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2 July 2018



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COVER IMAGE: CANEGROWERS Proserpine Chairman Glenn Clarke received funding under the Reef Rescue program to purchase a wavy disc cultivator.

**Editor:** Wayne Griffin

**Design, subscriptions and classifieds:**  
Jacqui Segond

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Level 6, 100 Edward Street, Brisbane,  
Queensland Australia

ABN 94 089 992 969

Postal Address: GPO Box 1032, Brisbane,  
Queensland 4001 Australia

Telephone: 07 3864 6444; Fax: 07 3864 6429

Email: [info@CANEGROWERS.com.au](mailto:info@CANEGROWERS.com.au)

Website: [www.CANEGROWERS.com.au](http://www.CANEGROWERS.com.au)

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# A victim of market forces or at the mercy of government?

By Dan Galligan, CEO CANEGROWERS

A recent announcement by the Australian Beverages Council to address obesity and health concerns in Australia has again shifted the debate on sugar and nutrition.

The Beverages Council represents pretty much all the big non-alcoholic beverage companies in the country, including some of Australia and the world's most prominent and powerful brands.

In an attempt to shift the conversation away from government intervention and towards a market-based response, a number of Council members have pledged to deliver a 20% reduction in sugar across the industry's product portfolio by 2025.

To assess the implementation of this pledge, the total sugar reduction will be quantified by aggregated sales data across all members who sign the pledge and will be assessed from 1 January 2016 figures.

Council members have agreed to meet this target by selling more low and no sugar varieties, reformulating products with different ingredients, introducing smaller pack sizes, investing in label literacy, and through a number of other quite specific initiatives. Obviously, while maintaining their market share and profitability along the way!

## Obesity Problem

Much has been said in recent months about the sugar tax debate and the role sugar plays in the diet. However, facts are always helpful.

We do have an obesity problem in Australia, and people's consumption habits play a significant role, as reported by the Australian Bureau of Statistics on 2016 data.

This problem is particularly profound in vulnerable communities and amongst those groups most at risk of over consumption of discretionary (treat) foods.

This overconsumption is a big threat to teenagers, who, it's reported, can get almost a third of their total daily recommended sugar intake from soft drinks.

So, if all that is to be agreed (and there are countless debates on the accuracy of such data), then this intervention by the Beverages Council is really smart.

For all its uncertainty, there is one sure thing about this debate. The emotion, the rhetoric and the potential for government intervention and

overreaction could cause a far greater problem than the reality of the problem as it exists in the community.

There are many factors driving the obesity problem, such as Australian consumers having more food choices than ever before and living more sedentary lifestyles.

However, despite the complex factors at play, many people, some of them with vested interests, are seeking to oversimplify the issue, find quick-fix solutions, and generally blame someone else.

## Industry approach

Cane growers are justifiably proud of the role their industry has played in shaping and supporting regional communities, while producing a high quality and natural product. And we're confident of our prospects for the future.

However, we need to face up to the reality of the nutrition debate, acknowledge the very real concerns of the community, and the very real risks - not just to health but also to our industry. We need to embrace our role in the debate and in finding solutions.

Obesity is a big problem, as is type two diabetes, and as a prosperous modern society we should be doing something about it.

Is sugar consumption solely to blame - no! But if the sugar industry wishes to remain a legitimate, sustainable, and valued part of our community into the future, we need to take the proactive steps to stay ahead of the conversation, driving debate and solutions before government drops its approach upon us.

As an industry we need to be the masters of our own destiny. While the beverage industry's pledge will have market implications for us, by taking charge of our own risk management and responding in our own way to community demands, we can establish a vision for the industry and set goals that manage risks and set targets with some surety.

This is something that we should all aspire to. ■



*"As an industry we need to be the masters of our own destiny."*



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# NEWS IN BRIEF

## Grower confidence falls with world sugar price

Rabobank's quarterly Rural Confidence Survey has found that confidence among Queensland's primary producers has hit a five-year low, with 75% of cane growers expecting conditions to deteriorate.

While the biggest cause for concern amongst cattle producers and grain growers was the continuing dry conditions, the falling world sugar price was the main worry for Queensland's cane growers, the report said, with the state's producers now exhibiting the most negative sentiment in the country.

Overall, 46% of the state's producers now hold a negative outlook on the year ahead (up from 31% in the previous survey), while only 11% expected the agricultural economy to improve (down slightly from 12%).

A total of 40% expected similar conditions to the last 12 months.

**Sugar producers were particularly pessimistic about their income projections, with 82% expecting their income to fall in the next 12 months.**

Rabobank regional manager for North Queensland and the Northern Territory **Trent McIndoe** said drought was the biggest factor in the overall downswing in Queensland farmer sentiment.

"On the other side of the coin, we're seeing some cane producers in the Herbert River region north of Ingham suffering losses from substantial flooding, putting additional pressure on growers already concerned about prices."

The survey found 75% of the state's sugar producers are expecting conditions

to deteriorate. Of those cane growers anticipating worsening conditions, 88% said falling commodity prices were the chief reason for this outlook.

"We are just about to kick off the 2018 crush, but with the ICE #11 continuing to hover around 11 to 12 US cents a pound and no reprieve on the horizon, many cane producers could be producing at a loss this year," Mr McIndoe said.

In line with the decline in overall confidence levels, Queensland producers also lowered their income expectations for the coming 12 months, with this measure falling to its lowest point since June 2013.

The percentage expecting gross farm incomes to increase fell to just 12% while the proportion of respondents expecting lower gross farm incomes stood at 41%, up from 33%. However, the majority expected similar incomes to last year.

Sugar producers were particularly pessimistic about their income projections, with 82% expecting their income to fall in the next 12 months.

"It's undoubtedly a frustrating time for growers at present and with sugar prices so low it comes as no surprise that confidence is down across the industry," CANEGROWERS Chairman **Paul Schembri** said.

"But if there is one thing we do know it's that the sugar market is cyclical by nature and, while it may not be this month or even in six months time, the market will turn and prices will rise." ■

## BEVERAGES COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENT SEEKS TO HEAD-OFF TAX TALK

The Australian Beverages Council has pledged to reduce the sugar content of soft drink products sold by its members by 20% by 2025.

In making the announcement last week, the Council, whose members include Coca-Cola and Pepsi, said companies would use a number of methods to meet their target including selling more low and no sugar products, reformulating existing products and reducing pack sizes.

The commitment applies to all categories of non-alcoholic drinks including: carbonated soft drinks, energy drinks, sports and electrolyte drinks, frozen drinks, bottled and packaged waters, juice and fruit drinks, cordials, iced teas, ready-to-drink coffees, and flavoured milk products.

"Australia's non-alcoholic beverage industry is serious about supporting healthier lifestyles" said Mr **Geoff Parker**, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Beverages Council.

"That's why leading beverage companies in Australia have united for the first time to commit to reducing sugar across the industry by 20% on average by 2025."

CANEGROWERS CEO **Dan Galligan** welcomed the move, but said the organisation would assess what, if any, impact the pledge has on the domestic sugar market.

"In light of the current debate around obesity and nutrition, this is a smart move by the Beverages Council," Mr Galligan said.

"While we do have some concerns over how this will affect the domestic market, and in particular our domestic refineries, we would much rather see beverage companies taking proactive steps to address the nation's obesity problem, than have an ill-conceived and ineffective sugar tax foisted on the nation."

Federal Health Minister **Greg Hunt** also welcomed the announcement.

"If you can work with the industry and get an outcome such as this, you get exactly the outcome we all want: healthier products, healthier children, and healthier adults," he said. ■

# Funding to increase visibility of sustainable sugar

CANEGROWERS has secured \$2.2 million in Federal Government funding to help develop blockchain technology to improve market access for Australia's sustainably-produced sugar.

Blockchain is a list of records called blocks, which are linked and secured to show provenance.

"Proving the provenance of sustainable sugar is becoming increasingly important," CANEGROWERS Environment and Sustainability Manager **Matt Kealley** said.

"Consumers and international sugar markets are being increasingly influenced by end-users, such as Coca Cola, which plans to source 100% of its sugar from sustainable sources by 2020.

"The problem for growers is there is currently no way of tracking this sugar from their farm to the international marketplace."

Blockchain technology offers a way to

help exporters track their sugar overseas and get better market access for exports which have credible traceability.

It is anticipated the project will assist in maintaining and growing international markets and act as a driver for a premium for sustainable sugar in the market.

**"New block chain technology will help sugar exporters track their sugar overseas and get better access for exports."**

"Smartcane BMP demonstrates sugar that is sustainably produced because the program supports soil health, nitrogen use efficiency and biodiversity as well as productivity and profitability through its promotion of best management practices," Mr Kealley said.

"CANEGROWERS intends to leverage the sustainability benefits of Smartcane BMP adoption by creating a mechanism to identify the quantities of sugar in the supply chain that has been sourced from BMP certified farms."

