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Moments of leadership provide glimpses of opportunity

By Dan Galligan, CEO CANEGROWERS

A tumultuous month for the industry is coming to a close. I would like to recognise the palpable feeling of gloom shared by many people in the cane-growing community. Given the range of challenges we are facing, this feelings is not surprising.

The world sugar price remains stubbornly low, dampened by the distorting policies of India and the global oversupply. Our response has been to press the Australian Government take up the issue at the World Trade Organisation. This action has gained global recognition, with many other countries now joining our cause at the WTO. This is an important initiative that must yield reform and, with an adequate response from India, the market could respond effectively to give some relief in the medium term.

Closer to home, the full impact of the State Government's proposed reef regulations are becoming apparent. Over recent weeks we have seen the industry come together to make its case to a State Parliamentary Committee. Unfortunately, in this debate it can be difficult to find successes. To be clear, we don't support the regulatory approach, and yet the numbers in parliament make it difficult see any outcome other than the enabling Bill being passed.

We should still acknowledge what has been achieved.

There were three objectives in the recent Committee consultations. The first was to get the Committee to conduct regional hearings, the second was to ensure growers were there in numbers to demonstrate the importance of the issue, and the third was to ensure that the views of CANEGROWERS were soundly presented and heard.

The fact that the Committee was not initially provided with the capacity to conduct regional hearings was outrageous. The fact that this situation was reversed was welcomed. The fact that growers responded in such strong numbers and with such conviction and clarity was the most impressive and critical outcome of all. Hundreds of growers attended the four hearings and so far we have more than 1,800 respondents to our online petition.

There is no way that from Cairns to Bundaberg the Committee could come away with anything but a very powerful message from the industry. All three objectives were achieved and now we move to the next challenge.

When the committee tables its report in Parliament on the 26 April, the ball will be in the Minister's court. The government seems unmovable on this issue, at least at the policy level, so we are in for a battle. But we will not see a setback as a defeat.

Your efforts to set the record straight, to demonstrate the fine work being done by farmers to be both productive and environmentally sustainable, have provided an excellent foundation to give us leverage in this discussion. Our objective is to track a pathway to see both existing and proposed regulations repealed. We need to achieve this not just through political leverage, but also through demonstrating that the regulations simply aren't justified, that this is not the best or fairest way to resolve the challenge, whether it be perceived and real.

These challenges and many more will in part fall to the incoming Directors of CANEGROWERS. Our election process, now complete, has once again shown that the industry has a wealth of engaged and talented people who see opportunities that need to be embraced by our organisation.

With nearly half of our districts participating in elections, we have again seen the value in members having a vote and a direct say in who they trust to represent their interests at local, state, national and international levels. It is a guarantee that some of our issues will endure for the next three years of representation, but we can be confident that together we can chart a course for a vibrant future for cane growers in Queensland. ■



"Your efforts to set the record straight, to demonstrate the fine work being done by farmers to be both productive and environmentally sustainable, have provided an excellent foundation to give us leverage in this discussion."

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

NEWS

Reef Bill Public Hearings - Growers Have Their Say

Across four days in four locations, CANEGROWERS members made themselves seen and heard at public hearings on the Queensland Government's Reef Bill.

The six-member Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee had been tasked with reviewing the *Environmental Protection (Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019* before it is debated in State Parliament.

After the initial plan of just one public hearing in Brisbane drew outcry from the industries and regions set to be impacted by the Bill, a whirlwind tour to Cairns, Townsville, Mackay and Bundaberg was organised.

The Bill proposes giving the Queensland Government the power to demand data from individuals and companies in the

sugarcane farming supply chain, hands future farm regulation decisions to a public servant with no requirement to consult or avenue for appeal, and extends reef regulations into southern growing districts.

The Committee is due to report back to the parliament by 26 April. Full transcripts of the public hearings can be found on the Queensland Parliament website. Go to www.parliament.qld.gov.au and follow the links to the Work of Committees area.

Here's how some of the CANEGROWERS representatives presented the views of growers in each location.

CAIRNS

Growers with placards greeted people turning up for the hearing in Cairns. The signs carried some of the key messages growers want the Committee to take from their regional visits: New Regs will Stop Growth, Cane growers face a caning (again!), I'm not a criminal, don't make me one.

Inside, CANEGROWERS Cairns Region Chairman **Stephen Calcagno** told the Committee that further regulation would threaten the productivity and profitability of the industry.

"It will extinguish enthusiasm, hamper innovation and threaten regional economic stability - all factors that need to be considered," he said.

He also warned that the regulation-changing power being proposed for the Department of Environment head would create uncertainty and stifle investment.

"For one person to have this power without a provision for an independent review process holds great risk for industry productivity and profitability, regional development and the Queensland economy.

"Over the past eight years significant foreign investment into the milling sector has added value to the regional areas of Queensland, revitalising the industry and providing stability so that growers can invest on farm, embracing new technology and practices that will benefit all. To hinder this momentum can only have a negative effect on the outcomes that everybody wants for the environment."

In his presentation, CANEGROWERS Innisfail Chairman **Joe Marano** said the sugarcane industry had been innovative for 150 years.

"There is not a farmer I know who gets up every morning with the express intention of destroying the reef," he told the Committee.

He also countered the Government statement that the Bill was necessary because Smartcane BMP accreditation was not happening fast enough.

"Let us understand why the 72% are not accredited yet. They have not signed their records, they have not dated their record or they do not have a correct chemical store. It is not because they are applying incorrect fertiliser rates." ►



TOWNSVILLE

It was standing room only for many at the Townsville hearing with most of the crowd of almost 200 being cane growers from the Herbert River and Burdekin districts with the message that the Bill is not needed.

"I see that the government now wants to legislate something that we have been doing for the last 30-odd years. Your proposed new reef regulations in my opinion will, at best, stifle innovation and in most cases render it impossible," CANEGROWERS Herbert River Director **Chris Bosworth** told the Committee.

"I think the Queensland Government does not need this legislation as the present Act already regulates what we can do as growers. This legislation brings us close to a police state. I sincerely think the government should not introduce the legislation but reward growers who are investing in the future of the Great Barrier Reef," fellow Director **Jeff Cantamessa** said.

"This new legislation takes away a lot of the goodwill that we had before," CANEGROWERS Burdekin Director **Owen Menkens** said. "It will lead to a culture of doing just enough to please the regulator, and that will create a situation where less BMP take-up will happen and productivity, sustainability and profitability will drop."

Chairman **Phil Marano** urged the Committee to see the sugarcane industry as a vehicle for the future.

"We need to recognise that cane and growers can be a solution to the problems that we have. We can be a solution to improving water quality and also I think we can be a solution to climate change.

"Cane has not been thought about in the right ways or needs to be thought about differently. We can be at the forefront of biofuels and renewable energy and government should be focused on that instead of focused on knocking and bringing down growers."



