

## FARMERS CONCERNED OVER GROWING ICE USE

Crystal methamphetamine or 'ice' in the workplace is becoming an increasing concern, with the number of Queensland farmers reporting drug use among workers on the rise.

The National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction has published an article outlining strategies to identify and address ice use among farm workers. For more info visit <http://bit.ly/2nhqCAD>

## Growers form fire-fighting group as firebug strikes in Rocky Point

Rocky Point growers have been forced to form volunteer fire-fighting groups following a spate of deliberately lit cane fires in the district.

Local CANEGROWERS Deputy Chairman **Tony Huth** said more than \$300,000 worth of cane had been lost in five fires across the district since mid-February.

"One of the fires has been as the result of a stolen car being torched, but the rest have just been someone walking into the cane and flicking a match," Tony said.

"We have 62% standover cane here because of the mill shutdown last season

and with the dry weather we've been having, a fire can rip through the cane very quickly.

"That's why some of the younger growers have formed these fire-fighting groups.

"They patrol the area at night looking for fires or any suspicious activity and if they do see a fire they have water tankers and tractors on standby to fight it.

"They're doing a great job and generally they have it under control before the fire brigade arrives."

Arson is nothing new to Rocky Point growers with a number of similar attacks occurring over the years, Tony said.



"When we knew we'd have a lot of standover this year, we actually cut rows out to act as fire breaks. That has been a huge help in preventing these fires ripping through half the district."

# Farmers lead with plan to fix electricity mess

CANEGROWERS has put forward a five-point plan to fix the mess that is electricity pricing in Australia.

"The current system contains incentives for wasteful over-investment in network capacity and under-investment in base load generation capacity," CANEGROWERS CEO Dan Galligan said.

"It's a situation that has driven Australian electricity prices up to be among the most expensive in the OECD.

"Unnecessarily high electricity prices are a hidden tax on business which each year nets the Queensland Government around \$1.5 billion in dividends, income tax equivalent payments and interest charges.

"While governments appear to be struggling for a solution, the way forward is actually simple if governments, energy regulators and energy companies are genuinely committed to an electricity generating and distribution system that efficiently, sustainably and affordably delivers electricity to enable a growing economy."

The foundation of CANEGROWERS five-point plan, as outlined in its submission to the Independent Review into the Future Security of the National Electricity Market being chaired by Chief Scientist Dr Alan Finkel, is a fair and competitive pricing system based on good market discipline.

"Prices and tariffs should provide performance incentives, encourage reductions in cost across the supply chain and enable electricity users to remain internationally competitive, electricity businesses must bear the consequences of their investment decisions," Mr Galligan said.

The first step in the CANEGROWERS plan is for the Council of Australian Governments' Energy Council to commission an independent assessment of the economy-wide costs and benefits of the current unsustainably high electricity prices.

"Our members, the sugarcane growers of Queensland, have faced electricity price rises of 120% in the past seven years and we are just one industry of many feeling this pain," Mr Galligan said.

**"Unnecessarily high electricity prices are a hidden tax on business which each year nets the Queensland Government around \$1.5 billion in dividends, income tax equivalent payments and interest charges."**

"On the other side of the ledger, the Queensland Government, taking advantage of unrealistically high asset valuations, has saddled Energy Queensland with debt shifted from its own balance sheet."

The second step is to optimise the regulated asset base (RAB) by writing down the value of non-performing and under-used assets as required of all other businesses by international accounting standards. This would require the networks to face the consequences of their own investment decisions.

"These fundamental market disciplines were lifted from electricity networks in 2006 and since then, prices have spiralled out of control," Mr Galligan said.

"Regulations that have shielded the networks from the consequences of their poor decisions have stifled innovation, promoted inefficiency and driven costs higher. The system is broken.

"Governments should not be surprised that monopoly businesses will take advantage of poorly designed regulations and weak regulators to behave like the monopolies they are, pushing up prices to gouge extraordinary profits," he said.

"It will take decisive action, like the plan we are proposing, to halt this situation and sort out this mess for the benefit of all Australians." ■

## CANEGROWERS' five-point plan to fix the electricity pricing mess

1. **COAG:** Reinstate pre-2006 rules that require the optimisation of the electricity Regulated Asset Base and require network owners to face the risks of their decisions.
2. **COAG:** Redesign network tariffs to ensure that irrigators and other businesses in non-congested parts of the network are not required to meet congestion costs in other parts of the network.
3. **COAG:** Review the governance structures in Australia's electricity regulatory oversight framework to ensure it is working efficiently and effectively for the long-term benefit of the Australian economy.
4. **Queensland Government:** Reinstate local distribution grids to identify opportunities to increase efficiency, reduce costs and lower prices by ensuring the level of service provided matches local needs and circumstances
5. **Ergon:** Resubmit a tariff proposal that contains fair pricing which does not put an unnecessary cost burden on Queensland energy users.



# Policy Update

Environment with Matt Kealley

Industry with Burn Ashburner

Economics with Warren Males

## Reef in brief – Queensland Government Reef Regs

The State Government has released a discussion paper proposing changes to its Reef Regulations to 'broaden and enhance' them to 'limit water polluting practices from land-based activities in the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) catchments'.

The paper proposes a range of methods to ensure water quality targets are met and indicates that regulations will extend to 35 catchment areas, including Bundaberg, Isis and Maryborough.

The areas of focus include:

1. Set or improve minimum practice standards targeting nutrient and sediment pollution for all key industries in all reef catchments. This will include optimising fertiliser application, maintaining ground cover, and maximising irrigation efficiency. Record keeping for proof of compliance will be required and growers accredited in Smartcane BMP will be deemed as demonstrating compliance.
2. Set pollution load limits for each of the 35 catchments to target responses for managing risks to water quality.
3. Provide a framework for water quality offsets to be used to counter residual nutrient or sediment pollution from new agricultural, urban, and other intensive land uses.

CANEGROWERS will work through the detail of the discussion paper and develop a response to meet the 7 April 2017 timeline.

A copy of the discussion paper can be found at: [www.qld.gov.au/greatbarrierreef](http://www.qld.gov.au/greatbarrierreef) ■



## Harmonising agricultural vehicle access to roads

Moving class 1 agricultural vehicles is an issue for all of Australian agriculture. CANEGROWERS recently attended a meeting between the National Heavy Road Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) and other farming groups, including the NFF, NSW Farmers Federation, Victoria Farmers Federation, AgForce and Cotton Australia.

The meeting was about the harmonisation of regulations, a project being undertaken by NHVR. This initial meeting showed a comparison of the access regulations across the states and territories.

The first important issue is that agricultural vehicles are classed separately and not lumped in with general freight.

This recognises that agricultural vehicles are getting larger for economic reasons and movements are often short and frequent. Roads are not getting wider while the population and traffic is increasing (in the sugarcane areas at least).