Announcing the funding, Federal Agriculture Minister **David Littleproud** said the new block chain technology, "... will help sugar exporters track their sugar overseas and get better access for exports". ■

## Total Membership Fees - 2018 season

(cents per tonne of cane)

District Company	Crop Insurance	Total Membership Fees (inc. GST)
Bundaberg	Note 1	74.25
Burdekin	1.54	50.37
Cairns - Babinda	Note 1	42.63
Cairns - Mulgrave	2.10	44.93
Herbert River	2.86	44.17
Innisfail	Note 1	49.58
Isis	1.79	47.34
Mackay	4.27	49.18
Maryborough	Note 1	33.83
Mossman	2.00	36.03
Plane Creek	4.27	53.63
Proserpine	Note 1	37.68
Rocky Point	3.70	71.45
Tableland - Mossman Mill	2.81	52.77
Tableland - Tableland Mill	2.81	34.49
Tully	2.50	33.61

NOTE 1 - no additional charge for crop insurance, included as part of general fee. This fee schedule will apply to cane supplied to Queensland mills during the 2018 crushing season. Fees vary from district to district due to the size and extent of operations and services offered.

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# CANEGROWERS Regional round-up

## Mossman

Mechanical issues have plagued Mossman Mill during the first two weeks of the crush, resulting in 14,500 tonnes of delayed cane at the time of writing.

In Week 2 (week ending 17 June) the mill had a throughput of 28,075 tonnes of cane for a mill average CCS of 11.74.

Coastal growers supplied 18,061 tonnes of cane with an average of 11.75 CCS, while Mareeba growers supplied 10,014 tonnes of cane with an average of 11.91 CCS.

As at 25 June, 53,221 tonnes of cane had been processed for a mill average of 11.69 CCS.

Mossman Next Gen group is again organising the cane display at our Annual Show in July.

We encourage all of our growers to get involved to showcase our industry to the local community and visitors.

## Tableland

The Tableland season has got off to a slow start with both Mossman and Tableland mills experiencing mechanical issues during the first couple of weeks. The cold weather on the Tableland has seen the CCS start strongly and by week 3 it was above 12.

Mareeba Rodeo Cane Competition is coming up on Friday 13 July. Growers are encouraged to enter the competition.

## Tully

Just over 275,000 tonnes of cane have been harvested and crushed in the 2018 season, with the year to date sugar content currently sitting at 12.7 CCS.

There were some milling stoppages in the first week and showers are now beginning to impact on harvesting

## Cairns region

Growers supplying Mulgrave Mill commenced the 2018 harvest on 12 June, with South Johnstone growers kicking off a day later.

Mulgrave suppliers have experienced a far from acceptable start to the season, with problems around mill infrastructure and bridges.

Although MSF has managed logistics as best as it could, the outcomes have been far from satisfactory.

While delayed cane is managed via the Cane Supply Agreements, the amount of delayed cane is unacceptable, and we look forward to seeing this reduced over coming weeks with the bridge over the Mulgrave River now open.

The Harvesting Equity Committee and the CSA Review Committee continue to meet regularly with MSF to address outstanding matters affecting growers and harvesting contractors and to receive updates on the likely commissioning of the remaining bridges.

The weather has been quite good for the most part, with particularly cold nights. At the time of writing, the area is experiencing wet weather which has caused delays in harvesting and crushing. Planting was well underway in the Mulgrave Region before the onset of the wet weather.

## Innisfail

Crushing commenced at South Johnstone Mill on Wednesday 13 June, a day later than scheduled. Miscommunication regarding testing operations at the mill prior to commencement of crushing forced CANEGROWERS to step in and call a halt to the start.

There had been agreement with MSF Sugar to crush a quantity of mill owned cane prior to commencement of the season, especially the testing of No.5 mill which suffered a catastrophic failure at the end of the 2017 season. It was imperative that the mill was put under load to ensure that it could operate fully from the start of this season.

The mill has performed admirably since the commencement of crushing, in stark contrast with most mills in the state. A major derailment forced the closure of the main line feeding in from the northern areas, leaving 400 full bins stranded for four days. Throughput at the mill was reduced as a result.

CCS is higher than in 2017, but lower than in other northern mill districts. As at 22 June, 6% of the pre-season estimate had been harvested.

Wet weather has continued to hamper farming activity across the district and very little land preparation and planting has been achieved.



operations. While rainfall of 30 to 40mm has been recorded in some parts of the district, the southern parts of the mill area have received less.

Great news on the SmartCane BMP front with accreditations reaching the 60-grower mark, with several others well on the road for accreditation.



## Herbert River

After a cool and dry lead up to the commencement of the harvest and crushing season, operations got under way on Monday 11 June with harvesters filling a small loading to allow the mills to get off to an early start on Tuesday, 12 June.

It was a challenging start for both mills. Newly installed plant required attention to such an extent that the harvest for Wednesday was cancelled. As the mills settled down, daily harvesting targets increased and by the end of Week 2 we had processed 288,295 tonnes of cane for an average CCS of 12.42.

The first week saw 1108 tonnes of flood affected cane crushed. Unfortunately, it failed to reach 7 CCS required to qualify for normal payment.

Apart from the flood affected cane, the CCS for this time of year is looking promising. It provides a bright spot against a background of a flood impacted crop and a depressed sugar market.

There are exciting things happening in the Herbert with SRA forming a regional advisory group to give direction to applied research for the regional industry beyond what is happening in the variety improvement program.

Engagement with harvesting groups on fine tuning the harvest to optimise sugar recovery per hectare is seen as a potentially rewarding area of further research for the local industry.

## Burdekin

All Burdekin mills got their 2018 crushing operations underway on Tuesday 12 June, under clear skies and cool weather.

Invicta B side commenced the earliest at 6.45am, followed by Inkerman A side at 9.40am, Pioneer 10am and Kalamia at 11am.

The first week was peppered with the usual hiccups and issues that impact mill performance and throughput.

Inkerman's B side had choking and electrical issues that restricted the week's throughput, while Invicta's B side dropped out for about a day with superheater problems and blackout issues. Loadings at Invicta were reduced due to a power blackout and also at Pioneer due to No. 2 boiler ID fan tripping.

The one bright light from the first week's crushing was the improved CCS levels of more than a unit in some mill areas when compared to last year, with KQ228 being the best performing variety.

Invicta weekly average CCS was 13.22 compared to 12.07 last year; Pioneer 13.35 compared to 12.57; Kalamia 13.62 compared to 12.34 and Inkerman 13.5 compared to 12.07 last year.

Burdekin has crushed 577,187 tonnes for the first two weeks of crushing, with CCS continuing to rise at all mills.

Hopefully the good weather conditions will continue to support the improvement in CCS levels.

## Plane Creek

Plane Creek Mill week ending June 24. Mill throughput for the week was 49,474 tonnes bringing the season to date total to 54,605 tonnes. CCS average for the week is the same as season to date at 11.98 units. The weekly throughput was slightly behind budget with issues with the shredder and prepared cane elevator. Average bin weight is 3.95 tonnes. The highest CCS recorded was 14.90 from a rake of Q228 second ratoon. Patchy rain over the weekend had little impact on cane supply.

## Mackay

There has been an improvement in milling reliability over the past week at all three Mackay Sugar mills. Mackay Sugar Mills processed a total of 209,372 tonnes week ending June 24 with Farleigh crushing 64,093 tonnes, Marian 89,868 and Racecourse 55,411 tonnes. Total throughput season to date is 624,882 tonnes. PRS for the week was 11.77 with year to date PRS 11.32.

The CANEGROWERS Mackay office has been extremely busy with over 900 people undertaking the mandatory Mackay Sugar online siding inductions to date.

There has been increased interest in the Ergon-endorsed *Safe Working near electrical assets in the rural industry* online course offered by CANEGROWERS Mackay, which has been designed for those working in close proximity to powerlines. This is a generic course and enquiries are welcomed from all cane growing districts by phoning 4944 2600.

## Proserpine

Proserpine Mill commenced crushing operations as scheduled on Tuesday, 19 June. The short week saw 53,853 tonnes of cane crushed at an average CCS of 13.08.

The two-month dry period preceding the crush will undoubtedly impact the pre-season crop estimate of 1.76 million tonnes. On the positive side, initial CCS is higher than expected and bodes well for the season ahead.

Light showers are forecast for the week ahead, however this is unlikely to impact the harvesting sector.

June's Show Cane Awards were a huge success with a number of growers featuring in the winner's circle. Congratulations to Watts Farming who took home the CANEGROWERS Insurance Perpetual Trophy for overall exhibitor.

Lethebrook Branch were again victorious with their District Exhibit, although they were pushed hard this year by Town Branch.

