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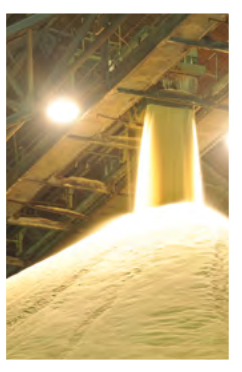


SOIL HEALTH & CROP NUTRITION

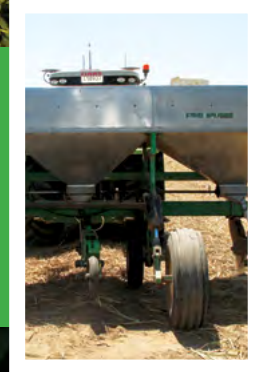
IMPROVING FARM PRODUCTIVITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL OUTCOMES THROUGH INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICE



**Bundaberg
Sugar Mill
to produce
organic
sugar**



**Good news
for growers
as Peru FTA
opens up
market**



**Rate Mate:
DAF unveils
nitrogen
tool for cane
industry**

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We come to you

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Help to lodge claims

If something goes wrong and you need to report a claim, we are here to assist you during the claims process.

Contact your local CANEGROWERS Office to discover how WE CAN HELP YOU!

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COVER IMAGE: Digging peanuts on a cane farm in the Childers region in preparation for harvest. Read more about it on page 11.

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Smartcane BMP — let's step it up!

By Paul Schembri, Chairman CANEGROWERS

The most successful industries are those with the vision to plan for the future. And in my experience, the best people to carry out that planning are the people with real skin in the game — the ones who stand to win or lose depending on their own actions.

Around 20 years ago, Australia's cotton industry faced a real fork in the road. It was beset by escalating environmental concerns that seemed set to either close down the industry entirely or at the very least, sledgehammer it with massive environmental regulation.

The root cause of these problems was a public perception that cotton growers were exposing rural communities to the harmful effects of agricultural chemicals.

Cotton industry leaders decided action was needed to turn around this adverse perception, so they developed Cotton BMP (Best Management Practice). Growers responded positively and the rest, as they say, is history.

The cotton industry is now regarded as one of the most environmentally responsible agricultural industries in Australia.

It has an extremely high rate of grower engagement in its BMP program, and to demonstrate the seriousness of their commitment, all elected members are required to be BMP accredited.

Importantly, the solution to cotton's problems were industry-inspired, meaning growers, not government, controlled their own destiny.

The cane industry's own best management practice program, Smartcane BMP, has been running for around four years and it's pleasing to note that 276,000 out of roughly 400,000 hectares of Queensland's cane production land is now benchmarked in the program. To date, 64,000 ha has been accredited.

Should the number of accredited farms be higher? Absolutely!

Unfortunately, there are a couple of myths around BMP that make some growers reluctant to engage.

Possibly the greatest of these myths says that you can only do BMP via a computer — that is not so.

When I started my BMP journey, I, like every other grower, was naturally apprehensive. However, I approached the program in a way that worked best for me.

I didn't want to record my farming information electronically, so instead I recorded all my data in a note book. I then used that information to develop a series of farm maps.

The hardest part of BMP is, of course, the record keeping. But what I've discovered is that once you have created your records, maintaining them on an annual basis is not too difficult at all.

Another myth about BMP is that it only exists to keep the government off our backs.

Whilst the threat of government regulation played a part in the original development of the program, I have found that my participation in BMP has given me a powerful insight into what I need to do to optimise farm profitability.

It is also worth noting the growing global trend towards sustainably produced sugar.

Around the world, those involved in selling sugar are coming under pressure from buyers to ensure that the sugar produced, whether it be from Australia or other countries, is sourced from sustainable growing systems.

So, BMP is becoming increasingly important, not just to satisfy the requirements of government, but as a prerequisite to selling our sugar.

I ask growers to have a good look at Smartcane BMP and if you are not already signed up, please contact your local facilitator.

We really need to ramp up the level of engagement and accreditation.

Success is rarely the single action of an individual, it is the sum of all the "small bits".

I ask all growers to do their "small bit" to get us into a better place for the future. ■



"There is a myth that says you can only do BMP via a computer — that is not so. I ask all growers to do their 'small bit' to get us into a better place for the future."



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NEWS IN BRIEF

PAFTA provides pathway to Latin America

Queensland sugar has gained greater access to one of South America's fastest growing markets following the ratification of the Peru-Australia Free Trade Agreement earlier this month.

Under the terms of the agreement a number of Australian agricultural exports including sugar, dairy, rice, sorghum, sheepmeat and wine were granted immediate tariff-free access to Peru, while other exports, such as beef, will see tariffs slashed within five years.

The new access for Australian raw sugar is relatively small, starting at just 30,000 tonnes in year one of the agreement before increasing to 60,000 tonnes in year six and 90,000 tonnes in year 18. However, it is hoped the deal will open the door to other markets in South America.

"Peru is one of the fastest growing economies in the world with an average growth rate of 5.9 per cent over the last decade", Trade Minister, **Steven Ciobo**, said. "This agreement gives Australian businesses the opportunity to share in that growth."

"PAFTA will serve as a gateway to Latin America, and to value chains between

Asia and the Americas. It is also a stepping-stone to a trade agreement with the Pacific Alliance (Mexico, Colombia, Chile and Peru)."

Welcoming the deal, CANEGROWERS Chairman **Paul Schembri** said it that while the quantity of sugar covered by the agreement wasn't significant in terms of the industry's overall production, the deal is strategically important as it opens up another market to Australian Sugar.

"It's important because it creates market diversity," Mr Schembri said. "By selling into multiple markets, we will continue to ensure that growers receive a premium for their product."

"If the Australian sugar industry can continue to produce good a quality product, it will continue to be sought around the world and this will lead to greater market access and a more secure and prosperous future for our members." ■

POWER PLANT ON TRACK FOR MID-YEAR FINISH

Construction of MSF Sugar's \$75 million Tableland Green Energy Power Plant (TGEPP) is continuing full steam.

Project Manager **Mark Magnanini** said several major construction milestones had been reached since the start of 2018, following the arrival of an \$18 million steam turbine generator.

"In January, we erected a 38.35m chimney stack and assembled the furnace chamber, cooling tower, steam transformer and the high and low voltage electrical switchroom."

Mr Magnanini said the boiler would be hydro tested in March, with other major commissioning activities scheduled to take place in June before the planned project completion in July. ■



Rate Mate

"The step-by-step guide is easy to use and contains graphs showing current costs and potential savings."

DAF launches sugarcane nitrogen tool

Cane growers now have a new online tool at their disposal to help with calculating nitrogen costs.

The 'Sugarcane Nitrogen Rate Mate' has been developed by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) as a step-by-step guide to help growers to calculate nitrogen rates, cost savings and more.

DAF agricultural economist, **Samuel Cook** said growers could save money by monitoring their nitrogen use more closely and changing their method of calculating fertiliser rates.

"By using the tool, it will help growers analyse the impact of nitrogen use on farm profitability," Mr Cook said.

"Growers undertake a simple and quick assessment of their nitrogen requirements, and the tool will estimate the cost savings a farmer can make by reducing their nitrogen rate."

"The step-by-step guide is easy to use and contains graphs showing current costs and potential savings."

"Until now, growers have had to calculate this for themselves by using a worksheet, which can be time consuming and difficult to analyse."

Mr Cook said feedback was welcome from growers about the usability and functionality of this tool.

The Sugarcane Nitrogen Rate Mate is available from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries website at <http://bit.ly/2omCTBV> or call 13 25 23. ■

Bundaberg Sugar breaks new ground

Bundaberg Sugar has announced it will begin processing certified organic raw sugar in 2018.

