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COVER IMAGE: Scott Fasano is one of a growing number of Wet Tropic cane farmers who are turning to peanut fallows to boost incomes and soil health.

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Senate Inquiry a platform or springboard – we must decide

By Dan Galligan, CEO CANEGROWERS

'The gift that keeps on giving' is a phrase we hear a lot - but when it comes to management of the Great Barrier Reef, it's often uttered with distinct irony.

With the revised State Reef legislation now in place and negotiations around the details of the regulations coming to a close, the debate around our exposure to policy on reef management is picking up pace.

The recently announced Senate inquiry into the evidence-base for reef regulations could be the most important springboard yet for our industry to make the case for a fresh look at reef policy.

We will realise this opportunity only if we are smart, tactical and very clear about the outcome and recommendations we want to see from this inquiry.

Senate inquiries are deliberately established to provide a platform for Senators to take a deep dive into complex policy issues. Being established as a multi-party Senate standing committee, it is important to note that this is a federal inquiry is looking at the basis for state legislation.

We must be aware of the capacity of the inquiry to shine a light on issues, expose policy flaws and make recommendations for changes. But bringing about any such change will require a commitment to reform by a State Government.

CANEGROWERS enters the fray with a very positive story to tell and a precise call to action. Our strategy is quite transparent and our concerns have been consistently raised.

Our story is one of farming families and their proactive management of both productivity and sustainability which has been, thus far, unfairly characterised and misjudged.

The inquiry will be our chance for growers to tell the real story of the enormous changes the growing sector has embraced over decades and, in doing so, set the stage for a more honest, collaborative and realistic approach to any plans and targets that growers should be asked to achieve for the sake of securing the resilience of the Great Barrier Reef.

As an industry, we have been working towards supporting the future health of the reef as a tremendous asset for Australia. But growers can only be asked to do their bit to manage reasonable risks on clearly justified grounds.

As an the industry, we can acknowledge that the international significance of the reef allows us to share the story of the sustainable sugar supply chain that is emerging as a real asset in global sugar trade.

Equally the inquiry will be an opportunity to shine a light on the science that surrounds decisions on reef management.

For too long science has been politically weaponised and used as justification for policy decisions without commensurate investment in either communication or the collective building of confidence in the processes that delivers scientific outcomes.

CANEGROWERS will be encouraging scientists to participate in this inquiry to tell their story too - to share their knowledge and their knowledge gaps, to share where we have strong confidence in the evidence around the actions needed to secure reef health and equally where our level of certainty is not great. Scientists need to be encouraged to be open to discussion at all levels, from the farm shed to the halls of parliament, to ensure their work is understood and not misused.

In the end, decisions to regulate farmers are made by politicians, not by academics. This inquiry is a tremendous opportunity to take a fresh look at reef management. Growers have a very positive story to tell and the industry has a proactive message of supply chain sustainability that can be delivered if we choose to take back control of the way in which our industry is judged.

With a reporting deadline of this time next year, this inquiry will be a 12-month campaign that will not be started or won with this first submission.

As the inquiry rolls through its regional hearings next year, CANEGROWERS will work closely with our district companies to put growers front and centre in this process, and to use this springboard for a positive future for the industry and the reef. ■





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NEWS IN BRIEF

African swine fever threat looms

The National Farmers' Federation and pork industry want action on controlling Australia's population of around 24 million feral pigs as the threat of African swine fever (ASF) looms.

ASF is killing 80% of the pigs it infects overseas and it's considered a significant threat to Australia's \$5.3 billion pork industry now that it's been detected in Timor Leste.

Airport surveillance of travellers has been increased in northern Australia.

"If this virus gets in, it does actually wipe out the domestic pig industry, and if it gets into the feral pig population, it will be incredibly hard to contain," **Margo Andrae**, CEO of Australian Pork Limited (APL), said.

"It is vital that as a nation, we direct the resourcing required to deliver and continually improve the systems that safeguard agriculture from potentially devastating pests and diseases"

At a meeting in Canberra NFF members have moved a motion calling on the government to invest in and strengthen Australia's biosecurity systems to protect primary production, the community, the environment and the economy.