It was interesting to note that Queensland was singled out as having the greatest level of access i.e. bigger vehicles can go on more roads.

The sugar industry, in the highly populated zone with the Bruce Highway dissecting it, was recognised as having greater access than similar areas in other states.

This makes it all the more important to maintain the access we have in the harmonised regulations and an undertaking was given that access would not become more difficult.

CANEGROWERS will stay part of this process as the devil is often in the detail. ■



## Trade with Korea celebrated

CANEGROWERS and QSL met with representatives from the three South Korean sugar refineries (Samyang, Cheiljedang and TS Corporation) to celebrate their 45 year relationship with QSL. During that time the refiners have purchased more than 25 million tonnes of Australian raw sugar and the relationship will extend into the 2017 season. The world market reputation of Australian sugar, established over a long period, is second to none. Like the Koreans, refiners across Asia express a strong preference for Australian sugar.

## Testing high pol sugar

As a follow up to his recent visit to Mackay, Japan's Vice-Consul inspected Gateway Laboratory's world class sugar testing facility in Brisbane. He left with a clear understanding of the importance of rigorous procedures being followed to produce accurate measures of pol and moisture.

## Marketing

While we wait for the finalisation of the terms of the On-Supply Agreement (OSA) between Wilmar and QSL, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that Australia is again leading innovation in the world sugar industry. Nowhere else can sugarcane or beet growers choose the marketer of their GEI sugar or manage the way in which that sugar is priced.

The introduction of competition in the provision of marketing services is in its infancy. New relationships are being forged as mills and QSL work to encourage growers choose their services. The competition in this important link in the value chain will drive new product offerings, innovation and improved efficiency. It is a positive force which will ensure Australia remains a leader in the world sugar industry. ■





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"Even though we're not the biggest fund, I can tell you we've got the biggest heart,"

reflected Craig Stevens, AustSafe Super's Chief Executive Officer.

"It's embedded in our culture and it's thanks to our terrific people and the fantastic relationships we have with our members, hard-working rural and regional Australians.

"Even though we're not the biggest fund, I can tell you we've got the biggest heart."

"Over the past year our members have seen a number of new developments that have added value to their membership.

"These developments are in part thanks to some of the great working relationships we have with key partners

such as the Link Group, JANA and Chandler."

This award tops off a pretty impressive period for AustSafe Super, which has also seen us awarded a coveted Financial Review Smart Investor Blue Ribbon award for Best Growth Super Fund.

AustSafe Super is a competitive award winning fund.

We may not be the largest fund, but we punch well above our weight to ensure we achieve the best retirement outcomes for our members.

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## Visit marks Korean sugar milestone



QSL reached an important milestone for one of its key markets recently, celebrating 25 million tonnes of raw sugar sales to South Korea.

Representatives of Korea's three refineries – CJ Corporation General Manager Alex Lee, Samyang Corporation General Manager CK Park, and TS Corporation Deputy General Manager SJ Cho – visited Queensland to officially extend their long-term contract with QSL for the 2017 Season.

While in Queensland, QSL's Korean customers also toured the Townsville Bulk Sugar Terminal and met with growers and other industry stakeholders from the Burdekin.

Speaking at the official signing ceremony in Brisbane, QSL CEO Greg Beashel thanked the three companies for their unwavering support of QSL across nearly five decades and into the new Marketing Choice era.

"This latest contract marks a milestone in our business relationship which began back in the early 1970s, starting with initial sales of around 300,000 tonnes," he said.

"We've now been doing business together for 45 years, during which time we've doubled and then tripled those initial sales volumes, eventually setting a new seasonal record last year with sales of almost 1.3 million tonnes."

Mr Beashel said QSL's strong and lengthy relationship with the Korean refiners was underpinned by a high-quality Queensland product and QSL's excellent service.

"To have such an enduring commercial relationship is not only an asset for our business, but is of enormous benefit to the industry we represent, and so we look forward to securing further Korean sales for our grower and miller members for many years to come."

Speaking on behalf of the Korean contingent, Mr Park thanked QSL

and Queensland cane growers for their strong support.

"We don't think the sugar we receive from Australia is just a commercial commodity, but believe it is the blood, sweat and tears of all Australian cane growers," he said.

Mr Park said that despite approaches from other sugar providers, they were keen to maintain their relationship with QSL and the quality sugar that had helped power their business for many decades.

"So please be assured that we Korean Refiners will stand still, as we did for more than 40 years, and stand with you, QSL and the Australian cane growers." ■

*Pictured: QSL Managing Director and CEO Greg Beashel presents Samyang Corporation General Manager CK Park with a memento marking 25 million tonnes of QSL sales to the South Korean market.*





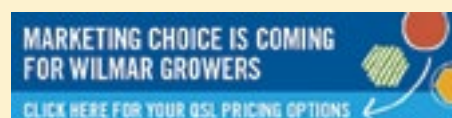
## Preparations continue for Wilmar growers

While we await the detailed draft of the On-Supply Agreement (OSA) from Wilmar, QSL has been progressing final preparations for the implementation of our new marketing arrangements for Wilmar growers.

Full details regarding how these growers can access QSL's marketing and pricing services will be released shortly, but in the interim, all Wilmar growers considering using QSL for marketing and pricing services during the 2017 Season are urged to complete and return their QSL Direct Pre-Registration Forms.

Wilmar growers should have received a copy of this form in the mail or via email in recent weeks. The pre-registration form is also available in the Wilmar growers section of our website.

To find the Wilmar growers page, just click the following image on our homepage ([www.qsl.com.au](http://www.qsl.com.au))



Completed forms can be emailed to [info@qsl.com.au](mailto:info@qsl.com.au) or returned to your local QSL office. ■

## Regional QSL offices

**QSL offices are now open in each Wilmar milling district, staffed by QSL's Grower Services Team.**

Opening hours for each office vary, so appointments are recommended and can be made by contacting your local QSL Grower Relationship Officer.

The details of each office and key staff are below:

### **AYR OFFICE**

YOUNG STREET, AYR, QLD, 4807.

Postal Address: PO Box 950, Ayr, Qld, 4807.

Contact: Grower Relationship Officer **Rebecca Love** on **3004 4455** or email [rebecca.love@qsl.com.au](mailto:rebecca.love@qsl.com.au)

### **PROSERPINE OFFICE**

88 MAIN STREET, PROSERPINE, QLD, 4800.

Postal Address: PO Box 303, Mackay, Qld, 4740.

Contact: Grower Relationship Officer **Kathy Zanco** on **0437 645 342** or email [kathy.zanco@qsl.com.au](mailto:kathy.zanco@qsl.com.au)

### **INGHAM OFFICE**

11 LANNERCOST STREET, INGHAM, QLD, 4850.

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Contact: Grower Relationship Officer **Jonathan Pavetto** on **0428 664 057** or email [jonathan.pavetto@qsl.com.au](mailto:jonathan.pavetto@qsl.com.au)

### **SARINA OFFICE**

36 BROAD STREET, SARINA, QLD, 4737.

Postal Address: PO Box 303, Mackay, Qld, 4740.