Making the announcement earlier this month, Chief Executive Officer **Guy Basile**, said interest from retailers and manufacturers, who are currently purchasing organic sugar from overseas, had prompted the decision.

"Customer interest is not only in organic sugar but particularly Australian grown organic. This is a first for Bundaberg Sugar and we will be the only suppliers of Australian organic sugar," Mr Basile said.

"Initially we will produce small quantities of organic raw sugar but growth and further reach into the market will allow us to increase production.

"Our intention is to develop a robust customer base to meet the needs of retailers and manufacturers who are currently purchasing organic sugar from overseas.

"Supporting this is the quality certification we currently have with the British Retail Consortium (BRC) and Bonsucro for sustainable global practices in food production," he said.

Bundaberg Sugar General Manager Operations, **David Pickering** said 20 hectares of land on company farms will produce around 2,000 tonnes of organic sugar cane in 2018.

A further 35 hectares of land is currently in transition from standard to organic farming.

"There are special processes involved. On our farms we've had to ensure the land has only organic inputs for a number of years prior to being certified.

"Crushing the organic sugar cane will occur at the end of the 2018 crushing season. Key principles associated with transporting and milling the cane is tracking and segregating the organic product from normal production.

"There is a significant emphasis on cleaning between making non-organic and organic sugar. It normally takes around two to three days for the sugar process to cycle through the mill. Therefore, in manufacturing organic sugar, we have to modify our production to ensure we are processing organic product only.

"We have further stringent procedures in place within our packaging plant to segregate the organic from non-organic sugar," Mr Pickering said. ■



Pictured: Bundaberg Sugar personnel – Ian Dart, Farm Productivity Manager; Simon Doyle, General Manager Farms; David Pickering, General Manager Operations.

REEF TRUST III Water Quality Grants



Need financial help to make a practice change?

Reef Trust III is an Australian Government program that aims to support farmers to make practice changes that benefit their yields as well as water quality.

**Round 2 Applications for Wet Tropics Sugar Cane Growers
OPENS 26 FEBRUARY-27 APRIL 2018**

Funding available:

SINGLE FARM - UP TO \$25,000

MULTI-FARM - UP TO \$80,000

DISTRICT SCALE - UP TO \$100,000

To find out more go to: wtsip.org.au/reef-trust-3-grants



Policy Update

Environment with Matt Kealley

Industry with Burn Ashburner

Project Catalyst 2018

Project Catalyst has been going for 10 years and supports a network of likeminded growers who are testing ideas and management practices on their farms for sustainability and productivity improvements.

I have attended four Project Catalyst forums and the 2018 forum in Townsville has reaffirmed my view that Project Catalyst is an excellent networking event for growers who are wanting to test their ideas and share their experiences.

There is positivity in the room, a mix of ages and experience from across the industry and a willingness to find ways to improve their business operations.

The program is funded by Coke through the Coca-Cola Foundation and by the Australian Government through Phase III of the Reef Trust Program.

It is supported by WWF, NRM organisations from the Burdekin, Mackay-Whitsundays and Wet Tropics regions and other partners including Bayer Crop Science.

The presentations focused on grower trials in soil health, chemicals and nutrient management with growers and the agronomist giving updates on the trials being tested.

Water quality and the reef still drives the agenda and questions from the floor kept the discussion fluid which tended to continue into the breaks.

The forum also held panel and workshop sessions which discussed the trials as well as record keeping and tools to keep records, succession planning, technology and ideas for innovation.

Sustainable sugar was discussed at the forum and Coca-Cola outlined their sustainable sugar needs. CANEGROWERS provided an update on the sustainable sugar work we are doing with Smartcane BMP and Bonsucro to meet these needs.

Mick Quirk set the scene and the on-ground engagement was energetically delivered by Terry Granshaw, the Smartcane BMP facilitator from the Burdekin.

Terry's passion for the cane industry and the process he uses to support growers improve their productivity was well received.

His message was simple – keep the records for yourself and use them for your business – the rest will take care of itself.

All the growers I know have ideas and test these on their farm all the time.

Project Catalyst brings some of these ideas and growers together which inspires them to keep innovating. In my mind, this is always a good thing. ■



Agriculture increases employment

CANEGROWERS is a member of the Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance (RJSA), which provides leadership and advice to government, service providers and other organisations on employment, skills, industry training and workforce-planning issues on behalf of Queensland's agriculture industries.

To be effective the RJSA needs to get some perspective on the overall employment in agriculture.

The 2016 Census data has been analysed and has found that agriculture employs 60,608 people in Queensland, an increase of 9 percent compared to 2011.

This is the equivalent of 5,189 more people employed in agriculture, of which 33% are female and 67% male.

Most agricultural sub-sectors have increased their level of employment, except sugar cane.

- Nursery and floriculture production – up 56%;
- Fruit and tree growing – up 24%;
- Agriculture, forestry and fishing support services – up 23%;
- Other cropping (sugar, cotton, etc) employment – down 12 %

Agriculture business employment breakdown showed 18,281 owner managers represent 30% of the workforce of which 10,083 have no employees, 7,219 employed 1–19 workers, and 573 employed 20 or more employees.

The average age of the farmer in Queensland agriculture is 46 years old, with 24% of the workforce over 60, which shows that the age of workers is still an issue as the industry is at risk to lose 14,578 to retirement in the next five years.

The level of employment also increased across all major occupations. There are fewer managers but there are

more labourers, machine operators and drivers, technicians and trade people, professionals, sales workers and others.

CANEGROWERS is working with Queensland Farmers' Federation to maintain and enhance the RJSA. ■



Economics with Warren Males

Australia's electricity policy dilemma is far from over

Under the current regulatory framework, electricity prices can go in one direction — up!

Reflecting an abundance of natural energy resources in the form of coal and natural gas, Australia's comparative advantage in low cost energy production was, in the past, a key driver of economic development. Our energy intensive industries thrived. Nowhere was this more important than in Queensland.

With a shift in policy, especially in the regulation of electricity prices, that comparative advantage has disappeared. Soaring prices are a drag on economic activity.

"The transmission and distribution networks are natural monopolies, so costs to users depend on the quality of regulation rather than the extent of competition."

To contain and manage costs, businesses across the state are investing behind the meter in alternative energy sources. For some, turning the clock back and installing diesel pumps and generators makes sense.

In the electricity market about half of the electricity bill can be attributed to the cost of getting the power from generators to users.

As Professor Ross Garnaut said to the 7 February annual meeting of the Australian Agricultural and Resource Economics Society in Adelaide, "The transmission and distribution networks are natural monopolies, so costs to users depend on the quality of regulation rather than the extent of competition."

He argues that flaws in regulation have led to wasteful over investment. High guaranteed rates of return on these investments mean the cost is passed to users.

Professor Garnaut says, "The over-investment has been large enough to show up in massive declines in total factor productivity in the utilities sector".

In this environment that the Queensland Competition Authority (QCA) has been asked to determine regulated retail electricity prices for regional Queensland for 2018-19.

While QCA's hands are tied on methodology, CANEGROWERS has identified several areas that QCA could consider to reduce prices:

- Ergon has a flatter load profile than Energex.
- Retail costs faced by Ergon are lower than Energex.
- Retail prices in South-East Queensland are below standing offer prices.
- Ergon's actual renewable energy costs appear to be less than allowed levels. ■



Money Matters

with AustSafe Super

AUSTSAFE SUPER NOTCHES UP A MILESTONE IN THE INDUSTRY

This year marks AustSafe Super's 30th anniversary. Founded in 1988, the Fund began with under 1,000 members and \$100 million funds under management. Three decades later, it represents over 100,000 members and \$2.4 billion funds under management.