BUNDABERG

At the final public hearing, the CANEGROWERS message was that the inclusion, for the first time, of the southern regions in Reef regulation was not justified.

CANEGROWERS Bundaberg Manager **Dale Holliss** told the Committee that it made as much sense as including Brisbane and would provide as much benefit to the reef.

"The southernmost point of the reef is 100 kilometres north of us and is north of the Kolan, Burnett and Elliott catchments where we grow cane," he said. "Given the southerly direction of the east Australian current, it is physically impossible for any of our run-off to affect the reef."

"The contribution of cane growing to sediment and nutrient export is minimal ... At least 70% of our run-off goes through a settling pond before it leaves the farm and 80% of all of our farms have detailed nutrient management plans."

CANEGROWERS Isis Chairman **Mark Mammino** said that the region had been a low priority for Reef-related spending.

"In the Burnett region there is no funding available to the cane sector for the 2019-20 season for any Reef Trust money," he said.

"We have been asked to go from a position of no regulations to these upgraded, unnecessary new regulations."

MACKAY

Again, in Mackay, there were more observers and supporters for growers than seats put out in the hearing room.

CANEGROWERS Mackay Chairman **Kevin Borg** told the Committee the successful change that he'd witnessed had been through a collaborative effort rather than an autocratic approach.

"I would like to dispel the myth that those who are not BMP accredited are automatically tagged as environmental vandals," he said. "Most of these people are working towards BMP and only have a small amount of work to do to become accredited."

As other growers had done, he explained his farming system including controlled traffic, nutrient management, stool splitter and green cane harvesting.

"We have implemented all this at great cost to our business. Apparently, this is not good enough. Our state government has decided to further regulate us based on the misinformation and advice of a few who have only anecdotal evidence of poor water quality. I say 'anecdotal evidence' because I believe that monitoring is not done well enough and any results of the monitoring that is done are very broad."

CANEGROWERS Proserpine Chairman **Glenn Clarke** also questioned what needed to change in the current regulations.

"You are now spreading reef regulations over an area 1½ times the size of Victoria. Someone has to audit this and be the reef police. I would rather see a collaboration between the government and industry," he said.

Following the public hearing, the Committee members visited **Joseph Borg's** farm to discuss his focus on productivity and environmental stewardship through maximising incorporation of inputs into the soil, their uptake by the plants and their retention on the farm. ■



Policy Update

Environment with Mick Quirk

Industry with Burn Ashburner

Economics with Warren Males

Reef water quality – more regs will diminish real progress

In the last issue, I outlined the new minimum standard proposed for cane farming by the Queensland Government. Since then, CANEGROWERS and other industry and conservation stakeholders have participated in discussions organised by the Department of Environment and Science (DES), to review and critique this proposal.

The main message from industry was that the proposal would provide no clear benefit for growers or the environment, while escalating the complexity and cost of compliance. Also the two year window for growers to develop a whole-farm nutrient management plan, with agronomic assistance, was unrealistic.

At the meeting, I focussed on the positive activities happening on cane farms and on how additional regulations will hinder future success. For example, whole-farm nutrient management planning is being successfully rolled out in all districts with funding support from the Australian and Queensland governments. Participation is voluntary, ensuring that growers have ownership of the plan and can ensure it meets their needs.

Growers speak highly of these plans, as they help minimise the number of blends required to implement SIX EASY STEPS. The maps and data also help zero-in on constraints to productivity such as soils, variety, disease or other factors. Forcing growers to have a plan is not likely to boost commitment to using it!

Growers are keen to work on initiatives which are centred on them and which value local data, research and innovation. This is the blueprint for real progress. ■



Australian Society of Sugarcane Technologists

The 41st Conference of the Australian Society of Sugarcane Technologists (ASSCT) will be held in Toowoomba from 30 April to 3 May 2019. The theme of this year's conference is *Broadening our Horizons*. CANEGROWERS has had a long association with ASSCT and I am on the executive and organising committee.

As with many organisations, ASSCT is in the process of looking ahead to make sure it remains relevant into the future. In 2017, the executive started with the concept of making the conference into a Sugar Week. The vision was to showcase a range of activities and research while giving the industry a chance to congregate in one place and deal with issues of relevance.

In line with this, Sugar Tuesday was launched to give attendees a more practical insight into some of the innovative and topical research being undertaken in the growing and milling sectors.

Sugar Tuesday will again feature at the Toowoomba ASSCT conference. This year, sessions have been incorporated into the main conference program, but retain the interactive, Q&A aspects that allow those attending to find out information that is of greatest interest to them. Sessions on precision agriculture, new technologies, farming systems, drones, adoption, and genomics offer agriculturalists the chance to hear from sugarcane and other cropping industry experts.

Invited speakers from various fields will provide concise presentations, to be followed by panel discussions. The sessions will be on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon. I hope to see you there. ■



Regional Queensland needs efficient electricity prices

In its draft retail electricity price determination, the Queensland Competition Authority (QCA) proposed no change in prices for agricultural tariffs (T62, T65 and T66) while recommending a 7.2% reduction in small business tariffs. In responding, CANEGROWERS has presented evidence that the transitional tariffs more than cover the actual cost of delivering electricity to farms.

QCA's methodology for assessing both retail and network costs results in regulated cost allowances that exceed actual costs. QCA's failure to call out the flawed methodology is resulting in prices for regional Queensland that are inefficient and are retarding economic growth and development.

By benchmarking Ergon Energy's retail costs on the inflated costs of other retail providers, QCA is perpetuating the problem, effectively charging users for costs that are not incurred. This appears to be at odds with the requirements of the *Electricity Act 1994 (Queensland)* which refers to the 'actual cost of making, producing or supplying the goods and services'.

QCA presents no up-to-date evidence to support its assertion that current prices for transitional tariffs are below the cost of supply. The best available evidence strongly suggests the claim is false and CANEGROWERS work shows legacy tariffs are more likely to reflect the actual costs of supplying electricity than the replacement standard business tariffs.

CANEGROWERS is calling on the QCA to determine retail prices for the Ergon Network that reflect the actual costs of prudently and efficiently supplying electricity in regional areas. ■



CANEGROWERS Elections 2019 Results

The CANEGROWERS Elections 2019 process has confirmed 86 men and women to represent their fellow growers for the next three year term.

The election process allows every eligible CANEGROWERS member to nominate for a board or committee position across the organisation's 13 district companies.

Following the count of votes in five districts where ballots were needed, the complete list is published below and on the CANEGROWERS website.

"I would like to congratulate all those Directors elected to positions this year,"

CANEGROWERS CEO Dan Galligan said. "Equally I thank and acknowledge all who participated by nominating for a position and everyone who voted.

"It is through active, robust and engaged participation from our members that we can deliver on our promise to the industry of an organisation that works on behalf of growers by working with growers.