"It is vital that as a nation, we direct the resourcing required to deliver and continually improve the systems that safeguard agriculture from potentially devastating pests and diseases," NFF CEO **Tony Mahar** said.

The NFF wants all levels of government to develop a comprehensive culling program on private and public land with "incentives or some sort of assistance to make sure farmers can help with control".

Ms Andrae has said the Federal Government's promise to direct special funding initiatives into drought-hit communities provided an opportunity to tackle feral pigs on a serious scale.



She said it could inject cash flow and work into drought-hit rural communities.

Options which APL wants on the drawing board include:

- a possible wild pig bounty (a co-ordinated control strategy similar to the national brucellosis blitz in the 1970s and '80s)
- more research on feral pig management and community attitudes to controlling pigs
- exclusion fencing programs to keep ferals out of farms and national parks. ■



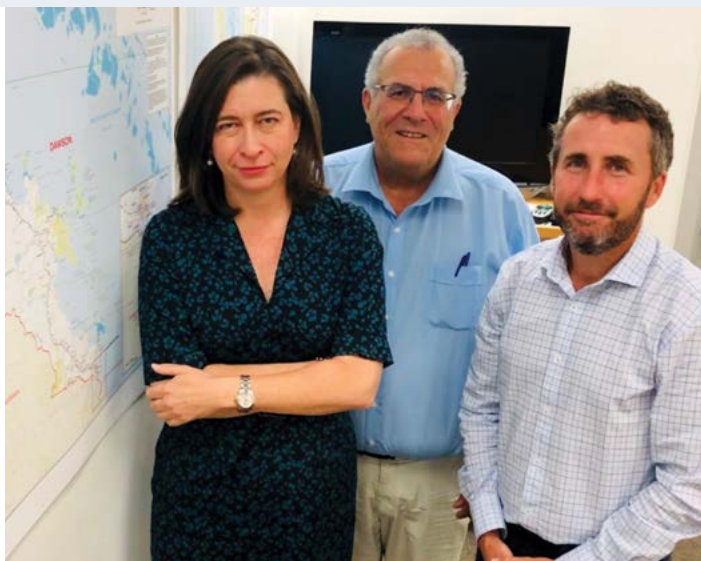
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Senator talks regs inquiry



CANEGROWERS Chairman **Paul Schembri** and CEO **Dan Galligan** caught up with Queensland Senator **Susan McDonald** recently to discuss the importance of a Senate inquiry launched last month.

Senator McDonald moved the motion which established the inquiry into the evidence behind regulating farmers to deliver reef water quality outcomes.

Submissions can be lodged with the Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport until 8 November and CANEGROWERS will finalise a submission before that date.

Mr Galligan says the inquiry will be CANEGROWERS chance to tell the real story of the enormous changes the growing sector has embraced over decades and in doing so set the stage for a more honest, collaborative and realistic approach to any plans and targets that growers should be asked to achieve for the sake of securing the resilience of the Great Barrier Reef.

He says CANEGROWERS will be encouraging scientists to participate in this inquiry to tell their story too.

"For too long science has been politically weaponised and used as justification for policy decisions without commensurate investment in either communication or the collective building of confidence in the processes that delivers scientific outcomes."

In the past weeks CANEGROWERS has moved to dispel an inaccurate claim from the Environment Minister Leeanne Enoch that revised minimum practice standards for farming in the reef regulations had been, "already approved and accepted by industry".

CANEGROWERS has consistently opposed regulation and had not given any approval to any of the measures.

Mr Galligan said it was mischievous to suggest that the responsibility for approving any regulation sits with anyone other than the government that initiates them.

"I'm not sure who, if anyone outside government, has given these new farming standards a tick on behalf of sugarcane growers but it certainly wasn't CANEGROWERS!" he wrote in a letter to newspaper editors. ■

NEW FACES ON SRA BOARD

Mackay district grower **Lee Blackburn** has joined the Sugar Research Australia Board along with scientist and research manager **Dr Jeremy Burdon**.

They replace retiring directors **Steve Guazzo**, who is a Herbert River grower, and **Dr Helen Garnett**.

SRA Chairman **Dr Ron Swindells** thanked the outgoing directors, both of whom had been on the SRA Board since its formation in 2013.