*Pictured left: Lethebrook Branch representatives receiving the award for Best District Exhibit were John Casey (left) and Peter Quod (right) – centre is QSL Grower Services Officer, Kathy Zanco who sponsored the Award.*

Continues page 8 ►

## CANEGROWERS Regional round-up

### Bundaberg

The 2018 harvest started on 18 June with Millaquin Mill commencing crushing operations. The mill will operate in six-day mode for the season. It will commence crushing at midnight and crush out at 8am on Sunday morning. Stopping for 16 hours each week.

Bingera will commence on 2 July. It will operate in five-day mode for the first three weeks and then will move to six-day mode for the remainder of the season, commencing crushing at 4am Monday morning and ceasing at midnight Saturday night. Stopping for 28 hours each week.

### Isis

The 2018 crushing season roared into action with cane harvesting and transport equipment making their way into cane fields around the Isis Mill cane supply area on Sunday, 17 June.

Processing the 2018 crop commenced at 07:51am on Monday, 18 June, when the first bin of an expected seasonal total of 210,000 bins of cane was weighed and tipped.

The 2018 estimate is for a crop of 1,345,000 tonnes of sugarcane to be available for harvest and, after making allowances for planting material, the Isis Mill is expecting to process around 1,315,000 tonnes of sugarcane by early November.

Harvesting contractors have made modifications to equipment in preparedness for the 2018 season based around SRA trial-work that occurred across the Isis region

during the 2017 season. This trial-work recommended optimising harvesting feed trains to match elevator pour rates and focused on minimising cane and subsequent sucrose loss that occurs through the harvesting process. More trial-work will be undertaken across the region to minimise cane loss and maximise returns to all stakeholders during the 2018 season.

Road users are reminded that all cane rail crossings are now active with cane locomotives and bins now traversing the rail network. Please take care on the regions roads as equipment associated with the harvest and transport of cane is quite large and slow moving. Motorists and pedestrians are reminded to remain vigilant as harvesting and transport activities associated with the crushing season occur 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

### Maryborough

Two weeks into the season and the majority of harvesters have commenced operations. Weather has been good so far, other than one wet day. At the time of writing, 55,555 tonnes of cane had been crushed or 6% of estimated crop. CCS is reasonable at 12.22.

MSF mill has been operating reliably over the first few weeks with its first maintenance day occurring on 25 June.

The efforts made on the new linings for the trailers has proven worthwhile. The reduction in material finding its way onto the sides of roads around town has been noticeable and MSF has confirmed more single trailers will have coverings added as the season progresses.

The focus on safe loading levels for haulouts to trailers is also going well but will need to be maintained throughout the season. ■

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If you're interested, start by checking your eligibility at [ato.gov.au/fhss](http://ato.gov.au/fhss). If you're eligible and want to get started, you can start making voluntary contributions into your AustSafe Super account.

For more information, visit [austsafe.com.au/memberhub](http://austsafe.com.au/memberhub)

Source: Australian Taxation Office. First Home Super Saver Scheme (2018).

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Big Shot is a one application high analysis N.P.K.S fertilizer. The inclusion of molasses in BigShot, aids the microbial slow release of fertiliser nitrogen. The molasses used in Big Shot has not only been proven to slow down the release of nitrogen, it also increases the capacity of tillering plant cane to absorb nutrients.

LiquaForce BigShot gives you the ability to add trace elements more consistently in your fertiliser program. This offers farmers the flexibility to create unique mixes specific for their requirements, meeting their nutritional needs to the very last drop, including trace elements of zinc, copper, boron, or molybdenum.

## VALU RANGE

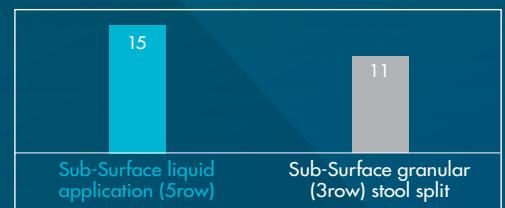
Liquaforce had developed its Valu range to work in synergy with BigShot. Demand for the Valu range is growing as farmers become more conscious that plants not only need N, P, K and S but also micro nutrients.

The LiquaForce advantage over granular is that trace elements are mixed evenly through a blend and not shuffled out of consistency when blended in a one ton bag.

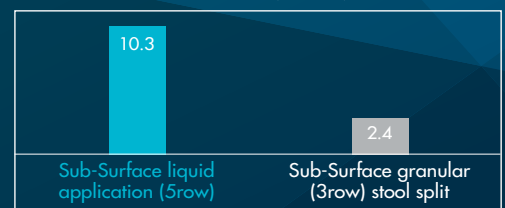
A FEAT analysis was undertaken to calculate estimated variable costs associated with fertiliser application. The estimated variable costs were based upon information supplied by fertiliser contractors surveyed, within the Herbert cane growing region (2012). The analysis considered the various fertiliser placement options and various options for the number of rows treated during an application. These figures are indicative of costs associated with fertiliser application methods found within the Australian cane industry.

Estimated variable costs associated with fertiliser application.

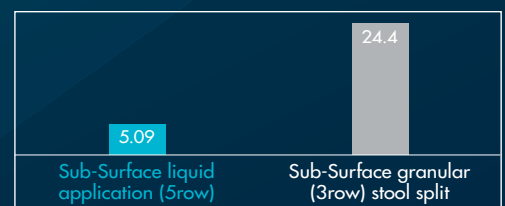
Average speed of application (km/hr)



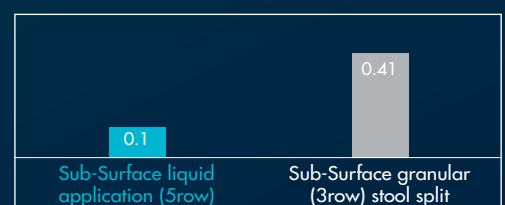
Work rate (ha/hr)



Variable cost + labour (\$/ha)



Labour (hrs/ha)



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# New digital blueprint to unleash **BILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN PROFIT**

A unique collaborative research project has delivered a digital agriculture blueprint to boost the unconstrained value of national production by \$20.3 billion.



Launched during ABARES by Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, the Hon. **David Littleproud** MP, the Accelerating Precision Agriculture to Decision Agriculture Report outlines an industry-wide overhaul of digital technology systems to unlock potential savings and profit gains.

Project leaders believe the research effort is the first of its kind in the world, bringing together an entire industry sector, including all 15 of Australia's RDCs, with funding support from the Rural R&D for Profit Program.

*"In Australia we're tackling the problems head-on ... Producers across the sector could potentially benefit from an estimated increase in production value of 25% on 2015 levels."*

The project has also involved research support from three universities, CSIRO Data 61, the Australian Farm Institute, and the Data to Decisions CRC.

"As business sectors across the world grapple with the challenge of keeping up with global advancements, here in Australia we're tackling the problems head-on through an unprecedented level of collaboration," said Cotton Research and Development Corporation Executive Director **Bruce Finney**.

"If we continue that level of cooperation over the next few years, producers across the sector could potentially benefit from an estimated increase in production value of 25% on 2015 levels," he said.

According to economic modeling, these gains will come from better decision-making and improved efficiencies in four key areas:

- *savings through less labour and improved automation,*
- *tailoring inputs like fertiliser, seed and water to need,*

- *increasing market access and biosecurity, and*
- *boosting genetic advancements.*

The size and type of potential benefits vary from one industry to the next.

However, this research project has shown us that every agricultural industry in Australia is currently missing out on significant production gains because of its inability to adopt or properly utilise available digital technologies.

"We need to work together to remove the critical barriers, common across all industries, and achieve the necessary level of investment in solutions, particularly to improve on-farm connectivity," said Mr Finney.

To start to bridge that gap, the P2D project has delivered a series of tools, including a reference architecture to design big data systems that bring together information from across systems, industries and economies to improve decision making. ►



It has also developed a register of cross-sectoral agricultural and environmental datasets.

The P2D project has also delivered a web-based grower toolbox to address issues around producer confidence and knowledge.

Two of the most significant barriers to adopting available digital technologies is a lack of confidence in return on investment and confusion around the best options for individual farms and businesses.

For example, two-thirds of producers surveyed as part of the research said they knew nothing at all, or very little, about on-farm telecommunications options.

Producers are also wary about data privacy and ownership and need legal guidance on where they stand.

The grower toolbox provides practical information and guidance to help producers navigate the legal issues around privacy and policy and give them the confidence they need to aggregate data, using collective systems.

The comprehensive survey of growers has highlighted issues around digital literacy, the availability of appropriate data and decision support mechanisms and also leadership within industry to overcome the obstacles.

It's also confirmed that a lack of access to mobile and internet telecommunications infrastructure is a major impediment to adoption.

Three quarters of digital agricultural technology users reported ongoing problems with the reliability of mobile telecommunications and their ability to link devices.

If digital agriculture is to be adopted, it needs to be sustained by consistency of service and support and the reliability of technology.

The 13 key recommendations within this report call for new data policy, digital strategy and investment in data assets, as well as ongoing efforts to build digital literacy and capability.