Contact: Grower Relationship Officer **Kathy Zanco** on **0437 645 342** or email [kathy.zanco@qsl.com.au](mailto:kathy.zanco@qsl.com.au)

#### **NOTE:**

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# CANEGRUB CONTROL WITHOUT THE CHEMICALS

By Wayne Griffin

At a time when Queensland's agricultural industries are under increasing pressure to reduce chemical run-off into waterways, a small but growing number of cane farmers are turning away from chemical controls and letting environment-friendly microbes do the heavy lifting when it comes to managing canegrubs.

It was an episode of the ABC's *Landline* program that first piqued Michael Ottone's interest in harnessing the natural power of microbes to combat pests and diseases on the 190 hectare cane and pineapple farm that he operates with his brother Peter at Bilyana, 20 minutes south of Tully.

"It was 2005, I was watching *Landline* and it was about some tea tree growers who had started using compost tea to boost production," Michael explained when *Australian Canegrower* visited the Ottone Family farm recently.

"The price of tea tree oil had dropped, so as an extra source of revenue they'd started selling the leaves to nurseries for mulch after the oil had been extracted, instead of putting them back into their own orchards.

"But after about three years their crop production was going backwards, the leaves weren't growing very well.

"That's when one of the guys heard about compost tea and tried it out. Within two years they were back up to where they had been.

"I said to my brother, that's what we should be doing."

The brothers' biggest concern at the time was the negative impact fumigating for nematodes in their pineapple crop was having on soil health.

"I wanted to get away from that because it was pretty horrendous for the soil," Michael said.

"When we discovered we could also use microbes to protect the pines against *Phytophthora* root rot, that's when we decided to give it a go."

Michael and Peter bought a microbe tea brewing system, which included two 1,000L shuttles hooked up to a compressor that pumps air through built-in diffusers used to aerate the mixture as it brews.

"To start off a brew we'll fill the shuttles with water and put in 20L of molasses as food for the microbes.

"Then we add an inoculant, which has got metarhizium, three types of trichoderma, plus a lot of other beneficial bacteria and fungi in it. ►



*Pictured: Michael uses two 1000L shuttles, fitted with diffusers and attached to an air compressor to brew his microbe tea.*





*Pictured: Impressed with the success of his microbe tea in combating root-rot and nematodes in pineapples, Tully grower Michael Ottone now uses the home-brewed mixture to successfully manage canegrubs in his 100ha cane crop.*

"We brew that up for 24 hours and then it's ready to start spraying out in the paddock.

"You can't really store the mixture, so it needs to be used within 24 to 48 hours."

Impressed with the results in their pineapple crops, where both the nematodes and Phytophthora were brought under control, Michael and Peter decided to try out the brew on their cane.

Six years on and the microbe mixture is now their sole canegrub management tool, and the farm hasn't had an infestation yet.

### HOW IT WORKS?

"The trichoderma is a beneficial fungi," Michael explains. "In pineapples, for example, it gets into the roots and stops Phytophthora root rot getting into the root system and taking over the plant.

"With the cane, the biggest benefit is from the metarhizium. We spray the mixture over the trash and the metarhizium gets into the soil and controls the canegrub by attacking the pupae in the soil. It also helps break the trash down, which is beneficial."

The benefits of metarhizium in controlling canegrub infestations have been well documented.

In 2000, after six years of trial work by BSES and CSIRO, the metarhizium-based product Biocane was released into the market.

Biocane, which was on the market for almost a decade, used a specific strain of *Metarhizium anisopliae* (strain FI-1045) to attack greyback canegrubs in the soil.

The product was eventually discontinued due to poor sales resulting from problems with storage and incorrect use, as well as the registration of imidacloprid for canegrub control.

### SAVING THE REEF

However, in the current climate of tightening restrictions around chemical run-off into the Great Barrier Reef lagoon, Michael believes his microbe tea might be part of the solution.

"There's a big push on from government to try and improve water quality in the area. If they could get more people using this method I think it would be a big help," he said.

"It would be great if people could also get funding through Reef grants to set up this kind of system. I think it would definitely get more growers interested.

"For about \$5,000 you can get a 2,000L system in place to brew up the microbes."

### SAVING MONEY

And it's not just the Reef that will benefit, according to Michael, with growers also feeling the impact on their hip pocket.

"Once you have the brewer system in place, it is very cheap to produce a batch of the microbe tea," he said.

"By the time you work it all out, even including the molasses you use in the brew and the inoculant, it works out at about \$15 per ha. With a commercial pesticide product you're probably looking at close to \$100 per ha.

"And you have to apply the commercial pesticide every year, whereas with this you're looking at maybe every five years.

"That's a significant benefit for growers and the environment." ■



## DEATH FROM ABOVE – permit approved for aerial baiting of rats

*Rats are one of the cane industries most persistent pests, costing Queensland growers millions in lost revenue each year.*

In dry years their numbers can reach biblical proportions, while the infestation of lodged cane areas have been practically impossible to treat in the past.

But all may be about to change, thanks to the recent approval of a minor use permit for aerial baiting of rats by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicine Authority (APVMA).

The permit approval is the result of months of consultation, CANEGROWERS Environment and Sustainability **Matt Kealley** said.

"CANEGROWERS applied for aerial baiting permit in response to a population boom in two key cane-growing areas that looks set to cost the industry millions of dollars.

"Areas of sugarcane which had lodged in the Mackay and Herbert River districts, coupled with weed-growth promoted by unseasonal winter rain, created the perfect conditions for two species of native rat to thrive during 2016.

"While growers can bait for these rats in sugarcane, the conditions meant they couldn't get into their paddocks to place baits by hand, leaving the rats to cause significant damage."

Rats gnaw the cane stalks off at the base, causing the cane to deteriorate and compromising the sugar content. In 2016 alone, the cost of rat damage in the Mackay and Herbert River districts was estimated at more than \$6 million.

"With around 500,000 tonnes of big standover cane left behind after rain stopped the harvest, the rats are still having a feast and that's going to impact on the 2017 season," Mr Kealley said.

CANEGROWERS worked closely with Animal Control Technologies (manufacturer of the approved bait Rattoff®), chemical registration consultancy DeGroot Technical Services, Herbert Cane Productivity Services Limited (HCPSL) and Mackay Area Productivity Services (MAPS) to progress a Minor Use Permit through the APVMA.

The APVMA has now approved a permit to enable Rattoff® application to lodged sugarcane crops via helicopter or UAV. ►



# RATTOFF®

**Trust the  
proven  
performers**

### **RATTOFF®**, set to protect sugar cane from rat infestation

**RATTOFF®** bait sachets provide a cost-effective and environmentally safe method for rodent management in standover cane, where a major rat risk to cane yield is emerging.