"Steve Guazzo has brought valuable experience in sugarcane growing and harvesting experience to the Board and helped ensure that SRA continues to deliver value to our investors," Dr Swindells said.

"He has also chaired the People, Performance and Remuneration Committee since inception while Dr Garnett brought extensive international scientific and corporate experience to the Board."

New Director **Lee Blackburn** is a director of Mackay Area Productivity Services and Queensland Commodity Services as well as holding a position on the Mackay Sugar Board.

The other new appointment, **Dr Jeremy Burdon**, is familiar to the Australian sugarcane industry through his role as a Director of the CRC for Sugar Industry Innovation through Biotechnology.

He was Chief of CSIRO Plant Industry from 2003-2012 and has been a member of the SRA Research Funding Panel. ■



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CANEGROWERS REGIONAL ROUND-UP

Supplied by CANEGROWERS district offices

MOSSMAN

Mossman Mill completed crushing on Wednesday 23 October with the last bin being tipped at 3.12pm.

A total of approximately 676,722 tonnes of cane went through the rollers for the 2019 season.

Tableland Mill will complete toll crushing approximately 195,000 tonnes of Far Northern Milling cane around 30 October 2019.

The CANEGROWERS Mossman Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday 27 November 2019 at the Mossman Bowls Club hall.

CAIRNS REGION

Some good rain has fallen across the area. It caused delays to the harvest but was certainly welcomed to assist with the establishment of next year's crop. Estimated finishing date is, at this point, 20 November.

CANEGROWERS Cairns Region Annual General Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 26 November with interesting guest speakers attending.

INNISFAIL

As at 27 October South Johnstone mill had crushed 978,453 tonnes. The official forecast estimate for CPA supply has been reduced to 1,533,776, and tonnes to be crushed at the mill reduced to 1,247,000 tonnes. The daily CCS has continued to sit above 14 but it is expected to fall as a result of recent rain. Seasonal average CCS sits just above 12.8. Finish of harvesting expected to be around 21 November

Reasonable falls of rain were experienced across the district between 22–24 October and caused interruption to harvest operations, forcing the mill to cease crushing for a total of 52 hours over the three days. With planting now complete, the focus has turned to fertilising.

Planning is underway to involve a range of local agricultural industries and support bodies at National Ag Day on 21 November. An event will be held in Anzac Park which is adjacent to Innisfail's CBD.

TULLY

Rainfall was welcome although it was patchy, with some parts of the district recording up to 70mm and most recording 20 to 25mm.

This has been great for the plant and ratoon cane and all are looking forward to more rain over the coming weeks.

Crushing is progressing and with just over 200,000 tonnes left to crush, harvesting should be completed by the second week of November.

The sugar content is holding at a respectable 13.4 CCS, which is one of the most memorable things about a season that has been disappointing in terms of yield and price.

The CANEGROWERS Tully AGM is set for Thursday 28 November.

HERBERT RIVER

During Week 17 of the crushing season the Herbert River district reached the 3 million tonne mark. The mills crushed 204,000 tonnes, with Victoria crushing 132,000 tonnes and Macknade crushing 72,000 tonnes. Mill average CCS was starting to peak at 14.73 with the mill average YTD CCS at 13.6.

In Week 18, the mills processed 196,000 tonnes, with Victoria mill crushing 133,600 tonnes and Macknade on track for 62,400 tonnes. Both sites had maintenance days.

Wilmar has reported that cane quality is starting to reduce, fibre is increasing and CCS is on downward trend. The mills also reported that they are continuing to get tippler hopper chokes with the high EM cane. The mill average for CCS was 14.5.

BURDEKIN

The end of the Burdekin season is not far off with the release by Wilmar of expected finish dates based on an expected final crop of 7.9 million tonnes. Pending no further rain disruptions and revised factory throughputs, harvesting is currently expected to finish for Inkerman on 11 November followed by Kalamia two days later and Invicta on 15 November. Pioneer Mill will be the last to finish on 19 November.

The Burdekin's four mills crushed just under 368,000 tonnes of cane in a week that included a scheduled stop at Invicta Mill's A-side. Total tonnage crushed season-to-date is now just under the seven million tonne mark.