"Having farmers and their families as our advocates is our unique and most powerful advantage and through this election process we have seen a great enthusiasm to be a part of an organisation that can make a difference.

"The staff of all of the CANEGROWERS offices look forward to working with the incoming Boards over the next three years."

The final step in the Elections 2019 process is a Policy Council meeting in May at which the QCGO Board and Chairman for the next three years will be determined.

All elected representatives are invited to an Induction Meeting in Cairns from 20 May. Invitations will be sent via email. ■

AREA	NAME
MOSSMAN	Rodney Rasmussen
	Michael Giudice
	Glen Fasano
	Matthew Watson
TABLELAND	Wayne Kattenberg
	Maryann Salvetti
	Rajinder Singh
	Claudio Santucci
	Douglas Rankine
CAIRNS REGION MULGRAVE ZONE	Neil Maitland
	Paul Gregory
	John Piccolo
	John Ferrando
	John Arcidiacono
	Richard Hesp
BABINDA ZONE	Robert Rodman
	Barry Stubbs
	Stephen Calcagno
	Frank Gatti
	Steven Bonso
INNISFAIL	Joe Marano
	Alan Colgrave
	Wayne Gattera
	Sam Spina
	Vic Guarrera
TULLY	Delbag (David) Singh
	James Dore
	Joseph Vasta

AREA	NAME
TULLY	Bryce Macdonald
	Steve Crema
HERBERT RIVER	Jeffrey Cantamessa
	Michael Pisano
	Salvatore Torrisi
	Paul Marbelli
	Christopher Bosworth
BURDEKIN	Steven Marbelli
	Terry Motti
	Owen Menkens
	Greg Rossato
	Roger Piva
	Phil Marano
PROSERPINE	Steve Pilla
	Glenn Betteridge
	William (Bill) Blair
	Justin Blair
	Glenn Clarke
	Eric Lindsay Altmann
MACKAY	Peter Quod
	Anthony (Tony) Large
	John Casey
	Joseph Borg
	Andre Camilleri
	Brett Leach
	William (Bill) Macdonald
	John Muscat
	Francis Perna
	Gregory Plath

AREA	NAME
MACKAY	Anthony Ross
	Paul Vassallo
	Paul Schembri
	Philip Deguara
PLANE CREEK	Kevin Borg
	Malcolm Langdon
	Wayne Schmidtke
	Sergio Berardi
BUNDABERG	Dean Cayley
	Mark Pressler
	Anna Attard
	Allan Dingle
	Kelvin Griffin
ISIS	Michael Cavallaro
	Mark Mammino
	Peter McClennan
	Simon Ricciardi
	Anthony Russo
MARYBOROUGH	Susan Bengtson
	Jeffrey Atkinson
	Ashley Petersen
	Roger Bambling
	Adam Doyle
ROCKY POINT	Isaac Schmidt
	Michelle Fischer
	Anthony Huth
	Richard Skopp
	Ben Spann
	Greg Zipf

NEXT CROP PROGRAM

OFF AND RUNNING TO DEVELOP INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP

A diverse range of sugarcane growers from across the industry are now taking part in the Next Crop program to hone their leadership skills and potential.



From L-R back: Aaron Moore, Kevin Stevens, Leyton Peterson, Michael Giudice, Chris Lyne, Ben Spann, Rhonda Pirrone, (front) Tony Bartolo & Michael Cavallaro in Sydney recently, taking part in the SRA Next Crop program.

Next Crop is a new investment by SRA in industry leadership and capability, and it is spanning across several months in 2019, with participants undertaking a range of leadership and development activities.

The need for this program was identified during industry consultation for SRA's five-year strategic plan.

"The future of our industry relies on ensuring we continue to develop and encourage new leaders to participate, collaborate, and have their voices heard. Next Crop is increasing the pool of people who can contribute to our industry through leadership roles in industry representative bodies, productivity service boards, NRM groups, local government, and SRA," SRA CEO Mr Neil Fisher said.

This year's participants are Aaron Moore (Atherton Tableland), Tony Bartolo (Mackay), Chris Lyne (Burdekin), Ben Spann (Rocky Point), Kevin Stevens (Brisbane), Michael Giudice (Mossman), Leyton Peterson (Hervey Bay), Rhonda Pirrone (Burdekin) and Michael Cavallaro (Bundaberg).

Burdekin grower Chris Lyne said he looked forward to taking part in the program.

"The future of the sugar industry depends on strong leadership at a range of levels, and this program is an opportunity to develop these critical skills," Mr Lyne said.

To learn more, visit:
www.nextcropleaders.com

Get clicking and win with Sugar Snaps

Budding sugarcane industry photographers are invited to share their best pictures as part of a new competition showcasing the beauty of the Australian sugarcane industry.

Both amateur and professional photographers are encouraged to submit their sugarcane industry photographs to the 'Sugar Snaps' competition, where they will have the chance to win prizes and see their work published in a 2020 shed calendar.

Farmacist Regional Manager, Mr Jayson Dowie, said the competition was seeking photographs capturing all aspects of the sugar industry from people to harvesting, farming systems, transport and even milling.

"There are some amazing images out there that celebrate this amazing industry. We would like everyone to get their cameras or smartphones out and

send us their best snaps," Mr Dowie said. "Through this competition, we would love to see a range of pictures revealing the depth and breadth of the Australian cane industry and showcase them in a sugar industry calendar."

SRA Executive Manager, Communications, Mr Brad Pfeffer, said the winning entries would be featured in the 2020 shed calendar and also be in the running for other prizes.

"The 2020 shed calendar will be produced as part of a series of 'RP161' Nutrient Management projects which are currently being delivered in the Burdekin, Mackay, Whitsunday and the Herbert regions," Mr Pfeffer said.

The RP161 Nutrient Management projects are delivered by Farmacist, Mackay Area Productivity Services, and Herbert Cane Productivity Services Limited (HCPSSL) and funded by the Queensland Government Reef Water Quality Program and Australian Government Reef Trust.

Entries close September 27, 2019. To submit your entry and for more information visit: sugarresearch.com.au/sra-information/sugar-snaps/ ■



Sibelco Aglime was applied to the last cane crop before rotating into peanuts. There was a definite yield increase in the cane and the lime carried through to the next crop.

"The Sibelco Aglime seemed to work well. It was available for the next crop as well giving us a double benefit."

"Even without peanuts in the rotation I think there would be a definite benefit from using Aglime on the cane ground."

Jack Russo, Farnsfield, QLD.

Sibelco® Aglime

Great crops start with great soil

High quality agricultural limestone to help improve soil quality and grow better crops.

Last chance to lodge your 2019 pricing choices

QSL growers in Mackay, MSF Sugar, Tully Sugar and Wilmar milling districts are reminded they only have until **30 April** to finalise their nominations for our optional managed pools or self-managed pricing products for the 2019 Season*.

After this time, any unallocated 2019-Season GEI Sugar tonnage will default to the QSL Harvest Pool.