APVMA have issued a permit to Cane Growers in Ingham and Mackay to allow helicopter or drone application at 1kg/ha in standover cane where ground access is impossible.

**RATTOFF®** stocks are available at most major rural retailers in affected regions.



**Animal Control Technologies  
Australia Pty Ltd**

Phone: 03 9308 9688 Fax: 03 9308 9622

Email: [enquiries@animalcontrol.com.au](mailto:enquiries@animalcontrol.com.au)

More info at [www.animalcontrol.com.au](http://www.animalcontrol.com.au)

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Excellence in Pest  
Animal Management



"This permit covers up to 10,000 hectares in the Herbert and Mackay districts for 2017," Mr Kealley said. "It will be very helpful as growers try to control the current infestation."

Mr Kealley said measures would be taken to ensure the baiting program did not impact on non-target wildlife.

"We had to demonstrate to the APVMA that distributing Rattoff® sachets by air would not poison other species," he said. "We showed them what lodged cane looks like and explained that the dull-coloured sachets would fall through the stalks to the ground making them less visible and less accessible to birds but available to the rats."

"Birds of prey have little risk of being poisoned with Rattoff® and its formulation minimises risks to the environment."

## Rats don't only cause problems in the cane field

"Rat damage also causes cane processing issues," Mr Kealley said. "In the Victoria and Macknade mills in the Herbert River districts, rat-damaged high-fibre cane caused the mills to choke, impacting on the efficiency of the mill."

"CANEGROWERS has also been made aware that cane deterioration from rat damage causes elevated levels of dextran in cane juice and this can cause processing issues at pan stage, making the production of high quality sugar more demanding and expensive."

MAPS and HCPSL will assist growers to bait for rats in their respective regions under the conditions of the permit. ■



# Smartcane BMP

With Project Manager, Mick Quirk



## A vehicle for acknowledging, and improving practice

BMP provides a framework for best practice management, not a one-size-fits-all approach.

Each practice has both an Industry Standard and an Above Industry Standard, and a grower needs to have all practices in the core modules at Industry Standard or better to be considered for accreditation.

For example, Industry Standard for fallow management requires, in part, that soil cover is maintained on all fallow land throughout the wet season. This could be achieved with a trash blanket or with occasional legume crops.

The Above Industry Standard for fallow management requires that the cover in all fallow land is provided by legume break crops, with crop residues maintained on the soil surface.

BMP therefore acknowledges the progress a grower has made with fallow management (and other core module practices), while also encouraging the grower at Industry Standard to consider the merits of the Above Industry Standard for his situation.

## What qualifications do I need for spraying herbicides on my farm?

There is sometimes confusion over what qualifications or training a grower needs, to be both compliant with the regulations and to be at Industry Standard for BMP.

If a person intends to prepare or use a prescribed agricultural chemical product under the Chemical Usage (Agricultural and Veterinary) Control Regulation 1999, other than from an aircraft, and to be Smartcane BMP Accredited, they will need to hold either a statement of attainment with the following:

### Units of competency

- (A) AHCPMG301—Control weeds;
- (B) AHCHM303—Prepare and apply chemicals;
- (C) AHCHM304—Transport and store chemicals;

OR

an unrestricted commercial operator's licence issued under the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act 1966;

OR

a qualification the chief executive (DAF) reasonably considers is substantially equivalent to a statement of attainment mentioned above.

There are many training courses that deliver these units of competency or equivalent.

ChemCert and Auschem are two brands of training that delivered a very good initial course, covering all the skills and knowledge for these three units of competency.

The statement of attainment that you received on completion of this course has no expiry date and remains current so long as you keep up to date with new information and technology, continue to apply herbicides and keep records.

The initial branded training had a five-year expiry date on Accreditation Cards. This was designed to remind individuals to attend a refresher course and keep up to date with the many changes that take place in the area of herbicides and application technology.

To date, no industry specific refresher course is being delivered for these units of competency. The course being delivered is often the whole three units of competency with a new Statement of Attainment being issued upon completion.

Holding an accreditation card or attending a repeat training course is not necessary under Smartcane BMP, or the regulations.

For BMP you need to have done the initial training course, have your Statement of Attainment with these three units of competency (or their equivalents), be able to demonstrate that you keep up to date, and keep the required records when applying herbicides. ■



# BASTA delivering the goods in sugarcane

Supplied by Bayer



Recently Bayer registered the well-known herbicide Basta® in sugarcane and conducted trials with one of northern New South Wales' largest sugarcane operations.

Dave Bartlett, manager for City Farm, a 700-hectare farming operation in the Tweed Valley supplying the Condong Sugar Mill, was impressed with the results.

"We have problems here with the weather sometimes," Dave said. "It'll rain for so long that we might not be able to get on the paddocks for two or three weeks at a time, which means our applications of weed control aren't necessarily in the right place at the right time.

"One of our biggest challenges is controlling weeds before they get out of hand. We've got every known grass that every other sugarcane growing area has, but we've also got some particularly nasty broadleaf ones at the moment."

The Basta strip trials involved treating six inter-rows with Basta and Balance and six inter-rows with other products (four different chemicals, plus a wetting agent).

"With the Basta and Balance combination, the two products proved very easy to use, easy to put in the tank, and they took out everything that the other products took out," Dave said.

"Basta was a surprising product for us. It took out weeds we weren't expecting it to take out. Whatever it is contacted with within the cane, it's virtually annihilated all the weeds we had in there, quite large grasses, grasses that were tillering.

"It's effect on the cane was minimal - slight discoloration of some of the lower leaves, no effect to the growth point of any of the cane.

"I think Basta will replace other knockdown products we've been using before. We'll also use it in situations where we've had wet weather, haven't been able to get on the field and the weeds have gotten a little bit away on us.

"There we can raise our Irvin legs up to a height that we wouldn't be game to use with any other product and, as in those trials, it will take out the weeds that we couldn't normally take out without damaging the cane crop.

"It's in a formulation that's not offensive. Safety-wise, it's very good and doesn't have an odour issue. The spray operators are quite happy with it.

"A silver bullet would be a control chemical that could take out every known weed in the crop, and there isn't one of those out there at the moment, but I think Basta is probably heading down that road.

"It's surprisingly good in its ability to take out every weed we've got there. It's definitely going down the right track. It's a very good product." ■

*Pictured: Dave Bartlett (supplied)*





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# THE PROVEN POWER OF BASTA

Protect your crops and your profits with the always reliable, effective and trusted power of Basta® Non-Selective Herbicide\* – now registered for use in sugarcane.

For most effective weed coverage and control, make sure you apply Basta when weeds are young and succulent.