Delivering better outcomes

Last year, we continued our track record of delivering strong investment returns along with regional seminars for members and employers and introduced a number of product improvements, including the launch of our Mobile App.

Our efforts haven't gone unnoticed with the Fund collecting several industry-based accolades throughout 2017. AustSafe Super was named Best Growth Super Fund in the Money Magazine 'Best of the Best' Awards, and was ranked 2nd out of ten in the top ten performing growth funds for the 12 months to 31 December, 2017¹.

Celebrating 30 years of growth

In our 30th year, there will be a number of exciting developments. Our members and employers are encouraged to keep an eye out at austsafe.com.au and follow us on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter for the latest updates.

For more information, please visit austsafe.com.au

¹ Chant West. A Stellar Year For Super Funds. 18 January 2018.

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Mark-to-market and Advances



By QSL Finance Manager –
Supplier Relations Bryce Wenham

QSL's Advances Payment system is designed to provide cash flow to Queensland cane growers both in and out of the harvest season by paying suppliers in regular instalments throughout the entire year.

QSL pays the first Advances Payment instalment when raw sugar is delivered to a bulk sugar terminal.

Due to our funding arrangements, this initial payment is subject to an upper limit of 60% of QSL's weighted average forecast final price for all pools, and is usually paid on a Wednesday (or Thursday for Wilmar growers) for all deliveries up to midnight of the preceding Sunday.

Top-up payments are then usually made at monthly intervals based on the results of the prior month.

Because pricing of QSL's pools continues until the season finishes in June each year, a portion of each pool usually remains to be sold until May or June.

The indicative pool results used to determine advance payments are therefore a combination of the actual pricing that has been secured and an estimate of the value of pricing that remains to be undertaken in the pool concerned.

For example, at the end of January 2018 the 2017 QSL Harvest Pool was approximately 82% priced, which meant there was still 18% of the pool to be locked in to pricing.

When this pricing is undertaken depends on a combination of the pricing guidelines for the pool and when physical sugar sales have been secured (i.e. sales and pricing must be aligned to the relevant ICE 11 contract. You cannot price against the October contract if you are not physically selling that sugar until June).

Until 100% of a pool's pricing is complete and the final Shared Pool result secured and applied to all pools, the final result of each pool is unknown. But in order to value the pool for Advance payments, QSL must make an estimate.

To achieve an indicative value for each QSL pool, the pricing that has not been undertaken is valued at what is known as a **mark to market**.

This means that if 18% of the pool is unpriced, this portion of the pool is valued at whatever the spot sugar price is on an assigned day, usually the final day of the month prior to payment.

If the market improves, there is a possibility the pricing yet to be undertaken will actually be done at a higher rate, increasing the indicative pool price and its subsequent final result.

However, if ICE 11 prices are falling, the pool values can reduce further as the actual pricing achieved may be lower than the mark-to-market estimate.

In short, the pool price is variable until the end of the season and all pool marketing and pricing activities are completed. But we need to draw a line in the sand in order to come to a value to base the Advances on – hence the use of "mark to market".

CURRENT MARKET IMPACT ON ADVANCES

Since December, the world raw sugar price has fallen by about \$50 a tonne in Australian-dollar terms, primarily driven by lower ICE 11 prices and a strong Australian dollar.

The AUD/USD has moved over 600 points in the past month, while continuing talk of a global sugar surplus saw the ICE 11 fall over 200 points during the same period.

Some of the QSL-managed pools' indicative prices have subsequently been revised down and February Advances payments reflect these new, lower pool values.

As explained above, QSL's pool prices are estimates only until 30 June each year.

DISCLAIMER:

This report contains information of a general or summary nature. While all care is taken in the preparation of this report, the reliability, accuracy or completeness of the information provided in the document is not guaranteed. The update on marketing and pricing activity does not constitute financial product or investment advice. QSL does not accept any responsibility to any person for the decisions and actions taken by that person with respect to any of the information contained in this report.



QSL believes there will be opportunities to secure improved returns before the end of the season.

However, in the interim, the Advances reflect pool valuations calculated using current market prices.

CHANGING ADVANCE PAYMENT RATES

While QSL has the ability to and does adjust Advance rates to try and maintain cash flow to growers, to increase the payment rate in a falling price environment increases the risk of potential overpayment.

This issue is just one of the factors the QSL Board considers when it reviews the indicative Advances rates each month.

Other considerations when determining the Advance rate include expected cash flow from shipments of raw sugar to customers, expected rates of deliveries from Suppliers to bulk sugar terminals, margin calls QSL may need to pay on forward pricing and QSL's available borrowing facilities

While QSL aims to provide as much payment as possible as early as possible, it must also manage the risk that growers are not overpaid based on an indicative Advances rate that leaves no room for adjustment, particularly in a falling market.

For full details of how much remains to be priced in each QSL Pool and an estimate of how future movements in the ICE 11 and our exchange rate could change the final value of each pool, please refer to the Pool Sensitivities Matrices for your milling region.

You can find a link to these on your pool prices page on the QSL website (www.qsl.com.au). ■

The Cashflow Forecast Tool

Wilmar growers using QSL's Cashflow Forecast Tool are reminded that it uses the latest indicative pool values to create a forecast and so as a result, the cashflow data generated will continue to fluctuate until the pool results are finalised on 30 June each year. For this reason we recommend that growers using this tool generate a new forecast at least once a month to ensure they are accessing the latest estimate.

The cashflow forecast data provided is based on many assumptions and is subject to significant uncertainties, many of which are outside the control of QSL. Growers using this tool should also be mindful that the data provided only details the Grower's Economic Interest in sugar (GEI Sugar) payment portion of their QSL Advance payment and does not include any allowances, deductions or adjustments that may be passed on by the miller. As such, QSL does not make any representations as to the accuracy of the information derived from the Cashflow Forecast tool, nor does QSL make any guarantees that this outcome will be achieved. ■

NOMINATIONS CLOSING FOR NEW EARLY POOL

Nominations for QSL's new 2018 Early-Start Actively Managed Pool close this month.

Just like the standard QSL Actively Managed Pool, the QSL Early-Start Actively Managed Pool is an in-season Committed Pool managed by QSL and has a minimum tonnage nomination of 10 metric tonnes. But as its name suggests, it starts pricing two months before the standard QSL Actively Managed Pool, giving it a longer pricing window. This pool provides an opportunity for growers who are prepared to commit some tonnage early to join a pool that commences pricing early.

For further information about this pool, please read the applicable Pricing Pool Terms for this pool (available at www.qsl.com.au), or contact your local QSL Grower Services Team representative. ■

IMPORTANT QSL DATES

WHEN	WHERE
28 February 2018*	Last day to nominate tonnes to the 2018 QSL Early-Start Actively Managed Pool .
1 March 2018	Nominations open for the 2018 QSL Harvest, Actively Managed and Guaranteed Floor Pools , as well as the 2019 2-Season Actively Managed Pool .
30 April 2018*	Last day to nominate tonnes to the 2018 QSL Actively Managed Pool, 2018 QSL Guaranteed Floor Pool and/or 2019 2-Season Actively Managed Pool .
30 April 2018	Last day to transfer any unfilled orders from the QSL Target Price Pool and/or QSL Individual Futures Contract Pool to other QSL pools for the 2018 Season. <i>Please note: Growers can only transfer unfilled orders from the QSL Individual Futures Contract Pool if they have not priced any portion of their nominated tonnage.</i>
* Please note: Isis Central Sugar Mill, Mackay Sugar and Bundaberg Sugar growers will be advised by their miller of their local QSL Pool Nomination deadlines for 2018.	

SRA research station gets **SMARTCANE BMP TICK OF APPROVAL**

Sugar Research Australia (SRA) has achieved Smartcane Best Management Practice (BMP) accreditation for its research station at Ingham in the Herbert region.