This nomination deadline – known as the Pricing Declaration Date – is also the last opportunity for growers with existing unfilled orders in the 2019-Season Target Price Contract to cancel or reallocate these to alternate pricing options.

Growers using the Individual Futures Contract can also cancel or reallocate unfilled 2019-Season orders before the Pricing Declaration Date, but only if no portion of the order has been filled.

**NOTE: Alternate nomination deadlines apply to growers supplying Bundaberg Sugar, Isis Central Sugar Mill and Mackay Sugar's Mossman Mill. See your miller for details.*

YOUR QSL PRICING OPTIONS

While all growers using QSL have tonnage automatically allocated to the QSL Harvest Pool and QSL US Quota Pool, they can also choose to allocate up to 60% of their GEI Sugar to any combination of the following optional pricing products:

2019 QSL Actively Managed Pool: Targets the best return over the season by pricing more frequently as short-term market opportunities arise. QSL can use a variety of pricing instruments, trade currency and unwind pricing to re-price at a later date in a bid to enhance returns.

2019 QSL Early-Start Actively Managed Pool: Nominations for this pool have closed.

2019 QSL Guaranteed Floor Pool: Provides a guaranteed minimum return with the potential for higher returns across the Season.

2020 QSL 2-Season Actively Managed Pool: Prices sugar to be produced in the 2020 Season, with pricing undertaken across the 2019 and 2020 Seasons. This pool targets the best return, with some pre-set price triggers, and has been designed for Growers who seek exposure across multiple seasons.

2021 QSL 3-Season Actively Managed Pool: Prices sugar to be produced in the 2021 Season, with pricing undertaken across the 2019, 2020 and 2021 Seasons. This pool aims to target the best return, with some pre-set price triggers.

SELF-MANAGED PRICING - YOU MAKE THE PRICING DECISIONS

These grower-managed pricing products allow you to make your own pricing decisions, either for the current or future seasons. The choices are:

- **QSL Target Price Contract:** Enables Growers to target a preferred sugar price for a minimum order of 10 tonnes in the current season or up to 3 seasons ahead. Unfilled orders can be rolled forward to extend the pricing window up until April in the year after crushing commences.
- **QSL Individual Futures Contract:** Enables Growers to price sugar incrementally during the current season and up to three seasons ahead, with separate pricing decisions for each of the 4 individual futures positions on the ICE 11 raw sugar market. Pricing is to be completed by April in the year after crushing commences.
- **Self-Managed Harvest:** Nominations for this pool have closed.

For more information about QSL's optional pricing products or the nomination process in your district, please contact your local QSL representative.

DISCLAIMER:

This update contains information of a general nature only and should not be regarded as comprehensive or complete. Please note that QSL does not provide financial or investment advice to growers in relation to pool selection or pricing decisions. Growers should seek their own financial advice and read the QSL Pricing Pool Terms in full which can be found on QSL's website. Nothing contained in this update should be relied upon as a representation as to future matters. Information about past performance is not an indication of future performance. QSL does not accept any responsibility to any person for the decisions and actions taken by that person with respect to any of the information contained in this update.



YOUR QSL GROWER SERVICES TEAM

Far North Queensland Herbert River & Burdekin



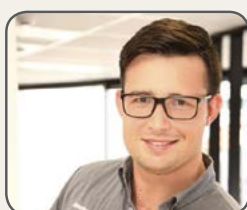
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Herbert River

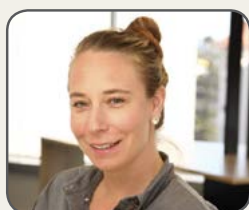
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EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY THE VALUE OF DATA

By Kim Kleidon

Whether you like it or not, there's no escaping technology. From smart phones to the 'cloud' it seems there are digital solutions for every industry and in the sugar industry, data is priceless when it comes to farm management. The latest gadget being adopted by growers is the drone.

As a fourth generation farmer, **Michael Reinaldo's** practices are a long way from where his great grandfather began. Still farming the original Herbert River district fields purchased in 1913, technology has been a driving force for Michael. Like his father, he adopts new ways of doing things with a passion, never backing down from a challenge.

"I love technology, data and going to that next level of understanding by recording and working it out," he says. "That was the reason behind my variable rate fertiliser box in 2009, from using GPS

and doing prescriptions, understanding how that all worked and applying it - then seeing the results in the field, the financial benefits, the production, all of that is what I enjoy."

Michael says the network of Project Catalyst allowed him to share his knowledge, trials and understanding of technology while also learning from like-minded growers.

"That's the point of Project Catalyst you don't need to do all the trials, you can take a step back sometimes, focus on

what you want to do, then watch and learn from what other growers are doing. You can then 'pick their brains' about how they've done their trials and adapt that understanding to your farm."

GIS Officer at Herbert Cane Productivity Services (HCPSL), **Rod Neilson** recognised the advantages of drones more than two years ago.

Geographic Information System technology provides a framework for gathering, managing and analysing many types of data - organising the layers of information into visual representations, using maps and 3D virtual models.

After flying his own drone over trials to capture images, Rod convinced HCPSL to invest in the technology.

"I downloaded a free version of software that stitched together a number of images and presented that to the board. All of a sudden the lights came on, they could actually see a lot of what they were trying to measure in the trial from the aerial perspective."

The trial was looking at some of the photo-toxic effects of herbicides on the cane, which can be seen in the colour of the leaf. With the green light to deploy a drone as part of his role, specialised





"I love technology, data and going to that next level of understanding by recording and working it out."

processing software (Agisoft) has allowed Rod to incorporate images into his GIS, producing maps.

"You could really see the difference. I went out with an RTK GPS to mark out all the paddocks and was able to build the whole system of trial plots, then overlay the drone image to identify the effects. It was really interesting," he said.

Over the past two years Rod met many growers interested in how they could use a drone.

"It's one thing to fly up and get a look at your crop, but if you want to take it to the next level and identify the exact location, you need to be able to process those images and make some kind of a map from it, put it into a GIS and you can then start to identify things," Rod says

While that may be a little more advanced than most growers want, the benefits to viewing a mature two metre tall crop include weed and erosion monitoring, water drainage during flood events and assessing crop damage.

Following advice from Rod, Michael Reinaudo started working with a drone in September last year.



Pictured: (above main) Michael Reinaudo with his sub terrain fertiliser applicator with coulter blades, (left) sub terrain fertiliser applicator, (above) farm images captured using drone technology. Photos courtesy of Terrain NRM.

Continues on page 14 ►



After adopting GPS and variable rate fertiliser with assistance from the original government program Reef Rescue, the Reinaudo family also used funding to modify a high-rise spray tractor making the transition to wider rows much easier.

The addition of a drone has resulted in more benefits than Michael ever imagined but he admits that it wasn't all about work.