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# SRA kicks off new series of canegrub trials assessing **NEW GENERATION INSECTICIDES**

By Phil Ross, Adoption Officer, Mackay



SRA has recently initiated a new series of trials looking at alternatives to the insecticide *imidacloprid*.

Current insecticides are very effective in managing canegrub, when used correctly. On the downside, the widely used canegrub insecticides like Confidor® Guard, suSCon® maxi intel, Kohinor® 350, Couraze Classic, Zooter Soil Guard and many others all have the same active ingredient; imidacloprid.

Relying on one active ingredient for such a major pest is risky, as the chance of resistance developing is increased. Compounding this risk is concern about the amount of imidacloprid being found in runoff water in regions where cane and other crops are being grown. To address these issues SRA is researching alternative active ingredients.

The SRA pest management team working on this project includes Karel Lindsay (Researcher), Manda Khudhir (Technician), both based at Mackay, and Jill Jennings (Senior Technician) based at Bundaberg. Eleven trials are now established, six in the central region and five in the southern region.

## Canegrubs are unfortunately part of many canefarmers lives

From the central region to far north Queensland the most common and damaging species is the one year lifecycle greyback canegrub.

At times, the two-year lifecycle species, French's canegrub, can also cause significant damage, although usually in more localised areas.

Consobrina canegrub, a species that can have either a one year or two year lifecycle, can also cause damage, usually in the Babinda to Mossman areas.

Canegrub species distribution in the southern region is largely influenced by soil types.

Southern one-year canegrub, and the two year lifecycle species, Bundaberg, Childers and Negatoria are the major canegrubs of concern in the Bundaberg and Isis districts. Southern one-year and Negatoria are the main species in the Maryborough district.

The Bundaberg and Childers trial sites have established populations of Childers canegrub, with both new and second year generations present. One site also has a large co-existing population of Bundaberg canegrub.

These insects are native to Queensland and also feed on a range of native and introduced grasses, apart from sugarcane

However, our artificial landscape of large expanses of sugarcane is a feeding paradise for canegrubs and can result in huge population explosions, if not managed. ►



The SRA trials are testing six new chemicals and comparing results against imidacloprid (Confidor® Guard).

Various application rates are being tested. Environmental persistence of the insecticides is also being evaluated at 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15 month intervals.

The trials are at the early pre-screening stage and apart from Confidor® Guard, the insecticides being tested are currently not registered for use in sugarcane.

There are a number of commercial partners collaborating with the project.

### **Trials are located at:**

#### **Central Queensland sites**

- Brightly (Mackay) - plant cane – John and Phil Deguarra
- Racecourse (Mackay) – ratoon cane – Barry Pace
- Homebush (Mackay) – ratoon cane – Lionel Clancy
- Dawlish (Sarina) – plant and ratoon cane – Manual Muscat
- O'Connell (Proserpine) – ratoon cane – John Casey

#### **Southern Queensland sites (all ratoon cane)**

- Spring Hill (Bundaberg) – Bundaberg Sugar Ltd
- Grange (Bundaberg) – Bundaberg Sugar Ltd
- Bundaberg – Doug Young (2 trials)
- Cordalba (Childers) – Angelo and Anthony La Rocca

Grub counts will be conducted on these sites during April/May and yields will be measured this coming harvest season.

Many thanks go to these growers who have volunteered sites. ■

*Pictured (Top-left): SRA's Mackay-based entomology team Karel Lindsay (right) and Manda Khudhir (left) with their insecticide applicator.*

*Pictured (Top-right): SRA's Bundaberg-based Jill Jennings.*

*Centre: Stool tipping as a result of root damage caused by canegrubs*

*Right: Close-up of destroyed root system caused by canegrubs*





# FERAL PIG MANAGEMENT IN QLD'S CANE INDUSTRY

Feral pigs damage the environment and agricultural crops, particularly sugarcane, through wallowing, rooting for food and selective feeding.

Information supplied by the Department of Agriculture & Fisheries and Queensland Parks & Wildlife Service.

## ABOUT FERAL PIGS

Intelligent, opportunistic omnivores with a rapid breeding cycle, feral pigs are notoriously difficult to control.

While the number of feral pigs is not accurately known, it's estimated that as many as six million could be wreaking havoc on Queensland's environment and economy, with the majority located in the national parks, wetlands and farming regions of northern Queensland.



## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TRAPPING PIGS

Key elements of a successful trapping program are:

- ✓ appropriate trap design
- ✓ suitable placement
- ✓ free feeding or pre-feeding
- ✓ maintenance of the door and mechanism, and
- ✓ regular inspection of the trap when set

## TRAPPING FERAL PIGS

Trapping feral pigs is the responsibility of the landholder. Trapping is becoming more popular as trap designs improve and feral pig feeding is better understood.

### Placing traps

There are a number of things to consider when placing traps on your property:

- ✓ The trap should be in an area where it can be easily removed and relocated in case pigs do not continue to feed at the chosen site. For example, choose an area that is not too boggy for vehicles.
- ✓ Enough traps should be placed throughout an area so that there is a high chance pigs will encounter one when they roam the property. Research suggests that traps placed about 1km apart is sufficient.
- ✓ Traps should be located somewhere that can be easily accessed for daily morning checks, for example areas that are en route to other daily farming activities.
- ✓ Traps should be located in an area that allows access for release of non-target species and disposal of captured pig carcasses.
- ✓ Traps should be placed where there is evidence of high pig activity. Soil disturbance caused by feral pigs searching for food is the most visual evidence of activity. You can also look for footprints or scats.
- ✓ If possible the area should be shaded. Shade cloth or hessian can be placed over the trap if no shade is available. Make sure the cover is tied down as a flapping cover can spook pigs.



**REMEMBER:** You need consent of the landholder if you are placing a trap outside of your property boundary. Planning, trap placement and pre-feeding can make or break a trapping program.

**Don't use inappropriate traps.** If you live in or near cassowary habitat, contact QPWS and CCRC who have cassowary-friendly traps for loan.

### DECLARED PEST LEGISLATION

Under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*, feral pigs are classed as restricted matter. They must not be moved, kept, fed, released into the environment, given away or sold.

[www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au](http://www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au)

### Pre-feeding & setting traps

**Pre-feeding or free feeding is crucial** to attract and settle pigs before traps are set.

1. Leave the door open and pre-feed until the pigs have been feeding inside the trap for at least two nights.
2. Almost any food you have in abundance at low to no cost can be used as trap pre-feeding material.
3. Walls of the trap should be at least 1.5m high or covered to prevent pigs jumping out.

***It is against the law to use MEAT as bait in trapping programs as it can spread infectious diseases between pigs and humans.***

Once you see pig activity at a site, place the trap (disarmed) and start pre-feeding. Deposit small amounts of food throughout the surrounding area or along pig trails. Monitor and replenish food at these sites for several days, as pigs become accustomed to the pre-feeding food. This will maximise the number of pigs attracted to the pre-feeding and trapping area.