The summary and technical P2D reports and the grower toolbox can be found at the project website [www.crdc.com.au/precision-to-decision](http://www.crdc.com.au/precision-to-decision)

For further information, contact Jane O'Brien (Communications) 0407 666 018 or Dr Rohan Rainbow (Project Leader) 0418 422 482. ■

*Caption: The P2D project has outlined the challenges and opportunities for embracing digital agriculture.*

## P2D Key Recommendations

1. Develop a Data Management Policy for Australian Digital Agriculture.
2. Develop a voluntary Data Management Code of Practice and a Data Management Certification or Accreditation Scheme.
3. Policy and investment to improve telecommunications to farms and rural businesses.
4. New investment models including public/private investment.
5. RDC's develop Digital Agriculture Strategy's and implementation roadmap.
6. Big Data Reference Architecture and Data Management Implementation Plan.
7. Establish, review and refine foundational data sets.
8. Establish a Digital Agriculture Taskforce for Australia (DATA) headed by the Chief Digital Agricultural Officer – to deliver outcomes.
9. Establish a Digital Agriculture Taskforce for Australia Working Group (DATAWG) – to provide guidance.
10. Provide education and capacity building to increase digital literacy in the agricultural sector.
11. Establish baseline patterns of data usage and a national mobile network coverage (data speed and volume) database.
12. Digitise and automate data collection including for regulatory compliance activities.
13. Execute a cross Industry Survey every three years to identify producers' needs and issues in digital agriculture.

## PREVENTION THE BEST CURE: RSD threatening commercial sugarcane crops

More ratoon stunting disease (RSD) is being found in commercial sugarcane crops and in nursery cane in 2018 than in previous years, which is raising concern among industry staff about the impact that this disease is having on the industry, according to SRA.

The disease causes significant economic losses but has no external symptoms. Because it is spread through diseased planting material and on machinery, growers and contractors are reminded to maintain their vigilance against RSD with planting and harvesting in full swing in many areas.

One of Australia's major sugarcane diseases, RSD continues to cost the industry through lost production.

SRA Key Focus Area Leader for Biosecurity, Dr Andrew Ward, said that SRA's RSD diagnostic lab is detecting more RSD in samples in 2018 than in previous years, including in cane that was to be used as planting material.

He urges growers to arrange with their local productivity service to have their planting material tested for RSD.

"Planting represents a significant expense for growers and disease-free planting material lays the foundation for high yielding crops," Dr Ward said.

"Harvest is also a high-risk time for RSD to hitch a ride on machinery, spreading the disease between blocks, farms, and even districts.

"However, good farm hygiene can greatly reduce the risk.

"Cane knives, harvesters, plant cutters, planters and stool splitters should all be routinely sterilised between blocks on the same farm and between farms.

A range of resources are available on the SRA website regarding RSD, including an extension booklet with information on equipment sterilisation and developing a clean seed management plan.

Visit <https://sugarresearch.com.au/growers-and-millers/pests-and-diseases/>.

# CANE TO COAST

By Tiffany Tento

**CANEGROWERS believes that Queensland's cane farmers are doing remarkable things when it comes to protecting and caring for their environment and the reef.**

To celebrate and showcase the commitment and dedication of sugarcane growers throughout Queensland, CANEGROWERS is proud to launch Cane to Coast – a new section on our website featuring farmers and some of the innovative solutions and exciting projects that are changing the way the industry interacts with the environment.

Exploring the areas of SOIL HEALTH, NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT and WATER SENSE, we take a look back over the past three years at some of the work being done by farmers on their land to boost productivity and profitability while protecting their environment and ultimately the Great Barrier Reef.

## Soil health

**Soil and nutrient management has changed significantly in the past 20 years, greatly improving the efficiency of crop production.**

Recommendations for optimal nitrogen rates have become more accurate and specific; there is greater attention to ensuring all plant nutrients are in adequate supply; trash retention has reduced erosion; controlled traffic farming and reduced tillage have improved soil structure and reduced costs; and well-managed legume fallows help break pest and disease cycles while reducing fertiliser costs and improving soil health.

CANEGROWERS Proserpine Chairman Glenn Clarke (*pictured page 14*) says funding provided by the Australian Government's reef programs, in their many guises over the years, had no doubt helped Queensland cane growers to change their practices for the better.

The fourth-generation sugarcane farmer received funding under the Reef Rescue program to purchase a wavy disc cultivator, which enabled him to move his farm to a controlled-traffic system and avoid the need to use rippers and rotary hoes.

"The changes have meant less tillage, less soil disturbance, and less need for weed control – it's all about reducing the risk of sediment and nutrient losses, reducing run-off and protecting the soil structure," he said.

Glenn says farming just inland from the famed Whitsunday Islands meant growers in the region remained very conscious of their responsibility to the land and the surrounding environment.

"We live and work in one of the most beautiful places in the world," he said. "And with waterways and rivers all leading to the Great Barrier Reef and straight on to the Whitsundays, we are all committed to doing our bit to reduce our impact and protect the environment."

"This is our backyard – we want a healthy and sustainable industry as much as we want a healthy and sustainable reef."

Find out more about how our growers are using controlled traffic farming and fallow management as best management practices to deliver a range of benefits for their crops and the environment. ►



## Nutrient management

Nutrient management has taken centre stage in recent years with government targets to reduce dissolved nitrogen in water run-off into the Great Barrier Reef by at least 50 per cent by 2018, and 80 per cent by 2025.

A significant amount of research continues to be conducted into the role of nitrogen in the crop cycle and the environment, including slow release and enhanced efficiency fertilisers (EEF), climate forecasting and application technologies.

Burdekin grower Joe Linton is one of nearly 60 farms hosting a new trial of EEFs to determine their environmental and productivity benefits for Queensland's sugar cane growers.

Find out more about what our growers are doing in the areas of soil testing and fertiliser application improvements to fine-tune the nutrient requirements and application processes for crops, particularly those in close proximity to the Great Barrier Reef.

*Pictured: Eton cane grower Albert Schmidtko surveys his farm from his high-rise chemical sprayer which has proved a boon for weed control on his farm. Creative and innovative modifications on high-rise sprayers continue to deliver significant environmental benefits for the Great Barrier Reef and financial savings for growers with more precise and efficient chemical applications requiring less product and less time to apply.*

## Water sense

Farming alongside the Great Barrier Reef remains under intense scrutiny, in particular the potentially harmful impact of nutrients, pesticides and sediment on water quality. Water management is now more important than ever for farmers as they work to protect their livelihood and the environment around them.

Soil probes and weather stations have helped grower Gary Raiteri to irrigate his Proserpine crop only when it's needed for maximum growth. Gary has now modified his irrigation machinery, practices and technology being used on his farm, resulting in less water and electricity costs, reduced run-off and increased productivity.

*Continues page 14 ►*





Find out more about how our growers are stepping up their irrigation and drainage management practices to ensure crops receive the right amount of water at the right time boosting production, while limiting issues such as deep drainage, run-off or waterlogging.

CANEGROWERS believes that Queensland's sugar industry should be proud of the work it has done to improve its environmental impact, however this momentum and commitment must continue if we are to maintain long-lasting and real benefits in the future.

Visit [www.canegrowers.com.au](http://www.canegrowers.com.au) and look for the Cane to Coast tab to read more. ■



*Pictured: (top) CANEGROWERS Innisfail Smartcane BMP facilitator Deb Telford catches up with local grower Joe Zappala on his farm. Joe received a Reef Programme grant which helped fund a new purpose-designed stool splitter and fertiliser box enabling him to keep pace with environmental best practice in applying sub-surface nutrients to his crops.*

*(above) CANEGROWERS Proserpine Chairman Glenn Clarke received funding under the Reef Rescue program to purchase a wavy disc cultivator.*



Australian Government



As the Australian Government's Reef Programme ends this month, and the Queensland Government proposes further reef regulations which will impact the sugar industry, CANEGROWERS has renewed its call for a partnership approach to securing a sustainable industry and a healthy Great Barrier Reef.

CANEGROWERS CEO Dan Galligan says adding more regulations to the sugar industry risked alienating farmers and reversing the goodwill that had been created in recent years.

"CANEGROWERS sees regulation as a blunt instrument which leads to minimum compliance and the loss of innovation and excellence," Dan said.

"Smartcane BMP is an example of the Queensland Government supporting a program that focuses growers on productivity and profitability, together with environmental sustainability, proving that these ideals can go hand in hand.

"The Australian Government's Reef Programme is also a positive example of a government supporting growers with financial incentives to implement best management practices that have proven to benefit the environment and a farmer's bottom line.

"This is how governments and growers can work collaboratively towards a shared vision."

Dan said the new Cane to Coast CANEGROWERS website feature was proof of the diverse and long-lasting changes being implemented by Queensland's cane growers as part of the Reef Programme.