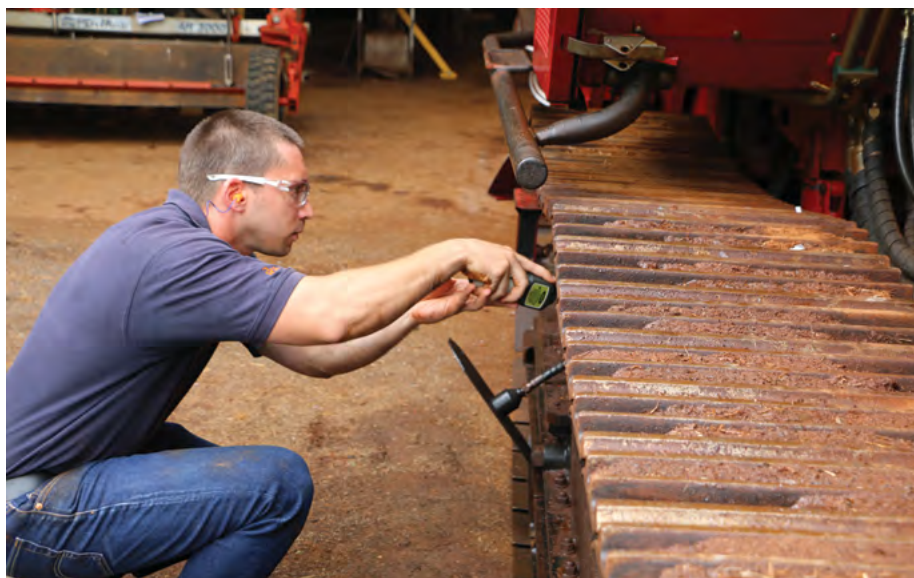
Smartcane BMP is the industry-led and government-supported program to assist sugarcane farming enterprises achieve and demonstrate best practice.

SRA CEO Neil Fisher said that SRA placed a high priority on ensuring its research stations are meeting the Smartcane BMP standard for management and stewardship.

"We have already achieved Smartcane BMP accreditation for our stations at Meringa and Mackay, and are delighted that the SRA Ingham station has now joined the list," Mr Fisher said.

"SRA is also pursuing BMP accreditation at our other sites, consistent with SRA's farm operational and environmental management plans.

"SRA's research stations have unique differences to a typical sugarcane farm. We grow cane but our core focus is research, development and adoption, which means that our objectives vary from those of a commercial farm.



"The high value product we produce from our farms is quality results and observations, leading to improved profitability, productivity and sustainability for growers and millers.

"However, the principles of Smartcane BMP remain the same and are a natural fit with our operations."

The accreditation occurred following the work of SRA's Ingham Farm Manager, Vince Blanco, with support from SRA Meringa Farm Manager, Jeff Smith, and SRA's Leader for Farm Operations, Jerome Gumley.

It also follows a series of investments and improvements that have occurred at the SRA Ingham station in recent years.

In line with the Ingham BMP accreditation, Mr Fisher said that major investments had been made in response to an external review that pointed toward specific steps that could improve the sugarcane plant-breeding program in the Herbert region.

"SRA has invested in additional staff within the breeding program, farming equipment and infrastructure. We have also purchased a near-infrared machine that allows for efficient and rapid analysis of samples and adds value to the breeding program," he said.

"This equipment is providing vital research support for local variety development and, over coming years, will continue to add value to variety development and other research activities."

In addition to the extensive work on developing new varieties, SRA research activities that now occur in the Herbert include soil health, yellow canopy syndrome, enhanced efficiency fertilisers, and improving harvesting efficiency. ■



Pictured: (left) Farm Manager, Vince Blanco, was part of the team that achieved the BMP accreditation for the SRA Research Station. (above) Harvesting efficiency and optimisation is one of the research activities undertaken by SRA Ingham staff. Pictured is Adoption Officer for Harvesting, Phil Patane.

WHEN SOIL HEALTH IS NUTS

Southern Queensland's 2018 peanut harvest has begun and cane growers who've used the crop as a fallow rotation are set to reap the benefits for years to come.

The Peanut Company of Australia says around 1,000 hectares has been planted to peanuts in the Bundaberg and Childers regions this season with a further 20ha at Maryborough.

PCA Supply Manager Lionel Wieck says the harvest will continue through to late-June.

"At this stage it is all on track with peanut yields expected to be 5–7 tonnes a hectare depending on growing conditions," he said.

There are some very good reasons why cane growers turn their fallow land to peanuts.

A 2006 Queensland Government study found that cane yields in a crop following peanuts can be boosted by at least 20% over the whole crop cycle.

There is also the potential for longer ratoons. Mr Wieck said growers have reported up to seven ratoons maintaining cane yields over 100 t/ha following a peanut crop.

"Peanuts take 21 to 24 weeks from plant to maturity depending on conditions and there's hardly any waiting after the peanut harvest before cane can be planted."

Being a legume, the peanut plant takes nitrogen from the air and fixes it into the soil via the root system. After harvest, the peanut trash releases nitrogen as it breaks down meaning some growers can avoid fertilising the following plant cane crop.

PCA says peanuts can break the nematode cycle where the pest has been a problem and allow for the use of herbicides with different chemistry to break weed cycles.

There is, of course, also a financial return with growers paid for nuts in shell on delivery to the weighbridge at the PCA processing plant at Kingaroy.

"There's good quality kernel developing this year which should make the growers around \$1,000 a tonne," Mr Wieck said.

The timing on the harvest depends on when the peanuts were put in and whether the cane grower is aiming for an autumn or spring cane plant.

"Peanuts take 21 to 24 weeks from plant to maturity depending on conditions," Mr Wieck said. "And there's hardly any waiting after the peanut harvest before cane can be planted."

"The peanut trash is easy to handle. I've seen a bed former working the same day as the peanuts were taken out and the cane planter following soon after."

Peanuts prefer sands, sandy loams and light clay loams with the best returns under reliable rainfall or irrigation. ■

PCA offers advice and guidance to farmers via its Farming Services Team <http://www.pca.com.au>



REDUCING RAT DAMAGE IN SUGARCANE THROUGH REVEGETATION

By WTSIP

Riverside tree-planting projects in the Wet Tropics are solving rat problems for cane farmers.

Researchers have reported a 70 to 100% reduction in rat numbers after tree-planting initiatives on land between cane crops and waterways. The growers involved say seeing crop damage from rats is a thing of the past.

CANEGROWERS Cairns Region member Frank Gatti began planting trees 25 years ago, at a time when rats were destroying up to 20 metres of cane either side of a creek on his land at Woopen Creek.

He and his brother Stephen collaborated with the then Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service to revegetate a 3.5km long strip of land (30-40m wide) between sugarcane and creek on their property just north of Innisfail.

Amazingly, an 80% reduction in the rat population was recorded within 12 months.

"There was no grass for the rats anymore," Frank said. "As part of the trial, we initially left some sections of grass and during the trial rats were captured in those areas, while there was virtually nil capture where we had revegetated."

"Before the project we would lose 20 to 50m of cane every year on our riverbank country. Revegetating has taken the guinea grass out."

Further south at Ingham, Lawrence DiBella has seen a 70% reduction in rat problems since a revegetation project on his land bordering the Herbert River.

The DiBella family began tree-planting in 1994 and now have about 1.5km of riverbank land under trees, varying from 10 to 40m in thickness, depending on the area.

Lawrence said the benefits were four-fold — the revegetation project has reduced the rat population, created a buffer for flood debris so it no longer ends up in his cane crop, encouraged native wildlife such as sea eagles and owls which eat rats, and improved the amenity of his property.