During pre-feeding, erect the trap in stages to allow pigs to become accustomed to the unfamiliar odour of the steel mesh and humans. For example, erect only three sides of the four-sided trap, and leave a wide entrance.

Place pre-feeding material inside the partially erected trap and when you think pigs are feeding confidently, put the gate on but leave it wired open. If, after a few days of feeding inside the trap, there is no evidence of non-targeted species feeding such as footprints, scats or motion camera footage, the gate can be set.

***Keep human activity to a minimum and avoid taking dogs around trapping sites.***

Once the traps are set, check them every morning. Destroy or remove trapped pigs as quickly and humanely as possible.



*Shooting of pigs should only be undertaken by licensed firearms operators with the necessary skills. Storage and transportation of firearms and ammunition must comply with relevant legislation requirements.*



## HUMANE SHOOTING OF TRAPPED PIGS

Shooting must result in a humane, rapid and painless death with minimum distress to the animal.

Smaller calibre rifles such as a .22 magnum rimfire with hollow/soft point ammunition are adequate for euthanasia of trapped pigs at short range (less than 5m).

Twelve gauge shotguns may also be used with shot sizes of SG or SSG for large pigs over 40 kg and BB or AAA cartridges for small pigs less than 40 kg.

**DO NOT SHOOT THROUGH THE TRAP.** Destroy caught pigs by resting the barrel of the rifle on the trap mesh with the tip of the barrel pointing inside the trap. Wait for pigs to settle before shooting. To maximise the impact of the shot and to minimise the risk of misdirection, the range should be as short as possible.

## RECOMMENDED SHOT PLACEMENT

### For smaller pigs

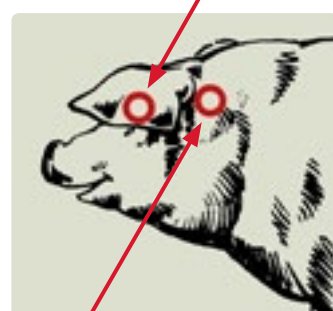
**FRONTAL POSITION:** The firearm should be aimed at a point midway across the forehead and about 2cm above the level of the eyes. The bullet should be directed horizontally into the skull.



### For larger pigs




These methods are preferred for adult pigs due to the heavier bone structure at the front of the skull.

**TEMPORAL POSITION:** The firearm is aimed at the side of the head so that the bullet enters the skull at a point midway between the eye and the base of the ear on the same side of the head. The bullet should be directed horizontally into the skull.



## CONFIRM THE SHOT ANIMALS ARE DEAD

Confirm the shot animals are dead by observing the following:

-  Absence of rhythmic respiratory movements
-  Absence of eye protection reflex or corneal reflex (blinking)
-  Loss of colour in mucous membranes (become mottled and pale without refill after pressure is applied).

**If death cannot be verified, a second shot should be immediately delivered to the head via the points of aim described.**

**BEHIND THE EAR:** The firearm is aimed at a point behind the ear directed towards the opposite eye.

*Pictured (far-left): Feral pig;  
Pictured (top): Pig damage.  
Images courtesy of the Department of Agriculture & Fisheries.*

*Pictured (centre): Pig trap;  
(left): Trapped pigs.  
Images courtesy of Queensland Parks & Wildlife Service*



Continued page 20 ►

## **Dogging is ineffective** in reducing feral pig populations

### **DISPOSAL OF FERAL PIG CARCASSES**

When disposing of carcasses there are a number of methods and options to consider.

**Trench burial** is the most practical method for disposal of small numbers of feral pig carcasses on farms. It involves the excavation of a trench, placing carcasses in the unlined pit and covering them with the excavated earth. A long deep trench (approx 15m long and 2m deep) reduces the amount of times heavy machinery needs to return to the site.

***Don't bury carcasses near watercourses, lakes, dams or ponds to reduce the likelihood of contamination of water systems. This also applies to coastal areas with permeable sandy soils.***

**Commercial landfill** uses highly regulated pre-existing disposal facilities. Waste transfer stations may accept feral pig carcasses for deep burial, with costs around \$70 per animal.

**Mass burial** is used when large numbers of animal carcasses from multiple locations are disposed of. Unlined burial is normally used when the soil types or local geology can control risks of leakage of decomposition by the products.

**Mounding** or above-ground burial is where carcasses are placed on a natural surface and covered with earth obtained from another source. There are environmental, work health and safety agency and future land-use matters that need to be considered.

Contact the appropriate authorities (eg local council, and environmental or WH&S agencies) for more information.

### **DECONTAMINATION OF TRAPS**

Since the detection of Panama disease tropical race 4 in the Tully Valley, banana farmers have implemented strict biosecurity plans to protect their farms from this potentially devastating disease.

All vehicles, machinery and equipment, including feral pig traps, must be appropriately decontaminated on exit. Decontamination of traps being moved between properties will not only minimise the risk of spreading the disease, but other pests and weeds as well. Ideally, growers can purchase their own traps to minimise the risk of spread of pests, weeds and diseases.

***Prior to the trap exiting a property, check that it's free from all soil and plant material and then apply appropriate decontamination.***

***Biosecurity Queensland has guidelines for effective decontamination procedures for farm machinery and equipment:***

[\*\*www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au\*\*](http://www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au)

***Download Codes of Practice and Standard Operating Procedures for the humane capture, handling or destruction of feral animals in Australia:***

[\*\*www.pestsmart.org.au\*\*](http://www.pestsmart.org.au)

### **OTHER METHODS**

#### **EXCLUSION FENCING:**

Although expensive, fencing is an effective method of pig control. The prevention of crop losses over time usually offsets the initial cost of the fence. Exclusion fencing can be confined to those areas of a property with the highest value. Mesh fencing is the most effective control method. ■

### **FERAL PIGS AND PANAMA DISEASE TROPICAL RACE 4**



**Landholders who are actively controlling pigs on their properties may reduce the risk of non-human assisted movement of Panama disease tropical race 4.**

Panama disease tropical race 4 is a soil-borne fungus that affects banana plants by attacking the plant's vascular system. The disease cuts off the supply of water and nutrients causing the plant to wilt and die. It is considered the greatest threat worldwide to commercial banana production.

The first commercial infestation of Panama disease was recorded in Panama, South America in the 1890s. The tropical race 4 strain of Panama disease is thought to have originated in southeast Asia around the 1990s and was first detected in the Northern Territory in 1997. It has since been detected in Far North Queensland on a Tully banana farm in March 2015.

The disease is not eradicable. It can survive for decades in the ground and is easily spread through soil, water and banana plant material. The tropical race 4 strain affects a wide variety of banana species including the most common commercial variety, the Cavendish.

The scientific name for the fungus that causes Panama disease is *Fusarium oxysporum* f.sp. *cubense*. The disease is classified into four races. Tropical race 4 is so named because the disease affects banana varieties grown in tropical environments.