"We have seen high levels of engagement and personal investment of growers in government reef programs," he said.

"Cane to Coast is a great way to showcase what a successful partnership between growers, government and industry can look like.

"These are some of the faces of the innovators, the dreamers, the people willing to take a chance and make the changes that will be of benefit to all.

"I would urge both the Queensland and the Australian governments to continue to work with us to develop a sustainable legacy for the future of our sugarcane industry and the Great Barrier Reef." ■



# Policy Update

Environment with Matt Kealley

Industry with Burn Ashburner

## Reef, rats and weeds

**New reef regulations are proposed for the industry** under which growers in the Wet Tropics, Burdekin Dry Tropics and Mackay-Whitsundays region would have to meet minimum agricultural practice standards to support the achievement of catchment load limits.

Minimum standards will not be regulated in the Burnett Mary region at this stage, but farming in the region will be designated an Environmentally Relevant Activity (ERA) and growers will be required to keep records of fertiliser use.

The upside is that producers accredited in the Smartcane BMP program will be deemed by government as meeting the minimum regulated standards and will not be a targeted for compliance activities.

The serious concerns for CANEGROWERS is that within two years, growers in the Wet Tropics, Burdekin Dry Tropics and Mackay-Whitsundays must use a nutrient management plan, while sediment loss controls will also be required where cane is grown on land at a gradient greater than 3%.

CANEGROWERS remains strongly opposed to the regulation of nutrient management plans and the need for additional sediment loss controls.

### Rat baiting permits have changed

Local Cane Productivity Service groups hold regional Damage Mitigation Permits for the baiting of rats, which are reviewed every three years. This avoids the necessity of individual growers applying for individual permits.

Growers are allowed to bait for rats in cane, however only two registered bait products, Rattoff and Racumen, may be used.

Baiting can only occur between 1 October and 30 June and a record must be made when baiting commences and provided to the local productivity service group within 48 hours.

### Weed management

Weed management in cane is an important job to get right, as yield loss combined with the price of herbicides can cost growers up to \$338/hectare.

Now is a good time to think about your weed management program and use the records to examine costs, meet regulations, and support your Smartcane BMP accreditation. ■



## Portable roadside warning signs in built-up areas

If a grower is moving an agricultural vehicle between 3.5m and 4.0m wide on a critical road north of Rockhampton or a critical and major road south of Rockhampton, then they are required to travel under what is known as the Coastal notice - *Queensland Class 1 Agricultural Vehicle (Coastal Zone 1) Dimension Exemption Notice 2016 (No. 1)*.

### The conditions of this notice are:

1. An eligible vehicle must
  - a. have a minimum buffer zone of 0.5m from the centre line at all times (unless turning across a roadway); and
  - b. travel no more than 5km travel for a single journey; and
  - c. be accompanied by 1 pilot vehicle operated by an agricultural pilot; and
2. Portable road side warning signs must be placed
  - a. at least 350m in advance of the travel zone in both/all directions; and
  - b. at any critical or major road intersecting with the road along which the eligible vehicle is travelling

Growers regularly question whether portable warning signs must be placed at the intersection of all roads when traveling through a built-up urban area, for example in Ingham.

The simple answer is no.

Apart from critical, major and minor roads, there are also roads in 'critical areas' as per the *Critical Areas and Roads in Queensland Map* published by Transport and Main Roads.

Critical areas are effectively another defined road type.

Point 2.b above clearly states warning signs must be placed "**at any critical or major road intersecting**" - critical area is **not** mentioned.

Therefore, under the notice, growers are not required to place warning signs at all intersections in urban areas. However, growers need to be aware that each Regional Council may have specific regulations as to which roads can be used in built-up areas. These are detailed in the Coastal notice.

CANEGROWERS will continue to push for growers to be able to choose between the use of portable warning signs or two pilots in order to provide the operator with the safest option.

You can view the Coastal notice on the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator website: <https://bit.ly/2KeBd7j> ■



## Rolling underway for QSL Target Price Pool



By Bryce Wenham, QSL Finance Manager, Supplier Relations

As previously outlined in this column, the QSL Target Price Pool now extends the amount of time a grower has to achieve their targeted price past the traditional June deadline in the season of delivery by transferring the exposure for any unfilled orders or open nominations from one closing contract to the next in a process known as 'rolling'.

This transfer from one closing contract to the next begins in June and continues automatically for any applicable orders and nominations until April each year.

While QSL does not charge a fee for this process, the cost of establishing the new positions against the next contract is passed on to participating growers as a roll cost.

QSL has now finalised the roll cost for any unfilled 2018-Season orders or open nominations for the QSL Target Price

Pool which were not filled at market on the night of 20 June 2018. This cost is \$1.49/tonne.

Growers using QSL Direct who had orders that have rolled will now see this roll cost noted as 'Roll Amount' on any applicable open orders within their account.

This roll cost has also been incorporated into the new 'Adjusted Target Price' for these orders, as highlighted in red below:

Open Orders - Pricing								
Order Number	Pool	Futures Month	Order Date	Tonnage	Order Status	Target Price (AUD/MT)	Roll Amount	Adjusted Target Price
7080	TPP		19/04/2018 21:07	40,000,000	Open - Action	\$440.00	\$1.49	\$441.49

In the example above, the initial Target Price of \$440 has been adjusted to incorporate the roll cost of \$1.49, resulting in a new Adjusted Target Price of \$441.49.

So in order for the grower to achieve their initial Target of \$440 and cover the roll cost, the market will now need to meet or surpass the new Adjusted Target Price.

Should a grower decide to change their target for any rolled orders, their new Target Price will continue to be automatically adjusted within QSL Direct to reflect the applicable roll cost.

It is important to note that the next roll for the QSL Target Price Pool is scheduled for 20 September 2018.

Any unfilled 2018-Season orders remaining in this product beyond this date will potentially incur an additional roll cost on top of the \$1.49/t currently applied.

### NEW RATIO USED

The target price sought using the QSL Target Price Pool is an average across the four ICE 11 contracts available each season, these being July, October, March and May. Prior to the first roll deadline, this average is calculated by allocating one portion of each order against the July contract, two against the October contract, two against the March contract and one against the May contract to reflect the general production and shipping arrangements (i.e. more sugar is available for sale in October than in July). This ratio is known as the 1:2:2:1 ratio.

By rolling unfilled orders and open nominations, QSL is changing the ratio used to calculate the Target Price Pool by increasing the portion of pricing against the October contract and effectively changing the ratio used to calculate the average season price to 3:2:1 – that is, three portions against October, two against March and one against May.

#### DISCLAIMER:

*These articles contain information of a general or summary nature only and should not be relied on to make any pricing or pool selection decisions. This information does not constitute financial or investment advice, and growers should seek their own independent advice before making any such decisions, in addition to reading the full Pricing Pool Terms which are available on QSL's website. Information about past performance should not be relied on as an indication of future performance, nor should anything in relation to these articles or the Cash Flow Forecast Tool be taken to include representations as to future matters.*





## 2018-Season Advances payments

QSL has begun paying Advances for the 2018 Season, with initial payments made based on QSL indicative pool values as at **18 May 2018**. These were:

QSL POOL	AUD/ TONNE GROSS
2018 Harvest Pool	\$369
2018 Early-Start Actively Managed Pool	\$354
2018 Actively Managed Pool	\$352
2018 Guaranteed Floor Pool	\$345
2018 2-Season Pool	\$379
2018 US Quota	\$721

Please note that the values quoted above have been rounded to the nearest dollar and do not include the QSL Shared Pool allocation, as this varies between milling districts.

You can find the Shared Pool value applicable to you under the **QSL Pool Prices** section of the QSL homepage ([www.qsl.com.au](http://www.qsl.com.au)).

Wilmar growers using QSL will receive Advances based on their individual pricing position, with any unfilled grower-managed pricing orders valued as at 18 May 2018 ICE 11 rates (i.e. marked to market).

The QSL Advances for all other growers will reflect the local payment arrangements detailed in their Cane Supply Agreements.

### INDICATIVE ADVANCES PROGRAM

The current Indicative Advances Program for the 2018 Season is as follows:

Applicable from*	Standard QSL Advances Rate (%)	Accelerated QSL Advances Rate (%)**
Initial	60%	60%
22 August 2018	65%	65%
17 October 2018	70%	70%
21 November 2018	72.5%	72.5%
12 December 2018	75%	90%
23 January 2019	80%	90%
20 February 2019	82.5%	90%
20 March 2019	87.5%	90%
17 April 2019	90%	90%
15 May 2019	92.5%	92.5%
19 June 2019	95%	95%
By 30 July 2019 (TBC)	100%	100%

\* These dates are when QSL makes payments to its milling suppliers to pass on to growers. However, miller and bank processing times may result in later local payment arrangements. QSL usually receives Wilmar payment information late on a Wednesday, and so QSL payments to Wilmar growers are usually made on Thursdays. Again, bank processing time vary but usually result in Wilmar growers receiving funds from QSL in their nominated accounts on a Thursday or Friday.