"Honestly, drones are fun. Initially we thought it would be great to get a bird's eye view of paddocks through the wet season, see how they evolve and what's happening," he says.

From the air he can see ribbons of poorer cane that he couldn't see or access from the ground.

"I can see where the water's lying. I can see other issues in the paddock. We even started using it to check our pig traps in the wet season as well."

Having proven to be a valuable resource in a very short time, the future of drones in agriculture is being advanced through the development of software applications and an increase in online services offering image processing.

Rod Neilson says that this, combined

with the availability of improved cameras, has meant that some data collection no longer needs an expensive multi-spectral camera to reveal plant health issues.

Using an RGB image and uploading it to an online service such as DroneDeploy which provides a Visible Atmospherically Resistant Index (VARI) analysis, provides a similar result to a Normalised Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI).

"Preliminary results are promising," Rod says. "Growers can invest in a \$2,000 drone like a DJI Phantom, to capture some really valuable data, without investing further into multi-spectral cameras or software, a saving of up to \$10,000."

Understanding how to set up flight plans and use the apps available is something Michael has pursued, due to his need for more data and increased efficiency, particularly in machinery movements.

Working with **Marcus Bulstrode** from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF), Michael has to set up flight plans to take multiple images which he then transfers to a shared folder online.

"Marcus would process them overnight, joining all the images together into one plan. From that we could zoom, right

down to 1 or 2 metres above the crop, so you could actually see if there was vine or weeds coming up," Michael says.

"We then use the GPS co-ordinates to locate the weeds and spray, reducing chemicals, time and overall costs."

This may leave you wondering 'what next'. Spot spraying of crops using drones is a development now being explored by DAF.

For Rod also, flying over trial sites and monitoring crops for HCPSL based on NDVI results was just the start. More recently he has spent time flying over flood damaged areas on farms, finding where water is sitting on properties and evaluating the damage done to the cane.

"We're also identifying areas of erosion where the drone can be used in a creek below ground level and see things like fallen trees that may prevent the water from draining away efficiently," Rod says.

"Unfortunately flying drones is weather-dependent, with high wind and the threat of rain a major deterrent in their deployment and use."

Rod believes that as the multi-spectral and thermal imaging cameras become more affordable the industry will be able to employ them in determining crop yield, health, maturity and ripeness.

As for software development and adoption by growers, Rod feels that it's all heading towards the more widespread incorporation of data gathered by drones in farm management.

"You go back 20-25 years and the things we're doing now are sci-fi themes from movies," he says.

Knowing the value of data, Michael is keen to continue wherever technology takes him, realising that knowing what's happening in each paddock and having the tools to manage issues in a more efficient and cost-effective way is a huge benefit.

"Today's farming is all about data - recording, collating and understanding what to do with that data," he says.

"If you record it and maintain it well, it is unbelievable what you can do with the knowledge." ■



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SPOTLIGHT: AGRIAN AGRICULTURE SOFTWARE FOR YOUR ENTIRE OPERATION

Supplied by Agrian Inc.

It is easy to get overwhelmed by all the technology offerings these days. As ag professionals you need software that is uncomplicated, unifies your workflow, and is truly a management system for your entire operation. Finding a provider that is non-biased and independent can be challenging.

The concept of independence is not one that's lost on Agrian Inc. The ag software company provides an all-in-one platform solution for growers, retailers, and food processors, and views independence as a unique advantage in the current landscape of amassing ag tech point-solutions.

"To put it plainly, Agrian is not building software with the ultimate goal of selling you something else," Agrian's CEO, Nish Majarian said.

In recent years, the industry has seen a rise of venture capitalist founded point solutions which ultimately leverage the user's data in an attempt to sell them something bigger down the line. It's an approach that often seeks to boost seed sales and push chemical products, while also aiming to disrupt the farmer's relationship with their trusted retail agronomist.

Majarian says Agrian's business model is simple: run a profitable business, just like their customers must do each day. And as a technology company, Agrian is playing this role well – providing the capabilities and services that help ag customers grow their business profitably, sustainably and safely. Majarian expands:

WHAT DOES AGRIAN DO?

"Agrian is an ag software company that helps growers, agronomists and food processors simplify their workflow by providing compliance, precision and agronomy in one platform. Agrian's unified platform allows users from each segment of the food supply chain to oversee the specific tasks that are relevant to their business, all in a format that is strikingly intuitive and easy to use."

WHAT TYPE OF CUSTOMERS DOES AGRIAN SERVE?

"Agrian started in the United States and serves over 25,000 growing operations,

from small growers to large growing entities, and works with 10,700+ agronomists – some independent and others with larger ag retail affiliations.

Today, Agrian's software powers over 3,000 ag retailer locations in North America and South America; between independent agronomists and the ag retailers Agrian manages over 130,000 growing entities for a total of over 150,000 growers that are directly or indirectly influenced by our software. On the other end of the supply chain, today, Agrian provides 60 of the top food companies software that empowers transparency from field to the fork."

WHAT HAS BEEN THE KEY TO AGRIAN'S SUCCESS?

"Our focus on our customers. Not tied to an investor's timeline or servant to the interests of those providing the funding, Agrian's focus is on one thing: the customer. The customer-centric culture at Agrian is no accident; and it's linked to the truth that, if we don't bring ideas and solutions forward that help our customers drive value in their own businesses, then we too will fail at ours."

For Agrian, independence has created a level of control, focus, and transparency that sets them apart. The trends of point solutions and consolidation will undoubtedly continue, ag startups will come and go, ebb and flow. But Agrian seems steadfast in what they know. "We sell a platform that helps make our customers' lives easier – that's at the heart of what we do," said Majarian.

To learn more about Agrian and the solutions they provide visit Agrian.com or contact: Jeremy@agrian.com for a demo.

THE TAKEAWAY?

How should cane growers approach their individual data strategy, and what should farmers look for in a platform for their farm data?

SEEK OUT CENTRALISATION

Migrate your data into one standardised and unified platform. Having your data scattered across a variety of applications, or point solutions, doesn't make for a robust data strategy – it makes for future headaches. A broad platform with broad capabilities will allow all your precision, agronomy and compliance data, across all your crops, to talk. And when your data is combined and used together, it can be a powerful tool to improve yields, produce higher returns and maximise input investments – not just in the future, but right now.