"Some years we still get rat damage but now it is just the occasional year not every year," he said.





“The reduction in rats and hymenachne are two pluses and another is the safety aspect. The trees keep tractors away from the edge of creek banks. Also, the area helps to filter any run-off during times of flooding.”

“Before the project we would lose 20 to 50m of cane every year on our riverbank country. Revegetating has taken the guinea grass out.

“Rat issues are now due to specific cane varieties like Q208 and some seasonal conditions.”

Lawrence said it was important to have an integrated pest management approach with a focus on keeping the cane crop weed-free, rat baiting when required and managing the harbourage areas.

The DiBellas learnt by trial and error that endemic species were the best for riverside revegetation because they can withstand cyclones and floods better than natives from outside the local area. His plantings feature Queensland maples, black bean trees and bleeding hearts. In the wetter areas, he has melaleucas and Leichhardt trees.

The family now collects seeds for propagation in their own nursery, as do the Gattis who have found endemic species like quondongs, Leichhardt trees and river cherries are the best performers in their area. *Continued. p 14* ►



Pictured: (top) Revegetated rainforest on the Gatti property; (above) Woonen Creek cane farmer Frank Gatti.



WEED AND PEST CONTROL

Trees eradicate rats after one year

Bubinda growers, Frank and Stephen Gatti, have drastically reduced cane losses from rat damage by revegetating a creek bank.

Three years ago, the brothers visited the Atherton Tableland and arrived home with a range of native seedlings. Their aim was to repair a creek on the boundary of their property, which was over-run by grass and was pooling stagnant water.

Frank Gatti said that before they started planting trees, the block of cane adjacent to the creek had 30 metres of cane "chopped in half by the rats".

"We recently measured the number of rats in the revegetated section of the creek and compared this with the section that hasn't been planted," said Mr Gatti. "The last few times we had no captures of rats in the forested section."

"Some people worry that trees would shade the cane, but you've got to weigh up whether you're prepared to

put up with the rats or some shade. Once the rats chop into the cane, it doesn't grow anymore and you lose CCS. We were losing about half our returns.

Stephen Gatti says they have never seen so many birds in the area.

"We get ducks and other birds coming to the creek now because the water is much cleaner. Apart from solving our rat problem, controlling erosion on the creek and giving us a more part of the farm, we can show environmentalists that cane farmers are doing something. The growth has been unbelievable."

The Gattis planted trees along three kilometres of their creek, which receives overflow from the Russell River.

Originally, trees were supplied by the Atherton Tableland Regional Nursery on the Atherton Tableland but after travelling back and forth a number of times they decided to produce seedlings in their own farm nursery.



Bubinda growers Frank and Stephen Gatti will star in a Landstream video following their successful revegetation of a creek on their property.

Study confirms results
Nigel Tucker, Manager of the Lake Eacham Regional Nursery owned by the Department of Environment, (DOH) is keen to involve more growers in planting trees.

"We collaborated with the BSES to conduct experimental trials on the Gatti farm and on Rose Dignan's farm near Tully," said Mr Tucker.

"At the Tully site we achieved 100% eradication of rodents within 12 months and on the Gatti farm we achieved total eradication for a while."



Frank and Stephen Gatti have improved water quality on their cane farm, solved a serious rat problem and created a haven for native birds.

This section of the creek is shaded by grass and a target for the next round of tree planting.

Australian Canegrower, 19 August 1995

CANEGROWERS Tully member Brice Henry took advantage of a local council-run revegetation program more than 30 years ago in which a team undertook the plantings and the initial maintenance work on his farm.

He is now considering revegetating another strip of land between cane crops and a different creek.

Trees planted as part of the program are now 12m high and the rainforest area has increased thanks to seeds coming in with bird populations.

"Before the project, we would lose cane on both sides of the creek," Brice said. "We used to burn the grass out, but still have a rat problem."

About 3km of creek-side land has been revegetated with species including quondong, palms and cottonwood.

The drop in rat numbers was significant within four to five years, and the last 15 to 20 years have been almost rat-free on the Henry farm.

Brice said the project also stopped re-growth of pest plants hymenachne and para grass.

"The benefits have outweighed any costs or time outlays," he said.

"I get the trees trimmed back every couple of years for the harvest season and in the initial stages I needed to spray a bit around the plants.

"The reduction in rats and hymenachne are two pluses and another is the safety aspect. The trees keep tractors away from the edge of creek banks. Also, the area helps to filter any run-off during times of flooding."

Frank also lists creek-bank stability as a benefit. The Gattis recommend planting seedlings 1 to 2 metres apart, with faster-growing "pioneer" plants in between such as bleeding hearts.

"These species shade out the weeds, get their roots in the ground fast and make it easier for the other trees to grow," he said.

"Another tip would be to make sure there is no grass in between." ■

"The benefits have outweighed any costs or time outlays."

Pictured: 25 years on and the revegetated creekside on the Gatti farm continues to significantly reduce rat numbers, saving up to 20 metres of cane either side of the creek.

Giving cane a boost with lime

Supplied by Sibelco



When Childers grower **Jack Russo** decided to apply some leftover ag lime to his fifth ratoon cane, he had no idea he was about to change his nutrient management regime and boost productivity.

Jack, who farms a 500 hectare property at Farnsfield with his brother Michael and father Joe, usually carries out soil-sampling and ag lime applications before planting a peanut rotation crop.

He'd never applied ag lime to his cane ratoons – until a few years ago that is, when he discovered some leftover lime on the farm and decided to give it a go.

"We had a few concerns. We were worried about where the ag lime would go with not incorporating it," Jack said.

He was surprised to discover a yield increase of the limed cane versus other areas of the farm with normally greater tonnages.

"We then backed it up with the peanuts, but we didn't have to re-lime because it was still available to the soil for our peanut crop, which was fantastic."

"If we can get the double benefit out of it, I think it is a very viable option for us going forward."

Opportune application of ag lime produces surprising results on Bundaberg cane farm.

Jack believes the results show that adding ag lime to the cane cycle could be a good option for other growers too.

"Even if you weren't growing peanuts in the rotation, I think there is a definite benefit with the ag lime just on top of the cane ground. I think going forward we'll try it a bit more."

The Russo's soil tests are conducted by BGA Agriservices in Childers, who determine the amount of ag lime they need to apply prior to the peanut crop.

"We have been up around the five, six tonnes to the hectare this year. Some soils we've been lucky enough to get away with only a couple of tonnes to the hectare but on average, we'd be at four to five tonne to the hectare of ag lime for our peanut rotation."

"It's pretty cost effective over the whole cycle. I'm getting a peanut crop plus a plant crop plus five ratoons. So I'm basically getting seven years out of my five tonne to the hectare," he said.

"We're actually seeing now that we're reducing our amount of ag lime on some of our soil."

"We are just keeping it happy now. We are not having to rejuvenate as hard as we were previously when we were doing just plough out and replant of cane."

"Now that we're putting the secondary crop of peanuts in, we're seeing the ongoing effect of what the ag lime is doing for the soil."

"And we're seeing our yields increase by big margins."

Normally ag lime is applied on the property any time from the end of July through to the end of October and is purchased through BGA Agriservices in Childers.

The ag lime is sourced from a Sibelco facility in the Burnett region and is applied using a belt spreader.

"It is really easy to spread. We haven't had any trouble with it. It is good quality so we've had no trouble spreading or using it all." ■

Pictured: Jack Russo, used ag lime on sugar cane to increase yields and provide residual for the peanut crop.

SIX EASY STEPS— RECOGNISING AND MANAGING DIVERSITY!

By Bernard Schroeder (University of Southern Queensland), and Danielle Skocaj and Barry Salter (Sugar Research Australia)

The Australian sugar industry is remarkable in many ways! One example is its location in the somewhat diverse environment that extends across a distance of 2000 km!