\*\*Accelerated Advances is offered for growers participating in the QSL Target Price Pool, Individual Futures Contract Pool and Guaranteed Floor Pool on an opt-in basis.

It is important to note that only the initial Advances rate has been confirmed by the QSL Board – all other rates are indicative only and will be reviewed and confirmed by the Board as the season progresses.

Growers receiving QSL Advances will be paid as per 18 May 2018 indicative pool values until the scheduled August Advances rate increase, when subsequent payments will reflect indicative QSL pool value as at the end of July 2018. ■



As a result of this ratio change, the 2018-Season QSL Target Price quoted each day in QSL's Market Snapshot (available online at [www.qsl.com.au](http://www.qsl.com.au)) and our daily price email now reflects the new 3:2:1 pricing ratio applicable to those QSL Target Price Pool growers who are yet to complete their 2018 pricing.

The Target Price Pool figures quoted for the 2019 and 2020 Seasons still reflect the 1:2:2:1 ratio. Following the September roll, the 2018-Season Target Price average will be calculated using a 5:1 ratio against the remaining March and May contracts.

For more information about the rolling process, including key pricing deadlines, please refer to the QSL Target Price Pool's Pricing Pool Terms, available from your local QSL representative or by visiting the QSL website at [www.qsl.com.au](http://www.qsl.com.au)

# GRANTS A WIN-WIN FOR GROWERS AND THE REEF



An additional 14 cane growers in the Wet Tropics have secured funding for projects to reduce nitrogen use and the potential for run-off to the Great Barrier Reef.

Forty-one Wet Tropics growers have now received funding through the Australian Government's Reef Trust IV Repeated Tenders program, which began in early 2017 and is in its final round of grants.

The funding is for a range of land management practice-changes designed to boost profitability and efficiencies, while also improving water quality flowing to the Reef.

CANEGROWERS Innisfail Chairman **Joe Marano** estimates the 41 growers will collectively reduce the amount of nitrogen fertiliser being used on their farms by at least 1200 tonnes over five years.

"We know from previous rounds that growers almost always reduce their nitrogen application rates beyond their contracted amounts, so we expect an even greater amount of nitrogen will be saved from flowing to the Reef," said Mr Marano, who also chairs the Wet Tropics Sugar Industry Partnership.

Some of the projects being funded include the use of biological fertilisers, liquid fertilisers, more targeted use of mill mud and the purchase of GPS systems to enable greater precision when applying fertiliser.

New grant recipient, Tully's **Russell Maifredi**, said his family would be fine-tuning application methods for both fertiliser and plant nutrition products. The aim is to reduce fertiliser use and run-off.

"We are splitting our fertiliser application so we go through twice at half-rate," he said. "And we are using additives to make the soil healthier and unlock unused fertiliser."

"The results from last year's trials have been good. By making our soil and plants healthier we can reduce inorganic nitrogen."

While this is the final round of the Reef Trust IV Repeated Tenders program, Mr Marano said there was still plenty of support for growers wishing to make farm practice changes.

"WTSIP extension officers are available to work one-on-one with growers to develop individualised whole-of-farm nutrient management plans. These are a good starting point for exploring what changes can be made on their properties to improve profitability and water quality run-off."

"As an industry we are continuing to work together to support cane growers so that when further investment comes into the region we are well placed to ensure the funds are spent effectively for the benefit of both growers and the environment," he said.

To find contact details for WTSIP extension officers go to: [www.wtsip.org.au/team/](http://www.wtsip.org.au/team/)

*Tully cane growers and contractors Steven and Russell Maifredi chiefted their Smartcane BMP accreditation in 2016*



Australian Government





# Mill farm tests soil additives to determine value in Wet Tropics

Many products available for sale claim to improve soil health and help producers reduce their fertiliser rates. In the Wet Tropics, some of these products have been trialled and used by industry for some time. Now thanks to funding from the Reef Trust IV Reverse Tenders, much larger commercial trials are taking place.

Tully Sugar Ltd (TSL) operates nine farms producing 150,000 tonnes of cane per year. Like any other grower in the Wet Tropics TSL is committed to maximising the outcome and efficiency of crop inputs such as fertilisers and pesticides while seeking longterm sustainability. TSL is Smartcane BMP accredited.

Last year the company successfully applied for grant funding through Round 2 of the Australian Government's Reef Trust IV Repeated Tender program.

This grant will fund the further evaluation of a range of soil additive products to determine their potential value to Tully growers. The results will be shared with all growers in the district.

Cane Productivity and Development Manager **Greg Shannon** says TSL is constantly looking for ways to improve its farming systems and supporting growers to do the same to 'get a handle' on the various types of soil and fertiliser additives now available.

"We started working four years ago on a small scale with several companies who are interested in determining how effective their products are in the Wet Tropics," Greg Shannon said.

"Ultimately it all depends on soil health.

"While the basics such as a good calcium program, the right cane variety in the right place, RSD and pachymetra management and good fallow works just fine, it is worth testing if these additives can provide something else to our farming systems.

"With this Repeated Tender funding we can evaluate these products on a much larger scale, across a more diverse range of soil types and microclimates on our farming operation.

"This will provide evidence for our farm manager and other growers to make informed decisions about using these products," he said.

*"While the basics such as a good calcium program, the right cane variety in the right place, RSD and Pachymetra management and good fallow works just fine, it is worth testing if these additives can provide something else to our farming systems."*

WTSIP Extension Officer **Alex Lindsay**, who supported TSL with their tender application, says the results of these trials will be interesting to many growers.

"Soil health is vitally important to long-term sustainability but it has become a bit of a marketing buzzword with many products making claims," he said. "However, there isn't much reliable evidence to say how well these products work in the Wet Tropics and what the likely economic returns will be.

"It's great that Tully Sugar are prepared to undertake these large-scale trials and are willing to share their information with growers."

TSL Farm manager **Sean Hodgson** says the results of the trials will help with making commercial decisions that have long term impacts for the farming enterprise and ultimately also the environment.

"It's still early days but we are seeing some positive signs with some products. We are keen to keep testing these products while adjusting our nitrogen rates.

"We're grateful the Australian Government has provided financial support to enable us to achieve an outcome that has such wide-ranging potential benefits" he said.

*Pictured: TSL Farm manager **Sean Hodgson** with Cane Productivity and Development Manager **Greg Shannon**.*





**Warren Males**

CANEGROWERS Head -  
Economist

*Let's not wait  
for a Royal  
Commission  
to sort out  
electricity  
prices.*

## QUEENSLAND'S ELECTRICITY TAX – A CHARGE FOR SERVICES NOT DELIVERED

The Royal Commission into misconduct in the banking, superannuation and financial services industry has shone a light on questionable practices across that sector. Stories about long, trailing commissions and fees for services not delivered have made headlines and challenged many in the industry, including the regulators.

Concerned about the cost of electricity in regional Queensland and its threat to the international competitiveness of sugar industry, CANEGROWERS is participating in Energy Queensland's Working Group ahead of the preparation of its next regulatory proposal and tariff structure statement for the Ergon Energy and Energex networks.

CANEGROWERS retained the Sapere Research Group to independently and objectively assess the Energex and Ergon tariff structure statements (TSS) and provide expert advice in preparing its response to the Energy Queensland's recent Customer Consultation Paper.

It might not be a Royal Commission, but Sapere's detailed analysis of the current suite of Ergon and Energex distribution tariffs raises some serious questions.

Sapere found that these tariffs:

- breach the mandatory requirements set out in the Network Pricing rules and the National Electricity Objective; and hence appear to breach the National Electricity Law;
- represent a substantial charge for future network augmentation that is not taking place; and hence appear to be inconsistent with Australia's Consumer Law.

Sapere's analysis, drawing on reports prepared by Ergon and Energex for the Australian Government, shows that there is extensive spare capacity in both networks to at least meet the demand for electricity until the mid-2020s and most likely beyond.

This means there is no basis whatsoever, under the relevant energy and consumer laws, for the imposition of additional charges in today's tariffs for future network augmentation.

Another signal that further network investment to alleviate any future congestion is expected to be very low is the Queensland Government's plan to extract 100% of accounting profits from Energy Queensland.

It is unlikely that a significant CAPEX program in either the Ergon or Energex networks would be fully debt funded.

CANEGROWERS is concerned that failure to take the significant spare network capacity into account in Energy Queensland's tariff structure will perpetuate and increase the inefficiencies and cross subsidies in the current tariff design to the detriment of our members, irrigators and the wider Queensland economy.

CANEGROWERS strongly supports efficient network pricing and is committed to working with Energy Queensland and the Australian Energy Regulator to ensure Queensland's electricity tariffs comply with Australia's National Electricity and Consumer laws. ■



# CANEGROWERS OPEN 2018



Seasoned tennis pros Dean Pickett and Kate Toomey overcame a pretty ordinary field of contenders to take out the inaugural CANEGROWERS Open doubles competition in Brisbane recently.