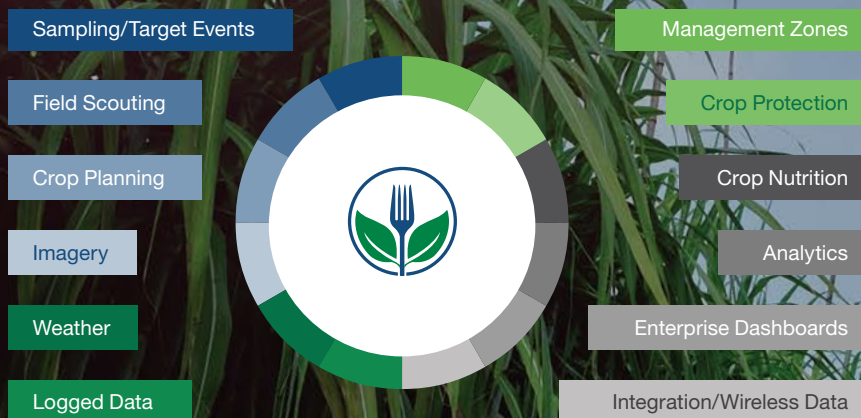
EVALUATE YOUR OPTIONS

Scrutinise the company that will need to stand behind your data strategy. Are they in it for the long haul? Or a novel technology looking to be sold? Put your trust in independent technology companies that have transparent business models: selling you software to help power your business. You do not want biased software powering the business you've built. ■



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PRECISION AG TECH GIVES GROWERS CONFIDENCE TO INVEST

Supplied by Vantage NEA

A unique soil testing method has given sugarcane farmer **Micheal Brombal** the confidence to invest in his crop by helping him become more precise with his inputs.

A second-generation farmer based in the Burdekin, Micheal has always been willing to incorporate precision agriculture technology into his production, especially when it allows him to increase his target management.

Wanting to understand why yield variation was occurring in his crop, Micheal had soil surveying conducted on his farm with the Trimble Agriculture Soil Information System (SiS).

Vantage NEA, formerly BMS LaserSat, runs the system, which uses EM mapping in conjunction with high resolution topographic technology to determine areas of variability in a field.

Vantage NEA precision agronomist **Bryan Granshaw** said the main point of difference between SiS and traditional soil testing methods, is that it provides spatial context and relevance to soil information.

"By far, the greatest errors associated with traditional soil mapping methods has to do with where the observations were taken," Bryan said.

"SiS uses EM mapping in conjunction with high resolution topographic technology to determine areas of variability in a field, meaning the areas tested are reflective of the issues occurring in the field."

Once these areas are pinpointed, they're tested with a unique soil probe and undisturbed soil cores are taken to a lab to be analysed.

Farmers, like Micheal, are then given post-processed, spatially correct soil maps that help them understand their soil limitations.

For Micheal, these soil maps were the starting point to switching his blanket rate gypsum application to a targeted, variable rate prescription.



SiS testing detected high sodicity across Micheal's farm and highlighted that the yield limiting levels were almost always occurring at depth.

The soil maps pinpointed the exact locations where there was yield limiting sodicity, including how far down the profile they were occurring.

Traditional soil testing methods, which only test the top layer of soil, would not have been able to detect the severity of Micheal's sodic levels, as they were occurring below the top 20cm layer of soil.

Micheal said having SiS analysis was very telling on what he needed to do to target his management better.

"Where we thought we had really good soil, we found out there were ways we could improve it," he said.

"It also highlighted areas that were performing really well and didn't need as much management."

Micheal has noticed significant cost improvements since he's been using variable rate to spread his gypsum.

These cost improvements have not only improved Micheal's bottom line, but encouraged him to invest in his farm despite the low sugar prices.

"It's encouraged me to still spread gypsum to improve my yields, despite the current low sugar prices," he said.

"It gives you the confidence to invest in your farm, because you know you're doing it properly."

Micheal has since had more SiS testing conducted on his property. ■

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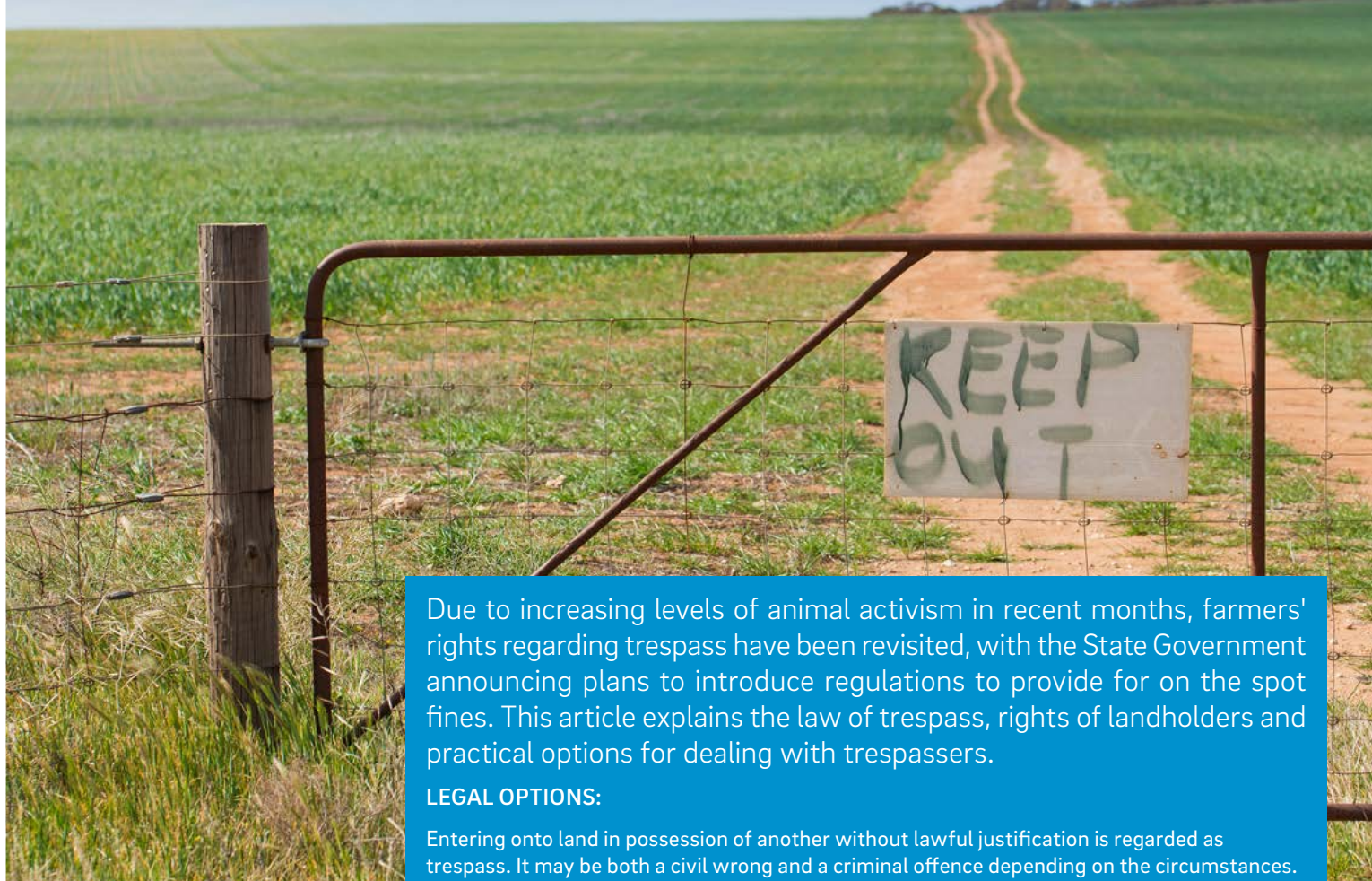
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BY TRIMBLE AGRICULTURE

TRESPASSERS

A HOT TOPIC



Due to increasing levels of animal activism in recent months, farmers' rights regarding trespass have been revisited, with the State Government announcing plans to introduce regulations to provide for on the spot fines. This article explains the law of trespass, rights of landholders and practical options for dealing with trespassers.