Is there another world sugar industry that encompasses areas from the super-wet tropics (as found in Far North Queensland) to almost temperate conditions (as experienced in the southern parts of the New South Wales cane-growing districts)?

In between these extremes are the subtropical conditions in Bundaberg/Isis, Maryborough and Rocky Point, and, of course, the moist tropics of the Herbert and Central regions, and the dry tropics of the bountiful Burdekin!

Equally as variable, are the soils found within and across these regions. They range from deep to shallow, acid to alkaline, light sands to heavy clays, high CECs to very low CECs, and relatively

high organic carbon contents to soil with inherently little organic matter!

Some soils are able to 'sorb' phosphorus (P) tightly, others have little ability to hold onto applied P fertiliser! Some of our soils are in well-drained positions. Others get excessively wet because of their low-lying positions in the landscape. A range of soils exist between these extremes.

Additionally, there are some soils that may get 'very wet' when they are 'wet' and 'very dry' when they are 'dry'!

Recognising this diversity and providing guidelines for managing nutrients in this variable environment are integral to the SIX EASY STEPS nutrient management program.

Importantly, the SIX EASY STEPS continues to evolve and improve with time as new information becomes available.

This is made possible by the six logical steps that underpin the program's framework. These STEPS ensure that the system is relevant and useful for all growers (and their advisors) irrespective of their location in the industry!

STEPS 1 and 2 bring together knowledge of the farm/area, the occurrence of different soil types, positions in the landscape and opportunities/challenges for improving nutrient management.

STEPS 3 and 4 are used for interpreting soil test results from accredited laboratories with sets of district-specific

SIX EASY STEPS



SIX EASY STEPS nutrient management guidelines.

Using the SIX EASY STEPS process up to and including STEP 4 ensures that growers are in line with current industry best management practices (BMPs). However, BMP also means that there should be a route for further improvement!

The SIX EASY STEPS program provides this mechanism through STEPS 5 and 6 that promote continuous improvement and cyclical learning opportunities. This is illustrated by the curved arrows in the SIX EASY STEPS diagram.

To enable this to happen, growers are encouraged to use the existing 'tools' in the SIX EASY STEPS TOOLBOX.

These include information sheets, district-specific guidelines, SIX EASY STEPS NutriCalc™, SRA FertFinder, guidelines for developing nutrient management plans (NMPs), etc.

As new information becomes available from R&D projects, further 'tools' such as updated/modified guidelines, information sheets for specific circumstances, electronic apps, decision support 'trees', etc. will be developed and added to the SIX EASY STEPS TOOLBOX.

These will equip growers with additional ways of making informed decisions about on-farm nutrient and soil management, particularly to suit their specific locations, soils and circumstances.

There are several current SRA-funded projects that aim to deliver some of these 'tools'. Look out for them, they may make your job a bit easier! ■

Pictured (left): Bernard Schroeder soil sampling near Mulgrave. Photographer: David Calcino

Fertilising soils for a sweeter future

Supplied by Stoller Australia



Stoller's liquid fertiliser program continues to show that soil health can be improved over the long term, when used in conjunction with granular fertilisers.

In previous issues of *Australian Canegrower* we have provided updates on a long-term fertiliser trial underway at the farm of CANEGROWERS member **John Werner** (pictured). In this article we look at some outcomes of this trial and speak to John about the experience.

The trial, which was originally established in 2010, compared the productivity and soil health outcomes of different crop nutrition programs on a paddock at John's Mackay cane farm.

Half of the paddock was planted and fertilised with a granular product only each year, while the other half was planted using Stoller ClearStart @50lts/ha, plus Action5 liquid fertiliser @1lt/ha in the furrow.

After each harvest, the ratoon cane had ClearStart applied over the row at 25lts/ha, plus Action5 @0.5lt/ha. In each case the crop was side-dressed using a high N, low P+K-S granular fertiliser as normal.

After a five-year cropping cycle, it was decided to plough out and replant the whole trial as the yields of the granular only side had dropped below economic levels, although the Stoller liquid fertiliser side was still economic and would have gone another year.

The whole trial site was ploughed out and a mung-bean break crop planted and then disced in. The trial site was then replanted in 2016 with Q240.

Again, the field was split in half, as before, and granular fertiliser-only used throughout on one side, the other half of the field was planted using the Stoller liquid fertilise program.

When the trial plant cane was harvested in October 2017, the granular fertiliser-only side yielded 112.53 tonnes/ha. The Stoller liquid program side produced 126.80 tonnes/ha - an increase of 14.27tonnes/ha over the granular-only side of the field.

We discussed this with John, owner of the trial site, and asked him the following questions:

Q: What do you put these yield increases down to?

A: We started trials with Stoller liquids in 2009 and we now use their liquid program across our whole farm as a result of what we found at the end of the five-year cropping cycle.

We dug metre deep trenches through both sides of the trial site and found that in the Stoller liquid treated area the root-mass was many times deeper and wider than the granular only side, and that the Free Living Nematodes had increased, while the Plant Parasitic Nematodes had decreased. The whole soil health throughout profile had improved.

Q: What else are you seeing?

A: We are now seeing levels of organic material steadily increasing to depth in our soils, because of the increased root mass produced each year by using the Stoller liquid fertiliser



Using the Stoller Liquid Fertiliser program resulted in larger, deeper root systems.



Smaller, shallower root system in the Granular control area.

program, which has led to an increase in both nutrient uptake and water holding capacity.

Q: Anything else?

A: We are looking for 20 sticks/metre and we get that. We are also getting a wider leaf and an improved canopy to intercept light. As I said, deeper and wider root systems are able to pull up nutrients from depth, as well as seeing reduced water stress in dry times. All in all, our whole farm return on investment has greatly improved and we feel we are moving in the right direction.

Stoller Australia and SSR STOLLER SUGAR RESEARCH have now established long-term sugarcane trial sights for assessing our fertiliser programs and new products in Mackay, Tully, Gordonvale and Mossman. Further results will be released this later year. ■

To view Stoller Australia reports in previous issues of *Australia Canegrower*, visit the links below.

- 6 June 2016 - <http://bit.ly/2C1o0yd>
- 15 February 2016 - <http://bit.ly/2Cocgl9>

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Soil Health: putting theory into practice

By Christine Petersen, Smartcane BMP Facilitator - Proserpine

Smartcane BMP's Soil Health and Nutrient Management module is the easiest in which to achieve Industry Standard level, yet for growers it can often be the most challenging area in which to achieve on-ground practice change.

Even those meeting Industry Standard are usually striving to make further improvements to keep productivity up and costs down.

Reduced tillage operations, matching row spacing to machinery, and legume fallow cropping are practices that most growers would like to achieve.

One challenge, however, is that all of these are part of the farming system, and you cannot change one without considering the others.

Any growers trying to gain improvements in these areas must do so with careful planning and often at a gradual pace – tweaking things as they go.

Another challenge, especially in the Proserpine district, is the practical issue of planting legumes. There is often a lack of contractors or machinery available for planting soy bean, which means that there are capital expenditure considerations for growers wishing to take this step.

Add to this the practical considerations of weather, soil characteristics and existing farming systems for the grower to negotiate before achieving a successful legume and minimum tillage planting, and it becomes obvious why this level of change takes time.

Another soil health issue, with its own set of challenges, is the application of ameliorants. Over years of reduced yield

and/or falling sugar prices many growers have, by necessity, reduced or ceased their applications of lime or gypsum.

Many are now attempting to reinstate this once-commonplace practice. However, the viability of doing so is limited by availability of affordable products and contractors to spread them.