Accounting guru Kate and policy prodigy Dean despatched five opposing teams from QCGO's Brisbane office to lift the coveted "gold" medal.

The talented duo bumped off CANEGROWERS Industry Manager Burn Ashburner and CFO Jodie Mittelheuser in a not-so-tight title showdown, 18-3.

It wasn't all bad news for the runners-up, however, with Burn and Jodie taking out the Best Dressed Award, thanks in no small part to Burn's fetching tartan skirt.

Thanks to legal eagle Chris Cooper and numbers wiz Joanna Gesch for their efforts umpiring some pretty average tennis. Thanks also to social club committee members Kate, Burn, Anna Prakash and Sharon Convery for organising a great day.

*Pictured: (top left) Tennis champs Dean Pickett and Kate Toomey, (top right) Best Dressed Burn Ashburner and Jodie Mittelheuser and (above) CANEGROWERS Open field of contenders.*

## Tony says goodbye to industry

Bundaberg CANEGROWERS has farewelled popular Board member Tony Castro, with the local cane farmer and long time grower representative selling up his farm and retiring from the industry

"Tony has represented growers for over 27 years. From the Fairymead Mill Suppliers Committee to a Director on the QCGO Board, he has held many representative roles and has always been a great advocate for Bundaberg growers," Bundaberg CANEGROWERS manager Dale Holliss said.

"His commitment and knowledge will be missed. We wish Tony and Lisa all the best for their future endeavours."



# SOCIAL MEDIA - RISKS FOR GROWERS

Social media is internet sites or apps which facilitate social networking and allow people to create, share or exchange information. The best known and most widely used platforms include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat. While the use of social media is an increasingly important communication tool for people and businesses, it doesn't come without risks.

## Risks

Whilst social media has many positives, the use of it comes with risks that need to be understood and managed. Some risks can lead to exposure of legal liability for the person who posted the material and in some cases for employers and employees.

Posting or making comments on the posts of others is no different from making those comments in public outside the Town Hall, having them appear on the front page of a newspaper or televised on the evening news.

In many ways, comments on social media pose greater risks because social media is visible to anyone in the world with access the particular site or app. Comments can be shared and therefore spread rapidly on social media platforms and are therefore impossible to remove completely even if deleted at the original source.

Social media sites can be accessed by many. Third parties may be able to post offending comments on your social media sites, which may attach liability to you even though not posted by an authorised person.

## SUMMARY OF RISKS APPLICABLE TO SOCIAL MEDIA

### Defamation Law

Any comment about a person on social media that is incorrect and likely to hurt that person's reputation may constitute defamation and is potentially legally actionable. Such comments could be made by you or even by a third party posting on your social media page or account. The person making the comment may be liable, but you also may be liable.

### Australian Consumer Law (ACL)

ACL prohibits various types of conduct including conduct that is misleading or deceptive or unconscionable. It also prohibits the making of false or

misleading representations about goods and services. Conduct on social media is covered by ACL.

### Confidentiality and Privacy

Comments and material posted on social media can potentially offend privacy laws.

### Intellectual Property including Copyright

Posting comments or material on social media can breach the intellectual property rights of the owner of that material. Copyright protects the expression of original ideas in a material form such as written work or video. Permission of the owner of the intellectual property may be required before it can be lawfully posted.

### Reputation

The posting of certain comments or material may not necessarily be unlawful or actionable, but the nature of the content may be such that the reputation of you or your business maybe adversely affected.

### Employers Vicarious Liability

If you have employees, you are potentially responsible for the social media activity, including private activity outside work hours, of employees. The employee could be liable, but you can also be liable for the acts of your employees.

## PERSONAL OR PRIVATE SOCIAL MEDIA

The use of personal or private social media by workers does not necessarily remove the connection to the workplace. You and your business can be exposed to liability arising from inappropriate comments made on private or personal social media by employees.

Your employees can also be liable for comments posted on social media in relation to workplace matters even if done out of hours on personal social media accounts. The Fair Work Commission decided in a 2016 case that

derogatory comments about a supervisor posted by an employee on the employee's Facebook account was a valid reason for dismissal.

The inappropriate use of personal social media accounts by employees can give rise to complaints of bullying, harassment and discrimination. If there is a sufficient connection to your business as employer, then you may also be liable for such conduct. For these reasons employers are generally entitled to prudently access and use information on an employee's social media account.

## HOW TO MINIMISE RISKS

Act with good faith and ensure accuracy and truthfulness in comments posted.

Monitor and review content and remove any potentially offending material and implement a response, grievance or dispute process where necessary.

Be careful if wanting to make adverse comments about a person or organisation and take legal advice where alarm bells ring.

If using someone else's material, ensure you have their approval and permission to use it.

Adopt a social media policy within your business that sets out the rules, procedures, expectations and responsibilities for social media.

Train and educate employees about social media policies and the expected behaviour, standards and risks of social media activity. ■



By Chris Cooper  
CANEGROWERS legal adviser



## FIRST 5 LINES FREE\* FOR CANEGROWERS MEMBERS!

Book online anytime of the day or night at [www.canegrowers.com.au](http://www.canegrowers.com.au) or email us at [ads@CANEGROWERS.com.au](mailto:ads@CANEGROWERS.com.au)

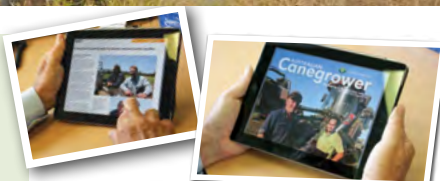
Next deadline is **9 July 2018**.

\* 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.



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## Graham Twyford Machinery Sales Pty Ltd

**Specialising in Used Cane Harvesting Equipment Sales**

### 2012 JD 3520 Wheel Cane Harvester

9 Litre 375 HP 7,700 Hrs 8 blade chopper system, Standard toppler. Elevator rebuild.

### 2010 JD 3520 Track Harvester

9 litre 375 HP engine 9,200 Hrs. 10 Blade Twyford chopper system. 16" grouser plates, new track hubs 2017. 24" elevator extension. Standard toppler. Good machine for age!!

### CASE 7000 1999 & 1/2 model

2000 Upgrades, Wheel machine Komatsu 325 HP engine 11,500 hrs. 15" x 8 blade diff chopper system. Tidy condition for age, new rear tyres, tilt cabin.

### CUMMINS QSL 8.9L Eng.

325 HP @ 1900 RPM. 750 Hrs.

### NEW ! BILLET PLANTER 2500

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

Used 10,000 series

Char-Lynn motors 40 cubic inch.

Used 2 x 6,000 series

Char-Lynn motors 60 cubic inch.

Whole Toppers 2 x CASE

as new one is complete.

**OMNITRAC Full Track walking gear** complete with 24" rubber belts.

Hi-Track drive. 5 roller suit Case or JD.

### NEW ! 4 SLAT OPEN BUTT ROLLERS

Suit JD 3510/20 and CASE.

Helps Drop Dirt. Enquire NOW!

**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.

**Graham Twyford**

48 Central Park Drive, Paget, Mackay

Mobile: +61 (0) 418 742 696

[graham@gtmachinerysales.com.au](mailto:graham@gtmachinerysales.com.au)

[www.gtmachinerysales.com.au](http://www.gtmachinerysales.com.au)

## 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

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**Neil's Parts Australia**  
**Elevator Chain**

**WN-EC-HP200-125**  
**246 Links, 2" Pitch, 6000lb, Hollow Pin**  
**For CIH-Austoft®**  
Replaces: 70010205, 87058600, 70010217, 86734900  
Fits: 4000, 6000, 6500, 7000, 7700, 8000 & 8800  
**For JD-Cameco®**  
Replaces: CB1433201  
Fits: 2500, 3500, 3510, 3520 & 3522  
**1800 463 457**  
AH 0417 662 137, 0408 735 148  
[www.neils.com.au](http://www.neils.com.au)

## Classifieds

### Mossman-Tully

Fiat 640 H/C Tractor. 34 inches clearance, 3567 hrs. Hydraulic Remotes. International 24 plate 3/4 offset. Blue line 24 plate drag offset with Bin wheel tow roller. Tandem Hans trailer. Fits 2 pallets with high standing canvas enclosed cover. Ph. 0429 660 238

John Deere 2120, 4029 hours, \$7,000 ono; Silkwood Implement Trash Planter, \$800 ono. Ph. 0439 471 496

2005 JD 6620 7310 hrs Coupled to Austoft Trailhaul, 2008 MF 7465 4630 hrs Coupled to Austoft Trailhaul. Ph. 0407 162 514

Tractor, International 766 with rops and new engine. Phone 0418 154 557

JD4455 Power shift \$30,000 inc. Plus Delta offset with Drum Roller, 7 Leg Ripper with Crumbler Roller, One tonne Bonel Fertilizer box side dresser, MF 188, MF 35X and many other implements. (Cairns) Ph. 0409 484 178