LEGAL OPTIONS:

Entering onto land in possession of another without lawful justification is regarded as trespass. It may be both a civil wrong and a criminal offence depending on the circumstances.

Civil Action

Being a civil wrong, growers may take their own civil action and sue the trespasser in the civil courts. Growers can seek a court order that requires a person to stop trespassing and to never trespass again (this type of order is called an injunction). The court can also order that the person trespassing pay compensation.

Criminal Action

Trespass is also a crime, as it is an offence in some circumstances under the Summary Offences Act to enter or remain on agricultural land without lawful excuse. It is also an offence under the Nature Conservation Act to enter on any landholder's land without their consent for the purpose of taking any wildlife. It is up to the police, following a formal complaint, to take the necessary criminal prosecution action. Fines of over \$1,000 and imprisonment for up to six months are possible for persons who, without lawful excuse, enter or remain on land used for agricultural purposes, or who open and leave open any gate on enclosed agricultural land. Fines for breaches of the Nature Conservation Act can be over \$19,000. Police will take a number of factors into consideration in determining whether to prosecute. These include:

1. Identifying an offence has been committed
2. Sufficiency of evidence
3. Public interest

Photo credit:

ID 43482075 © Vicki Vale | Dreamstime.com



By Chris Cooper,
CANEGROWERS Legal Advisor

PRACTICAL OPTIONS:

In some cases the legal approach may not be appropriate. Civil action can be expensive, time consuming, stressful, and uncertain in outcome. Police may also be reluctant to investigate.

However, alternative action might be considered. Options include, where possible, direct discussions with the trespasser (and their parents, if relevant), and community awareness programmes which could be undertaken in schools and throughout the community generally, preferably supported by some media coverage.

A local group comprising representatives of various interested bodies including growers, police, local council, community leaders and educators might be formed, which could develop and implement local programmes intended to inform and reduce the frequency of trespass.

Protecting your property:

You can eject a trespasser from your property. Under the Queensland Criminal Code it is lawful for a person in possession

of land to use such force as is reasonably necessary in order to prevent any person from wrongfully entering upon such land or in order to remove such person from the land provided that he does not do bodily harm to such person.

It should also be remembered that it is an offence under the Criminal Code to set a trap intended to kill or inflict grievous bodily harm on a trespasser.

Self-help options may be a good idea. The trespasser could be asked to leave the premises. If the situation looks as if it might get out of hand, though, the police should always be contacted. Try to make a record of the trespassers details, including name, vehicle description, date and time of trespass, with photos/video if possible.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Any growers wishing to discuss aspects of trespass liability or any other matter should contact your local CANEGROWERS office or call CANEGROWERS Legal Adviser, Chris Cooper, on Free Call 1800 177 159, for free initial legal advice.

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT POINTS FOR DEALING WITH TRESPASS:

1. Trespass is unlawful activity. It can be both a crime and a civil wrong.
2. **Immediate Steps**
If you see someone trespassing on your land the following are some options to consider, depending on the circumstances:
 - i. Call the police – trespassing is a crime.
 - ii. Record the details of the trespasser – description of the person and any vehicle, date and time, take photos/video if possible.
 - iii. Approach the person directly – tell them they are on private property and ask them to leave.
 - iv. You can use such force as reasonable necessary to eject the trespasser but you can't do bodily harm to the person. Such action can be risky and the situation could escalate into something more serious. Calling the police may be a better option.
3. **Legal Remedies**
The following are possible legal steps:
 - i. Lodge a formal complaint with police who may prosecute the trespasser for the criminal offence of trespassing.
 - ii. Take civil legal action and sue the trespasser in the civil courts and seek either a court order preventing further trespass and/or an order for the payment of compensation.
4. **Prevention Measures**
The following are possible steps to prevent the likelihood of trespass:
 - i. Community awareness programmes.
 - ii. School information programmes.
 - iii. Neighbourhood watch programmes.
 - iv. Place "No Trespassing" and "Private Property" signs at entry points.
 - v. Reporting trespassing behaviour to police.
 - vi. Erection of boundary fences and lock boundary gates where feasible and possible.
 - vii. Media coverage and engagement.
5. **Liability Issues**
 - i. Act reasonably in the management of your property.
 - ii. Ensure proper liability insurance cover is held. ■

Tableland Productivity Awards

CANEGROWERS Tableland has honoured its best at a Productivity Awards Night for Tableland and Mossman mill suppliers.

Chair **Maryann Salvetti** congratulated growers on an extremely productive 2018 season, with growers averaging 110.11 tonnes of cane per hectare, meaning relative tonnes of sugar per hectare of 15.70 and a season average relative CCS of 14.26. **Aurillo Rocca** won the Highest Farm Relative CCS Award with 15.45 tonnes.

Maryann also made special mention of the 31 growers who averaged above 100 tc/ha for the season. Kattenberg Farming won the Highest Tonnes of Cane per ha Award with 147.99 tc/ha.

Guest speaker **Cameron Begley** of Spiegare spoke about a bio-based economy with his presentation focussing on the role that biomass such as sugarcane will play in providing a renewable source of carbon-based fuels and chemicals into the future. He also explained the emerging value chain and the economics and market access.

Emilie Fillols and **Belinda Billing** from Sugar Research Australia provided an update on the results of trial work being conducted around off-site movement of herbicides and insecticides in heavy rainfall events.

The take home messages were that rate and timing of application are critical.

Salvetti Farming won the major prize, the Outstanding Canegrower Award, as well as the Champion Farm 200+ha Award, while also being runner up in the Highest Farm Relative CCS Award. A&C Zappala took out the award for Champion Farm 20-50ha, WJ&EA Tognola won the 50-100ha category while Murat Enterprises was Champion Farm 100-200ha. The Mossman Atherton Zone 8 Award went to RT&SI Johnson.