Averages CCS for the district has remained high, with 15.77 units recorded for Week 21 (w/e 26 October). Individual mill CCS season-to-date averages are: Pioneer 14.99, Inkerman 14.92, Invicta 14.97 and Kalamia 14.60.

The highest CCS sample was 18.9 from a rake of Q208 second ratoon recorded in the Invicta area.

Variety performance for the region for Week 19 has Q183 at 16.10 and 19% supply, followed by Q208 at 16.04 and 18% supply; Q240 was the highest supplied at 31% and 15.84 CCS.

PROSERPINE

Since our last report, Proserpine Mill has crushed another 170,000 tonnes bringing the season-to-date total to 1.316 million tonnes.

The average CCS dropped to 14.95 last week bringing the season-to-date average to 14.01 units. The highest CCS sample was 17.24 from a rake of plant Q240 from the Gunyarra Productivity District.

Based on an expected final crop of 1.58 million tonnes and no further disruptions, crushing is expected to be finalised by Friday 15 November.

The joint AGMs for CANEGROWERS Proserpine and Sugar Services Proserpine will be held on Friday 22 November – members are invited to attend.

MACKAY

At the end of week 14 of the crushing in the Mackay district, the three mills had together crushed a total of 3,905,579 tonnes of cane.

Individual mills recorded the following for the week ended 13 October:

- Farleigh – 59,644 tonnes
- Marian – 88,370 tonnes, and
- Racecourse – 51,262 tonnes

The total for the week was 199,276 tonnes with a CCS of 15.27 (year to date CCS: 13.75).

PLANE CREEK

No cane was crushed at Plane Creek Mill for the week 19-27 October due to problems with the shredder. A precautionary stop on Saturday 19 October to re-balance the shredder was unsuccessful and the decision was made to remove the shredder rotor for major repairs off-site.

Crushing resumed successfully on Sunday 27 October.

Cane Supply Manager John Tait acknowledged the Wilmar employees and external contractors whose skills enabled them to get the factory back up and running ahead of schedule.

"Thanks also to Plane Creek growers and harvesting contractors for their understanding during this stop. I wish everyone the best for the last remaining weeks of the season," Mr Tait said.

Plane Creek Mill's season total to date is 1,035,493 tonnes with an average bin weight of 3.99 and a CCS of 14.38.



Pioneer Valley Arts Exhibition. Read more on page 15.

BUNDABERG

The 2019 season in Bundaberg has wrapped up with the mills taking a day over 15 weeks to get through this year's crop.

Bundaberg Sugar Mills processed 33,840 tonnes for the week ending 13 October, bringing the season-to-date total to 1,093,521 tonnes.

The average CCS for Week 15 was 15.71 units, resulting in a season average CCS of 14.63 units.

The highest individual CCS for Week 15 was 18.30 units for Q208 OR cane from a Yandaran farm through Millaquin Mill.

The four major varieties supplied for Week 15 were Q240A with 26.0% of supply and an average CCS of 15.66 units, followed by Q208 - 17.6% and 16.11 CCS, Q242A - 11.5% and 15.66 CCS, and Q238A - 6.7% and 15.33 CCS.

By the morning of Tuesday 14 October Bundaberg Sugar Mills had completed the 2019 season with a total of 1,095,130 tonnes crushed.

Growers are reminded that 'out of allocation' releases from Paradise Dam continue.

SunWater customers can access water during this event for either direct application onto crops or storage for later use. For further information contact the Bundaberg office on (07) 4151 2555.

CANEGROWERS REGIONAL ROUND-UP

ISIS

The weather played a role in Week 15 of the harvest with interruptions occurring on Saturday 12 October when district rain gauges, which have mainly collected dust for the entire crushing season, measured between 10 and 30mms of rainfall. Cane harvesting ceased late on Friday night and this impacted crushing operations around midday on the Saturday.

Despite the small delay, Isis Mill processed 50,907 tonnes of sugarcane for Week 15 of the 2019 season and Week 16 saw a total of 66,355 crushed. Crushing for the 2019 season is expected to be completed during Week 17. The highest CCS for Week 15 was supplied by a Tirroan grower and came from the cane variety Q249 2nd ratoon which yielded 17.53 units. Week 16 saw a high CCS of 17.59 from Q208 4th ratoon from a Gregory grower.