Toft 4001 suitable for billet planter or harvesting your own cane motor 3yrs old. Pump box rebuilt, good track frame. Ph. 0401 281 262

Lockable Chemical Cabinet 1.65m x 850 x 1.6m - \$500. 10 x 25mm Spring Coil Tyne Tool Bar - \$400. All O.N.O and All Plus GST. Ph. 0419 988 158

2016 KUHN VB2265 ROUND BALER \$50,000 incl GST. Excellent condition, latest model, extra HD silage spec model, low bale count, drop floor, flotation tyres, ISOBUS, approx 60 hours use in non-abrasive conditions, always shedded, factory warranty to 11/2019, \$50,000 incl GST. Ph. 0414 604 974

Gessner 2 Row Sidedresser 1.5 Tonne, Confidor injection (both sides of each row), ground drive, canvas cover, modified for Tableland red soil conditions, VGC, works great, no longer needed. \$16,500 incl GST. Ph 0414 604 974

### Herbert River-Burdekin

International 786 100HP 3468 hrs gc \$8,000 + gst; 5-leg ripper with crumble roller \$2,800 + gst; 2000L fuel tank on 2m stand \$900; 1x1m cement blocks \$75 each. L&R crop divider saws \$600. Ph. 0447 183 182

20,000 litre iron tank in good condition, Suitable for fuel storage. Ingham Area. Contact 07 4774650 or Mob 0427 196 306

### Mackay-Proserpine

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. Howard rotary hoe HR40, 255cm wide - GC. Celli Tiger spike hoe, 2.5m wide with hydraulic crumble roller and oil cooler - VGC. 0438 606 578 (Mackay) Howard Crumble Roller, 4m long (bolts together at centre), brand new still in crate, fits rear tool bar of Howard CH2365DT Rotaryhoe, \$4,422 GST inc. Ph. 0428 236 165

### Bundaberg-Rocky Point

2011 M135X Kubota fwd tractor. 135hp, one owner since new with only 2500hrs. Full led light set up and always shedded and serviced regularly. \$45000 neg. Ph. Nick 0401 084 763

6270 Massey Ferguson, P + H Billet Planter, 1105 Massey Ferguson; 6100 Kubota Inter row with 300 LT Tank 3 Row sprayer, 3 yard trailable scoop; 6 T Trailer Spiderhubs 10 - 20 Tyres. Ph. 0427 738 712 / 0403 481 284

LT10 Cumming new turbo, needs work; 6 Cylinder Perkins needs work, 14 4" aluminum pipes, 3 point linkage fert box with tynes; Single row fert box, Hodge drop planter, under buster ripper 4 tynes for 90 inch rotary. Ph. 0427 738 712 / 0403 481 284

## Rainfall Report

brought to you by AustSafe Super

Location	Recorded rainfall (mm)		Average rainfall (mm)	
	7 days to 9am		January–June	
	18.06.18	25.06.18		
Mossman	0	5	2020	1724
Mareeba AP	0	0.6	651	717
Cairns	0	4	1900	1598
Mt Sophia	0	15	3134	2577
Babinda	0	0	1460	3261
Innisfail	0	52	2683	2714
Tully	0	36	2671	3154
Cardwell	0	6	1347	1655
Lucinda	0	0	1377	1653
Ingham	Tce	6	1572	1555
Abergowrie	0	0	1621	1429
Townsville	0.2	0	738	868
Ayr DPI	0	0	571	712
Proserpine	0	0.8	803	1027
Mirani	0	11	609	1118
Mackay	1	15	658	1169
Sarina (Plane Ck)	0	0	779	1282
Bundaberg	0.2	0	430	610
Childers South	0.8	0	566	513
Maryborough	0.2	0	584	728
Tewantin	0	0	839	1131
Eumundi	0	0	927	1095
Nambour	0.2	0.6	730	1085
Woongoolba	0.6	0	677	834
Murwillumbah	0	0	484	1035
Ballina	0	4	929	1146
Woodburn	0	0	595	878



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

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HBM billet planter. New chains and flights with 3t side tipper bin. \$5,500; Mcleod 3 Row hydraulic folding cultivator with rakes \$2,500; Southern cross model 100 irrigator 200 nelson gun, NO HOSE \$1,650. All prices include GST. Ph 0428 221 850

## Wanted

Wanted: 18 - 22 disc plough (Mackay area). Ph. 0478 934 556

Wanted STL Shares. Ph. 0419 717 006

Wanted to Buy: Lateral Move Irrigator and Pivot. Ph. 0407 960 575

Wanted: Toft 6000 35-1 planetary hub or parts. Ph. 02 6646 0207

Wanted to Buy: Massey Ferguson 165 used Rear tyre - 14 x 9 x 38. Ph. 07 4056 2821

Wanted to buy: Spray unit, 600L minimum, prefer 800L+. Boom spray and/or Irvin spray or similar. Ph: 0419 788 376

## Positions Vacant

Wanted full- or part-time farm manager (Mackay area). Ph. 07 49591479

## Property

Wanted Farm for Lease 50-100ha with small house and farm shed with basic equipment. Ph. 0488 934 076

GLEN ISLA CANE FARMS - TIGHTLY HELD AREA. Approx\* 334.82 acres in 8 FH titles with fertile alluvial soils. 2 equip irrig bores, mains & hydrants, 190ML allocation. Queenslander style home. Motivated Vendors looking to retire. Please phone Gary Johns - 0427 241 250

HOMEBUSH/OAKENDEN CANE FARM for sale in Mackay region. 100T/HA 5 year average 54HA property. Fully laser levelled farm with a large bore and underground water mains throughout. Block has 2 deeds 90 acre and 50 acre which can be sold separately. This years crop, Machinery shed with 3 phase power and water, tractor, irrigation winch, some implements and tail water pit pump all included in sale. Siding on boundary, great soil and no rocks. Ph Andrew 0428 597 324

VICTORIA PLAINS CANE FARM 84ha - average 6000 tonne - Kinchant dam allocation and bore water. Irrigation equip, 2 sheds, machinery. Renovated 4-bedroom home. Genuine enquiries 0409 342 123

600 acres Cane & Cattle - Sarina, 9 Titles, 2 Large Houses, 2 Sheds, Near new Tractors & Implements, 20 mins City Gates, 5 mins Sarina. Ph. 0418186525

100ha VICTORIA PLAINS canefarm for sale, 318ml Kinchant dam allocation, this years crop, tractors, irrigation and implements included. 15x9m shed. For more information Ph. 0419541372

Cane farm Proserpine 199 hectares total 155 hectares under cane. 2018 crop 10,500 ton approx. 495megs of water. 2x hardhoses and half of the farm is flood irrigated. Farm comes with machinery. 3 houses on the farm main house is fully airconed and has a large swimming pool. 0400 794 857

Cane farm Tarakan Road ABERGOWRIE 270 acres freehold Genuine enquiries pls phone 07 4777 4633 or 0408 608 664

Tropical Paradise Cane Farm/Equestrian Training Property, 96 acres 6kms to PORT DOUGLAS. All farmable land, 70 acres producing quality cane, 25 acres set up for horses. More Pics [www.horsedeals.com.au/listings/tropical-horse-paradise-b46ffd33-0236-427b-9f3e-ddaad136bb28](http://www.horsedeals.com.au/listings/tropical-horse-paradise-b46ffd33-0236-427b-9f3e-ddaad136bb28). Easy farm to maintain. Call 0408 880 724 Mandy

# Look up and Live

Think ahead, working in close proximity to powerlines has its hazards!

Working in close proximity to powerlines, above or below the ground, has its hazards. Unfortunately each year, workers in the sugar cane industry come into contact with Ergon energy assets. This includes contact with poles, wires and pillar boxes by

vehicles and the loads they are carrying.

Contact can also occur during harvesting and haulout operations, when moving machinery and plant from one location to another or when irrigating.

CANEGROWERS Mackay can

now offer growers a voluntary online induction called Safe Working Near Electrical Assets in the Rural Industry, which has been endorsed by Ergon Energy. For further information on this online course call CANEGROWERS Mackay office on 4944 2600. ■



# Spotted anything unusual?

## NOTHING WILL PROTECT YOUR CROP BETTER THAN A GOOD HARD LOOK

Growers have an important role in keeping watch for exotic pests, diseases and weeds that could devastate the Australian sugarcane industry.

Early detection and reporting is the key to protecting farms, industries and the communities that rely on them. Every moment lost harms our chance of successful eradication.

If you spot anything unusual in your crop please call the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881. The call is free (except from mobiles).

Visit [phau.com.au/industries/sugarcane](http://phau.com.au/industries/sugarcane) for further information and a list of the top priority cane pests.



**Look, be alert, call an expert**