The Proserpine district is some distance from the nearest lime or gypsum point of sale, so freight has significant impact on the costs.

There are also no contractors available locally to apply the product. Several growers have made capital outlays to build capacity to apply their own lime. However, this is not practical or achievable by all.

In recent years, productivity services and Smartcane BMP have attempted to overcome some of the issues by assisting growers to find alternative lime sources and external contractors and to plan where the best value is to be had with any application.

Sugar prices, product prices, capital expenditures and agronomic issues apply significant pressures on growers in their attempts to adopt many practices.

Knowledge and skills exist within the Productivity Services networks and the Smartcane BMP program to assist growers with these issues.



Reducing Compaction

By Terry Granshaw, Smartcane BMP Facilitator - Burdekin

Recently a grower asked me to help him move to a controlled traffic system. This grower currently produces high yields and is among the top three of his productivity group, so I asked him why he wanted to change to a wider row spacing.

His answer was very specific: "I need to fit my sugarcane and fallow crops on a row spacing that matches my harvester's wheel spacings so that I can maximise my soil health and reduce compaction in the rows that I grow crops on. I'm tired of cutting in the wet and destroying my soil biology, there has to be a better way."



By matching your row spacing to the wheel spacing of the heaviest machines that drive over your soil you will achieve a number of benefits, including

- reducing the amount of traffic time and fuel used travelling over the paddock;
- increasing the water holding capacity in your soil;
- improved drainage when a large rain event happens.

Depending on the system used, multiple rows across a wider bed will also speed up canopy closure and improve weed control.

Tillage can be reduced and usually in sugarcane an extra ratoon can be maintained because the machinery has not compacted the stool area.

Harvesting speed is reduced due to the large volume of cane that is presented to the machine, whilst elevator pour rate remains high. Also, 2 cm GPS guidance systems work better on wider wheel spacings.

Irrigation efficiency can be improved by having wider beds and better soil structure in uncompacted zones.

Furrow irrigation can be improved by running the irrigation water in the compacted wheel tracks. This stops deep drainage in the wheel zones, but improves lateral penetration in the beds. In furrow irrigation, less cups or outlets are used per hectare. This reduces labour costs and in some cases irrigation application amounts.

Reducing compaction by matching wheel spacings, assuming there are no underlying factors, should increase productivity and improve profitability.



Pictured: (p.18) Harvester matching wheel spacings; (top) Canefield with 1.52m rows; (bottom) Canefield with 1.83m rows

Nutrient Management

By Deb Telford, Smartcane BMP Facilitator - Innisfail



Smartcane BMP provides growers with an opportunity to review their farm fertiliser program. Within the self-assessment stage, growers are asked how the optimum rate of nutrients is calculated for their farm.

Most growers select Industry Standard as the level that captures their practices, such as soil testing prior to planting, and following industry recommendations for rate of nutrients applied.

However, when the evidence is viewed in preparation for a Smartcane BMP Accreditation audit, we sometimes find that the nutrient balance is not quite right.

Yes, it meets the legislative requirements, but there is room to improve for the benefit of the business.

After looking at applied versus recommended rates of fertiliser, we discuss with the grower why he has applied what he did, to gain a better understanding of any underlying factors.

Often the practice is a result of “trying to do the right thing” — implementing current best practice with the equipment and products that are available, while still maintaining ownership of his practices.

One recent nutrient review on the farm of Innisfail grower **Sam Spina** (pictured) identified that Sam was applying all the phosphorous requirements for the crop at planting and then only nitrogen and potassium in ratoons.

Closer inspection of recommended versus applied fertiliser rates showed that not enough phosphorous was being applied at planting for the plant crop and five ratoons, while slightly higher nitrogen rates than recommended were being

applied in ratoons due to the type of mixture being purchased.

Sam believed he was doing the right thing based on the soil test results for that particular year.

To give a better representation of fertiliser application rates for his farm, a whole farm nutrient management plan was developed by local advisory staff.

This helped rationalise products needed, based on utilising all soil test results from previous years, as well as the grower's knowledge of soil type and yield history on his farm.

The plan is in a format that can be easily updated annually and as a result, Sam is now applying small amounts of phosphorous to ratoons in a blend that has less nitrogen and potassium and which exactly meets nutrient requirements based on six years of soil test data for his farm.

This has led to a 20kg/ha reduction in nitrogen and a 10kg/ha increase in phosphorous applications each year.

His costs of production have remained the same as the increase in phosphorous is offset by the decrease in nitrogen and his productivity has been maintained.

Sam is also now Above Industry Standard in his BMP self-assessment for calculating optimum nutrient rates.

Continued on p. 22 ►



◀ Continued from p. 21

Fallowing

By Rebecca Stone,
Smartcane BMP Facilitator - Mossman

The importance of fallowing as a best management practice has been widely recognised and embraced by growers.

However, in some regions, such as Mossman, this consistency of fallowing has tended to ebb and flow over time due mainly to factors such as how the weather has impacted the harvesting season or how the forecast, both economic and climatic, is looking for the year ahead.

There are boundless volumes of information on the benefits of a good clean fallow.

It is an important management tool not only for soil health, but also for pest and disease management.

Some of the benefits of a good, well controlled legume fallow, free of cane volunteers, include:

- breaking the pest and disease cycle;
- helping to suppress weed growth;
- preventing soil erosion over the wet season;
- increase soil biomass and organic matter;
- control nematodes and soil pathogens;
- increase nitrogen levels in soil;
- improve soil structure;
- increased ability of soil to infiltrate rainfall and increased hydraulic conductivity.

Continual plough-out and replant contributes to the build-up of pests and diseases, while the introduction of break crops helps to reduce stress on the next crop to be planted.

Fallowing also allows farm blocks to be realigned or, if necessary, drainage works to be performed in the fallow period.



Another benefit is the ability to better control the timing of your planting operations, due to the flexibility it offers in when you can prepare your ground for planting. Variety selection can also be well planned in advance.

The cost of fallowing will depend on a number of factors, including whether it is a bare fallow or a legume fallow.

The cost of managing a legume fallow will be higher, yet fertiliser and weed control cost-savings will typically result from a well-grown legume fallow.

Fertiliser savings will result after a legume fallow due to the source of fixed

nitrogen which is then used to reduce the rate of nitrogen fertiliser required in the next plant cane crop.

Through Smartcane workshops and one on one engagement with growers in the Mossman area the importance of fallowing has been continually highlighted and this year in particular there are a decent number of well-managed fallows, both bare and legume, around the Mossman district. ■

Pictured: Legume fallows can reduce the rate of nitrogen fertiliser required in the next plant crop.

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Mossman-Tully

2005 John Deere 6620 7310 hrs Coupled to Austoft Trailhaul 2008 Massey Ferguson 7465 4630 hrs Coupled to Austoft Trailhaul. Ideal for Billet Planter. Ph. 0407 162 514

98 Cameco CHW2500 in very good condition, used for cutting plants and for Backup Machine. 1 set of McLeans 6 roller ¾ tracks with 24" plates, needs repairs. 1 set West Hill 5 roller ½ tracks with 20" plates, needs repairs. Mulgrave Area. Ph. 0407 183 680

2x 1000Lt Felco Saddle Tanks to suit 8000 JD, could easily be adapted to suit other tractor, quick release system, wraps over front tyre for good weight distribution and visibility, excellent condition, \$12,000 or best offer. Ph. 0409 912 062

7810 John Deere 4x4. Very good condition. Original owner, 6500hrs. Green Star auto trac ready. 28inch front tyres 90%. 20.8x38 rear duals. Inners 85%. Outers 90%. Three remotes. Quad box to C range. Cab interior very good. Ph. 0428 682 886