While this rainfall event was very patchy, it has provided just enough moisture for those with limited irrigation to spring plant which will allow these growers to also take advantage of the Isis Mill Cane Planting Incentive for cane planted in 2019 and available for harvest and processing during the 2020 season. Growers should contact their respective Field Officer once they have the cane in the ground to organise a speedy payment of the incentive.

MARYBOROUGH

The season is winding down in the Maryborough District. We are now in Week 15 with not much left to process.

As at 26 October, the mill had processed 562,838 tonnes for the season-to-date and the CCS average had reached 14.29. CCS is still holding well at 15.21 for the past week.

It was pleasing to see some shower activity throughout the district in recent days with prospects for some more to come. Planting activity has been a focus for those waiting for the weather.

Last week the CANEGROWERS Hall was busy with meetings. More than 40 growers attended an information session on soybeans, while a meeting on the region's feral pig problem also attracted a large crowd.

Thanks to Yolande Kliese from Productivity Services for coordinating both events and the pizzas and social afterwards.

Our AGM and end of season meeting has been moved to Thursday 7 November due to a clash of events and will commence from 2:30pm with a BBQ to follow. We will have a number of guest speakers on the day and I look forward to seeing growers there.

ROCKY POINT

The Rocky Point district harvest continues slowly. The Cogeneration plant usually runs for approximately three days before breaking down as a result of boiler tube or grate issues.

Its inability to reliably supply power and steam to the mill will again impact upon season length as the mill is only able to crush between 8,000-12,000 tonnes of cane each week.

Added to these issues, staff at the Cogen plant are now engaging in industrial action over a wages and conditions dispute. The first of this action commenced early on the morning of 28 October 2019 and more is expected.

As at 27 October the Rocky Point mill has crushed a total of 139,648 tonnes of cane at an average CCS of 13.18.



CELEBRATING LOCAL HEROES WHO SUPPORT SICK KIDS

On Wednesday 6 November, Sunsuper will host a morning tea in Bundaberg for the local heroes who care for children with complex and chronic health care needs and launch Nine Telethon.

With help from Community Lifestyle Support, the morning tea will connect nurses and families involved in Queensland's Connected Care Program; and Captain America and Captain Marvel will make a special visit to see the kids.

As a presenting partner of Nine Telethon, Sunsuper will donate \$100,000 to help fund Queensland's Connected Care Program, which supports more than 135 families with children who live with chronic health care needs in the Wide Bay region.

Sunsuper's Steve Travis, Executive General Manager Member Growth and Marketing said that initiatives like Nine Telethon with the support of organisations like Sunsuper means the Children's Hospital Foundation has the essential funding to invest in life-saving equipment research and programs throughout Queensland.

"Getting behind Nine Telethon and the Connected Care Program will go a long way in helping sick and injured kids receive medical treatment as close to home as possible, no matter where they live."

Nine Telethon is Queensland's only live televised fundraising event and this year has an ambitious target to raise \$13 million for the Children's Hospital Foundation.

Donations will continue to fund life-saving equipment and research for seriously sick kids, and run family support programs, such as Queensland's Connected Care Program.

Tune in to Channel Nine on Saturday, 16 November from 5pm to watch all the action. To attend the morning tea email dreamsforabetterworld@sunsuper.com.au

Disclaimer: This article has been prepared and issued by Sunsuper Pty Ltd, the trustee and issuer of the Sunsuper Superannuation Fund. Sunsuper Pty Ltd ABN 88 010 720 840, AFSL No. 228975, is the Trustee and issuer of the Sunsuper Superannuation Fund ABN 98 503 137 921, USI 98 503 137 921 001.

YELLOW CANOPY SYNDROME UPDATE

Sugar Research Australia continues to invest in research to understand yellow canopy syndrome (YCS). This article presents some of the latest findings as of October 2019.

1. YCS IDENTIFICATION

There are many causes of leaf yellowing in sugarcane. YCS affects leaves in the mid-canopy and has a specific pattern of leaf yellowing and progression. Yellowing occurs when levels of sucrose and starch accumulate past a lethal upper threshold.