Because the disease is a soil-borne fungus, it can be spread by animals when soil sticks to their feet and/or fur as they roam farms in search of food and water. Feral pigs are of particular concern as they habitually wallow in wet soil and are attracted to banana farms as they provide a reliable food source.

As banana farms in Far North Queensland occupy relatively small land parcels, multiple properties can be exposed to one individual animal. Potentially contaminated soil could spread throughout a pig's home range, an average of 8km<sup>2</sup>. Maintaining farm entry and exit biosecurity procedures and implementing a well-planned feral pig management regime can further protect growers from Panama disease tropical race 4. ■



# SOIL HEALTH

## 4th ANNUAL Marian Field Day

APRIL 6-7 | 2017



### SIMON MATTSSON, Farmer, Nuffield Scholar

Simon will be presenting on his recent tour to the UK and where they are at with Regenerative Agriculture, as well as how that is relevant to farmers in North Queensland. Simon will talk about some of the innovative farmers he met there including one who is grazing sheep on multi-species cover crop, no-til planted into standing wheat stubble, and who has a solar panel farm renewable energy project (top image, left) established. Simon will also talk about UK fellow Nuffield Scholar Tim May who studied mob grazing for his Nuffield Scholarship, and who now grazes cattle, sheep and pigs on cover crops across all of his 2500 acres of arable cropping country.

### PROFESSOR SUSANNE SCHMIDT (UQ)

Professor Schmidt will present an overview of her work at the University of Queensland, and relate this to what Simon Mattsson is doing on his farm. Professor Schmidt's expertise includes in the areas of plant nutrition with a focus on organic nutrients, plant ecophysiology, soil biology and biogeochemistry, sustainable crop systems and innovative nutrient management. She has been a researcher and educator at UQ since 1996 leading the Plant Nutrition and Ecophysiology research group.

### WALTER JEHNE, Soil Microbiologist

Walter Jehne will address attendees on the subject of soil microbiology. He is a soil microbiologist with extensive field and research experience at a national (CSIRO) and international (UN) level. Walter will present on his research into maximising rainfall on farms based on his own 100-drop theory. Walter will answer the critical questions How do you capture every drop of rain from the sky? How is it possible?, and What difference would that make for our farmers? With about 50 of 100 rain drops evaporating, the research into capturing this loss for land rehydration will make an enormous difference to agriculture in our future.

CQSHS membership is open to anyone interested in soil health. For membership email: [info@cqshs.farm](mailto:info@cqshs.farm)  
Annual Fee: \$75 (single family unit)  
Annual Fee: \$150 (corporate)

Proudly brought to you by:



## PROGRAM

### DAY 1 SOUTHS LEAGUES CLUB

- 7am breakfast
- Facilitated by David Hardwick (agricultural ecologist)

#### Presentations by:

- Simon Mattsson (UK visit)
- Walter Jehne (soil microbiologist)
- Professor Susanne Schmidt (University of Qld)
- Allan Royal, MAPS
- Matthew Redding
- Shelby Berg

Noon: Visit Simon's farm, Newman's Road, Marian to view machinery (lime spreader & cover crop planter) and sponsor presentations, and enjoy a barbecue

### DAY 2 SIMON MATTSSON'S FARM

- 8am half day hands on in-field soil assessment workshop hosted by agricultural ecologist David Hardwick.

Entry: CQSHS members FREE  
Non-members \$30

*(To take advantage of FREE entry, membership can be paid on the day)*

RSVP SIMON MATTSSON | [mattsson@mcs.net.au](mailto:mattsson@mcs.net.au) | P: 0417 862 979

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[www.cqshs.farm](http://www.cqshs.farm)

Proudly supported by the Australian Government Reef Programme

# Weeds – is your strategy up to the challenge?

By Deb Telford, Smartcane BMP Facilitator, Innisfail

The costs of ineffective weed control on our farms are well documented and widely acknowledged. Early control is crucial to minimising the negative impact of weeds on crop productivity and profitability.

Working through the **Weed, Pest and Disease Management module** of Smartcane BMP helps you compare your weed control practices to the criteria for BMP standards.

## FOUR KEY QUESTIONS

- Have you developed and implemented a weed management plan with consideration of known weed pressures?
- Have you implemented specific management strategies for fallow, plant cane and ratoons?
- Are you moving to a reduced reliance on residual herbicides through banding and use of knock downs in inter-rows?
- Is your spray equipment selected to suit crop stage?

These are the four of the main points for weed management in Smartcane BMP. If you can answer YES to all of these questions, then you are currently practicing effective weed management strategies.

If you are unsure, then contact your local Smartcane BMP facilitator or extension officer for advice.

To help you gain a better understanding of the process, below are two examples from Smartcane BMP accredited growers:

1. A local grower at **Industry Standard** has a **Farm Weed Management Plan** that uses the **SRA template** – available on SRA website [www.sugarresearch.com.au](http://www.sugarresearch.com.au)

### This plan includes:

- key principles of weed management,
- chemical application qualifications held (3 units of Competency: AHCCCHM303, AHCCCHM305 & AHCPMG301),
- list of the chemicals that have specific label buffer zones,
- the weeds present on the farm,
- an operating plan for fallow, plant and ratoon crop stages, as well as general farm weed management strategies and weed management goals for the second cropping cycle.

This may sound complicated and time consuming, but doesn't take long and is a valuable part of ensuring effective and efficient weed management on farm.

Sitting down and documenting a weed management plan with an advisor enables growers to review past strategies, keep up to date with any changes to chemicals and buffer zones as well as devise a workable plan for weed control next season.

2. A local grower at **Above Industry Standard** works from a documented weed management plan but he also maps his weed populations so he sprays only where weeds are present within a block. He now uses residual herbicides on a very small proportion of his farm, if at all – his weed control is highly effective and knockdowns are able to keep weed pressure under control.

Growers that have eliminated residual herbicides from their weed control strategies have followed a key principle in weed control "break the weed cycle and reduce spread". By preventing seed set, and by controlling weeds in fallow, their plant cane is now clean of weeds and ratoons have reduced weed pressure.

Now is the perfect time to review your own records of what you have done, determine what has worked well, and what you can do better in weed management for the next crop. ■

**KEEP IN MIND:** The herbicide product labels contain important information on usage and safety requirements, and growers should always read the label carefully before using any product.