CANEGROWERS Tableland would like to thank Rabobank, Miriwinni Lime, Qube Logistics, Lowes Petroleum, GT Ag Services, SunWater, Bayer Crop Services, Pumping & Irrigation Machinery Services, Honeycombes, QSL, Central Tyre Service, AustSafe/Sunsuper, Achmea Australia, North Queensland Tropical Seeds, Tableland Air Service and Mackay Sugar for their valuable sponsorship and support. ■

*Pictured: (below) Congratulations to Calendoon Management with father and son team **Gerald** and **Dean DeLai** winning awards for the Best Presented Farm, the Achievement Award for consistent productivity and being runner up for the Champion Farm 50-100ha.*



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

Howard AH rotary hoe 90" crumble roller plastic liner very good condition \$5,500. Ph: 0438 424 538.

Parts available for Howard AR & AH Rotary Hoes from \$50 to \$500. Howard AH90 rotary hoe fully reconditioned \$12,650. Ph: 0407 643 441 or 4959 5883.

6t side tipper Ian Ritchie. Excellent condition \$15,000 + GST. Ph: 0478 719 294.

Grouser plates 18 inch, D4. Brand new. \$4,400 incl. GST. Ph: 0427 014 222.

New Holland TS110A 4WD, 110hp, 4,980hrs, \$42,900 Inc., Kubota M135X-DC 4WD, 135hp, 4,970hrs, \$44,000 Inc. Transport subsidized. Ph: 0418 788 643.

Rainfall Report

brought to you by Sunsuper

Location	Recorded rainfall (mm)		Average rainfall (mm) January–April	
	7 days to 9am			Year to date
	08.04.19	15.04.19		
Mossman	115	27	2268	1585
Mareeba AP	8	0.6	601	680
Cairns	164	15	1669	1459
Mt Sophia	404	36	2138	2260
Babinda	0	36	1098	2708
Innisfail	246	36	1913	2224
Tully	264	35	1429	2623
Cardwell	55	14	1736	1513
Lucinda	36	6	2069	1465
Ingham	53	16	2378	1397
Abergowrie	53	25	1606	1286
Townsville	4	5	1702	814
Ayr DPI	1	0	901	643
Proserpine	29	9	1189	911
Mirani	9	5	1096	996
Mackay	29	4	689	996
Sarina (Plane Ck)	8	12	1118	1147
Bundaberg	1	0	140	489
Childers South	2	0	185	396
Maryborough	4	4	258	581
Tewantin	43	41	347	867
Eumundi	18	0	283	861
Nambour	23	35	405	859
Woongoolba	33	0	308	617
Murwillumbah	35	8	230	800
Ballina	43	45	298	780
Woodburn	77	5	216	629



dream with
your eyes open

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.

Bundaberg–Rocky Point

KMC 36/38-4 Row Peanut Digger, HYD drive-new chains, sprockets and blades \$28,000 + GST. Ph: 0457 930 627.

Wanted

Cane land to lease Eton, Marian and Mirani. Ph: 0407 170 420.

Bed renovator, billet planter & tipper bin. Ph: 0419 788 376.

Cane farm/land to lease. Isis to Bundaberg area. Ph: 0415 626 715 or 0438 838 559.

STL shares, genuine non-miller buyer. Ph: 0419 717 006.

Positions Vacant

Experienced Harvester Operator for 2019 crushing season. Tully Euramo area, 120,000 tn contract, excellent machinery, good support, high productivity farms. Permanent position with good conditions on offer to the right applicant. Email resume to accounts@doreandco.com.au or call Brian Dore on 0427667964 to arrange an interview.

Full-time farmhand in the Home Hill area. Ph: 0429 826 274.

Haulout Operators required 2019 season, Carmila area. Ph: 0407 701 298, 0447 180 488 or 0400 790 839.

Work Wanted

Permanent farm hand position Mackay Region. Immediate start. Enthusiastic 21 year old male. Extensive experience in Sugarcane industry being raised on a farm. Current Chemical Certification. Ph: Dan 0488 692 592.

Looking for a seasonal haul out or farmhand job. Haul out operator/farmhand for cane season. From Gordonvale seeking work Babinda, Gordonvale or Cairns area. MC licence, forklift, chemcert, etc. Agriculture, drilling and transport background. Ph: Steven 0438 157 829.

Property

Cane farm Mulgrave Valley. 35 kms South of Cairns. 209 Acres Total. Approx 170 Acres cane area. 2019 crop included, Estimate 4,000 ton. Ph: Steve 0410 600 247.

Cane farm Mulgrave Valley. 40 kms South of Cairns. 185 Acres Total. Approx 100 Acres under cane. 2019 crop included, Estimate 2000 ton. Ph: Steve 0410 600 247.

Cane farm, Silkwood area. 39.94 ha total, 31.74 under cane on 2 freehold titles. 5 yr av 97 t/ha, Part Bruce Hwy frontage, and 7.5 Kms from Kurrimine Beach. Shed and bore water on 1 title. Ph: 0417 647 002.

92 acre lifestyle block, ex cane, cane ground was approx 65 acres, 3 bed house shed, power, water, 3 phase, landline, underground for irrigation, property runs along the Pioneer River located Mia Mia/Pinevale area Mirani Mackay. Suit persons wanting extra cane ground or a hobby farm \$550,000. Ph: 07 4959 1008.

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. Qlder style home. Motivated Vendors looking to retire. Ph: Gary Johns 0427 241 250.

HOMEBUSH/OAKENDEN Cane Farm for sale Mackay region. 100t/ha 5 year average 57 ha property. Fully laser levelled farm with a large bore & underground water mains. Block has 2 deeds 90 acre and 50 acre which can be sold separately. This year's crop, machinery shed with 3 phase power and water, tractor, irrigation winch, some implements and tail water pit pump included in sale. Siding on boundary, great soil, no rocks. Ph: Andrew 0428 597 324.

Cane farm Tarakan Road ABERGOWRIE 270 acres freehold Genuine enquiries pls. Ph: 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. Easy farm to maintain. Ph: Mandy 0408 880 724.



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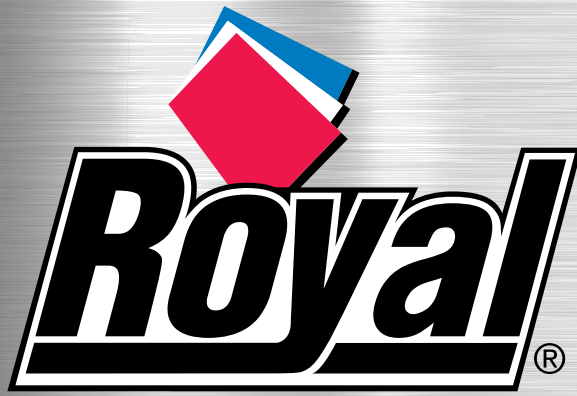


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NQ CRASH 272 Hartley Street CAIRNS (07) 4030 8400	ROB WALKER OIL 140 Munro Street AYR 0429 992 946	BERNARD PETROLEUM 44 Nandroya Road COOROY (07) 5447 7445	B-LINE AUTOMOTIVE 10 Smith Street MULLUMBIMBY (02) 6684 2955

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