Plant cane cutter with its own hydraulics tank and remote cables. \$800 ono. Double fan side stripper with topper. \$800 ono. Topper can be easily transferred from stripper to cutter if required. Ph. 0419 362 260

Track walking gear – going cheap! Telescopic lift ram for 12 tonne carter bin. 100-90 FIAT. Mulgrave (Gordonvale) area: 0427 163 748

Hi rise spray rig - 2 x 600L tanks, 2 x PTO pumps, can widen out for 6ft rows. Good basic unit. \$15,000. Ph. 0407 364 012

8240 New Holland Ford with or without GPS. New rear tyres with Air-Cab, GC. Ph. 0418 154 557

Oak casement windows, reasonable condition \$25 ea. Assorted timber: black penda 220mmx75mm, oak, hickory, tongue and groove, and hardwood. Ph. 0408 793 756

Herbert River-Burdekin

Inter 4 disc plough \$500; Belly roller \$150; Drill plough \$110; "Oversize" sign \$55; Ratoon roller \$200; 2 row line marker \$250; Truck wheel 8.25x20 @80% tread \$150. Ph. 0400 957 003

5-leg HD ripper with crumble roller \$3000; 3-leg ripper \$400; 3-row weeder \$300; 2000L fuel tank on 2m stand \$900; 1m2 cement blocks \$75 each; 2 x HD swivel coulters \$900 each. L&R crop divider saws \$600; HBM stick planter \$600. Ph. 0447 183 182

120 inch Howard Rotary Hoe \$8000. 16ft stock crate and trailer \$7000. 4 Liddle and Sons shields o.n.o. Milner 8ft heavy duty slasher \$3500. New irrigation motor ready to go, make an offer. Ph. 0428 382 084

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Rainfall Report

brought to you by AustSafe Super

Location	Recorded rainfall (mm)			Average rainfall (mm)
	7 days to 9am		Year to date	January–February
	12.02.18	19.02.18		
Mossman	253	49	535	918
Mareeba AP	44	56	257	444
Cairns	145	27	877	835
Mt Sophia	347	12	1327	1165
Babinda	226	0	920	1368
Innisfail	164	22	734	1100
Tully	133	15	619	1336
Cardwell	85	10	328	902
Lucinda	22	7	249	846
Ingham	39	15	319	827
Abergowrie	39	19	360	718
Townsville	0.8	0.2	142	566
Ayr DPI	0.2	15	120	445
Proserpine	37	33	232	645
Mirani	5	23	167	652
Mackay	12	27	161	598
Sarina (Plane Ck)	26	26	221	749
Bundaberg	0	0.6	204	330
Childers South	6	2	307	250
Maryborough	0.8	12	169	338
Tewantin	16	46	224	453
Eumundi	10	22	161	474
Nambour	2	39	100	489
Woongoolba	0	0	172	330
Murwillumbah	2	3	100	428
Ballina	9	3	255	377
Woodburn	4	0	114	306

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

Mackay-Proserpine

X2 John Deere 6510 with 6T Ian Ritchie bin \$30000 Plus gst. will separate bins. 120 inch Howard AH4000 hoe still has original Blades \$20000 Plus Gst. Ph. 0407 170 420

Hodge Bed renovator, single row Very good Condition \$22,000; Twin Side Tipper Suit HBM planter VGC \$4,400. Ph. 0428 495 053

SILVAN 800L Fire Fighter with HONDA pump and hose reel, done little work, \$3600 new, asking \$2000 ONO. Ph. 0409 221 601

New Holland 8340 tractors x 2. Good condition; well maintained. POA. Ph. 0418 495 755

New Holland 8340 tractors x 2. Good condition; well maintained. POA. Ph. 0418 495 755

1976 International tandem 10t tipper truck G.cond \$3500 plus GST ONO. 3PL Irrigation pump 12000 gph PTO drive G.cond.\$1250 plus GST ONO. Tr tyres 14.9-24 tread 45% \$75 ea. Ph. 0407 026 611

Confidor applicator, with a 300 litre tank and Hodge coulter assemblies. \$4000 (plus GST) Ph. 0418 710 958 / 4950 3048

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)

Sprayrite Tempo 1200 Spray Tank, Brand New, 1200L Capacity UV resistant, 170LPM PTO driven Pump feeding 5 section electric controlled spray controller, H Duty 3pl carry frame, \$15,200 Inc. Ph. 0428 236 165

Bundaberg-Rocky Point

FIAT 640 High 31" Clearance Tractor. Ideal for cane spraying (wide wheel track with excellent stability.) \$11,000 + gst; SYLVAN Spray Tank 900 litre-New high volume pump & Irvin Hydraulic boom \$3,900 + gst. Ph. 4159 9242

MF290 Tractor - low hours-very good condition \$10,500+gst; JOHN DEERE 2130 Tractor-good condition-ready to work \$9,900 +gst. Ph. 4159 9242

Bonel cane cutting machine with hydraulic topper in good condition. Best Offer. Ph. 0402 085 833

2 row billet planter and Case MX270 Tractor 6800hrs, extended front axel. Hydraulic drive, 1t fert bin. good condition. prefer to sell as unit. Ph. 0407 627 424



Secondary extractor hood to suit Austoft 7000, in good condition - \$900 + gst. Ph. 0413 584 728

2009 Case 8000 Cane Harvester. 5800 hrs. \$185,000 + gst, Qunico 1 ton fertilizer incorporator with plastic bin & stainless worm. \$8,000 + gst and Bonel 24 plate offsets. \$10,000 + gst. All in good condition. Ph. 4156 1409 or 0431 044 022

Half-tracks to suit 4000, 5000 or 6000 TOFT harvester. Fair condition. Open to offers. Ph. 0419 717 006

Wrecking TOFT 6500 harvester. Many parts available. Ph. 0413 584 728

Machio 6.2 metre double G heavy duty rotary hoe, Ford 5000 with 6 ft slasher, inter row 6 row cultivator (soya beans), 2 BKT 20.8 / 42 tyres 40% left. Call for details all in good condition 0408 768 489

Full billet planting outfit: includes Toft 4000 harvester, HBM billet planter and double 3-tonne tractor-hauled tipper bin, 2 bins. \$27,000 + gst, all good condition (farm sold). Ph. 4159 3323

Bonel whole stick harvester with hydraulic topper and trailers. \$2,500 + gst; MASSEY 205 cane harvester \$6,500 + gst. Ph. 4159 3323

Wanted

3 point linkage offsets. Phone mobile: 0427 128 251

WTB: Billet Planter and early-model 7000 crop divider shoes. Ph. 0428 749 167

Wanted: 5 inch aluminum pipes with ajax couplings Ph. 0428 529 216

STL shares wanted. Genuine grower. Pay market price. Let's keep STL shares in the hands of non-miller growers. Ph. 0419 717 006 or 0408 448 227

Wanting to buy: Suscon Applicator. Ph. 0407 640 076

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

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3-5 International Disc Harrow,
3-4 International Disc Harrow,
Bonel, Napier

Positions Vacant

Cane harvester driver req. to operate, supervise & maintain a 55,000 t contract in the B'berg area. Pre-season maintenance is also req. Ph 0427 577 256

Billet Planter Operator for upcoming season. Must be experienced. Ph. 0438 594 281

Experienced haulout operator required for family cane farming business for 2018 season - Pleystowe, Narpi & Calen areas. Elevating tippers; 5 on/3 off roster. Previous employment references & contacts required. Ph: 0438 173 757

Property

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

Wanted cane farm to lease Mirani area Ph. 0400 583 247

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

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

Cane Farm Cone Creek Road Mt Christian via Koumala. Total area 93.43ha CPA 70.81ha. House, 4 sheds, machinery, irrigated farm with 2 dams. Genuine offers/enquiries only. Ph. 0428 852 279





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