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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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09-T6050 New Holland coupled to 03 10 tonne Newton Tipper; Toft 4000 early series with 250 HP Cummins; Toft 4000 late series with 250 P Cummins; Newton 4 Tonne Side Tipper; 1070 Case for parts; 995 David Brown for parts; Bonel Whole Stalk Cutter; Tricycle front to suit IH 66-86 Series; 766 International for parts. Ph. 0428 776 026

### Mackay-Proserpine

Howard Crumble Roller, HO-CROLLCH365DT, brand new still in crate, fits rear tool bar of Howard CH2365DT, 2 rollers each @ 2m. \$4,422 GST inc. Ph. 0428 236 165

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## Rainfall Report

brought to you by AustSafe Super

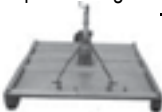
Location	Recorded rainfall (mm)		Year to date	Average rainfall (mm) January-March
	7 days to 9am 13.03.17	20.03.17		
Mossman	57	9	1366	1371
Mareeba AP	7	58	497	633
Cairns	3	56	960	1260
Mt Sophia	8	54	1713	1824
Babinda	111	0	1167	2173
Innisfail	62	25	1835	1763
Tully	148	14	1165	2088
Cardwell	104	24	997	1302
Lucinda	108	40	1036	1258
Ingham	46	3	772	1195
Abergowrie	10	15	455	1079
Townsville	28	32	378	747
Ayr DPI	118	48	510	594
Proserpine	38	41	787	787
Mirani	21	28	656	902
Mackay	15	3	758	849
Sarina (Plane Ck)	21	20	1026	1028
Bundaberg	13	48	132	431
Childers South	0.6	119	188	330
Maryborough	8	95	137	494
Tewantin	0.2	276	514	691
Eumundi	0	182	374	709
Nambour	0.4	123	306	715
Woongoolba	0	164	243	491
Murwillumbah	0	361	625	641
Ballina	3	306	504	591
Woodburn	0.8	369	698	491

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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](http://www.bom.gov.au). Weather report provided by the Bureau of Meteorology's Commercial Weather Services Unit.



MF 305 Harvester for sale. \$6,600 Neg. Ph. 0428597136 (Mackay)

Austoft Powerhauls x 2 (1998/1999), 1 x 9-tonne elevator, 1 x double 5-tonne side tipper. 4 complete wheel motors. Ph. 49592260

DitchWitch R100 trenching machine with back hoe attachment. F10 Volvo 10-tonne tipper with tagalong trailer used to transport trencher. Ph. 49592260

23.1/26 tyres R3 pattern made especially for the sugar industry. Rims also available. Dual bead, 8250 KG rating, 50 KM/H speed rated. 16 mm tread for floatation. 4MOSA brand. 12 months manufacturer's warranty. \$1,100 plus GST. Ph. 0429819115

Wrecking 94 7700 Toft most parts available Ph. 0428124826

97 Cameco full track harvester, elevator extension, 15' choppers with Westhill adjuster, engine overhauled start of 2016 season, well maintained machine. Ph. 49588264

Merril Wholestick Plant Cutter with topper \$2,750 inc GST cane plant trailers \$300 each inc GST. Ph Jason 0427132357

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. 0438606578 (Mackay)

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Kobelco 250 SK - 6E excellent condition comes with digging bucket, GP bucket and tilting mud bucket, serviced by Kobelco Brisbane. Ph. 0423040111

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Toft 6000 harvester, New Holland TR70 Header, Massey Ferguson 50B Backhoe, Janke Eliminator Mulcher, Bedford Tip Truck, Ph. 0488662313

Upton 80 metre boom irrigator. Ph. 0412370022

## Wanted

Local grower wanting to buy STL shares. Ph. 0419717006

CANE WANTED for 2017 and subsequent seasons. Tully area. Shawn Ph. 0418782815

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## Positions Vacant

Experienced farm hand wanted for Calen area. Position involves general farm work such as cultivation, planting, spraying and machinery maintenance. C and HR licence required. Permanent position for the person who meets requirements. Contact Keith 49588248

Caretaker required Murwillumbah (Northern Rivers). Position would suit retired person on a pension. Applicant must be fit, active, reliable, honest and self-motivated. Light duties in exchange for permanent accommodation. Enquiries please call 0403035015

Experienced cane harvester operator; 7700 full track; 2017 crushing season. Upper Pioneer Valley area; must have mechanical knowledge and hill experience. 30,000t plus. Apply in writing: PO Box 31 FINCH HATTON QLD 4756. More information: 0419260879

Sugarcane harvester and bin driver required for Condong Mill area. Machinery, maintenance and management skills required. Position for 2017 season and beyond, with prospect of full-time Harvester Operator position. Ph Bernard 0428298618

A Northern NSW Harvesting Co-Op is seeking a Manager/Harvester driver for the 2017 season and into the future. Mechanical experience is essential. Ph Jim 0416086227 or Ben 0402421565

## Work Wanted

MARYBOROUGH: Mature gent seeking driving position for upcoming harvest season. Have recently relocated and purchased home in Maryborough Qld. and keen to start work Have MC license Familiar with haul out (Burdekin Qld) Steve King - 0427775660



ANY DISTRICT: Looking for work as a truck driver for the 2017 harvest. High Risk Work Licence, White card, Bluecard, Front-end loader and Heavy Vehicle Driver Licence. Finish grape harvest end April. Wife also seeking work, keen and willing to learn. Offers greatly appreciated. Ph Rudy Capazzo 0427300548 or email rudy.rct@icloud.com

NORTHERN RIVERS: Looking for a driving job preferably HC truck (Mud Truck). Licences Class 5 open. Experience with Elevated Tipper Trailers and Side tipper truck. 66 years of age. Clean record. Good health. Prefer not to be hard in. Michael Hansby email startrucker1@gmail.com

BURDEKIN REGION: Experienced farmhand seeking full-time work or haulout job for 2017. Keen, honest and reliable hard worker with HR license, forklift license, white card and chemical accreditation. Ph. 0417682797 or 47822064 e: jgreco127@yahoo.com.au

CAIRNS REGION: Driving position wanted in the upcoming season. I have a HC Open licence. Happy to sit MC if needed. Work wanted around the Palm Cove Cairns area. Mature hardworking and reliable. I have experience in livestock driving (NZ) Please call Kirsty on 0401481051

MARYBOROUGH to CHILDERS: Looking for work as a truck driver during the harvest season. Approx 4 years experience operating heavy vehicles. Qualified light vehicle mechanic. Call Mitchell Hastie 0435872186

BUNDABERG AREA: Seeking Cane Harvesting jobs for upcoming season 2017. Hard worker and quick learner. Experience driving trucks/tractors. HC license. Concreter by trade, managed a small farm with stock, mechanically minded, willing to give anything a go. Forklift Licence, Heavy Articulated Licence, Manual Drivers Licence, White Card. Ph Mark 0409951568

## Property

ABERGOWRIE: Cane farm on Tarakan Rd, 270 acres freehold. Genuine enquiries please phone 47774633 or 0408608664

80ha farm for sale, 10km north of BABINDA. 40ha in cane. Genuine enquiries. Ph. 0427142102

WALKERSTON area: Cane farm for sale, fully irrigated. 42.5ha cane 3.6ha grazing. Ph. 0418185663

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