After a successful trial in Bundaberg, a YCS in-field midrib test kit will undergo regional validation across the industry during 2019/20. SRA is also developing a unique YCS biomarker, investigating six genes of interest.

2. THE ROLE OF INSECTS, PHYTOPLASMAS, AND OTHER BACTERIA IN COMBINATION WITH ENVIRONMENTAL TRIGGERS ARE BEING INVESTIGATED.

The most recent experimental work does not support a single cause of YCS. Phytoplasmas and other bacteria are intermittently detectable and only measurable at very low concentrations. A broad-spectrum insecticide has been effective in suppressing YCS expression but the identity and role of a specific insect, if any, is yet to be determined.

Environmental stress response expressed through gene expression, products of metabolism and protein levels is consistently represented across all samples sets.

Therefore, several factors need to be present to trigger YCS expression. Experimental work is focused on identifying the key factors so that management options can be progressed.

3. A CHEMICAL OPTION IS UNDER INVESTIGATION WHICH IN MOST CASES PREVENTS YCS SYMPTOMS EXPRESSION UNDER EXPERIMENTAL CONDITIONS.

Insecticide trials indicate removal of insects in general does suppress YCS symptom development by preventing the accumulation of sugars in the leaf. These trials have used a broad-spectrum insecticide (not Imidacloprid and not registered for commercial application above ground in sugarcane) at high doses as an experimental tool to confirm or eliminate the role of an insect in YCS. Please note, this is not a test of the suitability of this chemical as a management option. Insecticide trials will be conducted at six locations across the industry in 2019/20. The outcome of these trials will be pivotal to any YCS management program surrounding a chemical option for industry.

4. A CHEMICAL OPTION IS ENABLING SRA TO QUANTIFY THE IMPACT OF YCS ON YIELD AND IDENTIFY POTENTIAL CAUSES.

In contrast to last year, this year's harvest results from a small chemical trial indicated no significant difference in yield (tonnes of cane per hectare and tonnes of sugar per hectare) between the insecticide treated plots and the untreated control. In this trial there was also no significant correlation between symptom expression and yield loss.

Whether a correlation exists between yield and YCS severity (number of yellow leaves during the peak growing period or "YCS season") as a proportion of the overall canopy throughout the life of the crop is currently being investigated.

5. YCS IMPACT ON CCS

Analysis of commercial cane sugar (CCS) shows there is no penalty associated with YCS. This is consistent with all results from past trials and sampling across the regions.

6. RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

Research indicates that when a healthy balance between leaf sucrose export (supply) and crop growth (demand) exists, plants have more vigor. However, when supply exceeds demand, sugars will begin to accumulate in the leaf. Once an irreversible upper threshold is breached, cell death and leaf yellowing occur. Therefore, whenever possible, use all available resources together with best practice farming to ensure plant growth does not slow. High plant vigor will enable the crop to better cope with stress (environmental and biological) to reduce the incidence and severity of leaf yellowing.

SRA acknowledges the funding contribution of the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries towards this research activity. ■

WHERE TO LOOK IN THE CANOPY?



Accelerated Advances lift December cash flow

Looking to increase your cash flow prior to Christmas?

QSL's Accelerated Advances option is designed to maximise the amount of Advances paid to participating growers prior to the end of the year, with its Advances rate rising to 90% each December.

The Advances rate then remains at 90% until the QSL Standard Advances rate also reaches 90%, usually in April or May the following year. From this time the Accelerated Advances rate aligns with the QSL Standard Advances rate for the remainder of each season.

The QSL Accelerated Advances payment option is only available for:

- Tonnage nominated to the QSL Guaranteed Floor Pool;
- Completed pricing in the Target Price Contract;
- Completed pricing in the Individual Futures Contract; and/or
- Novated pricing (Mackay Sugar growers)

Growers who choose to receive Accelerated Advances have this payment option applied to all qualifying tonnage they may have that season in any of the pricing products outlined above.

It is important to note that in order for tonnage in the Target Price Contract and Individual Futures Contract to be eligible for this payment option, the entire nomination in that particular pricing product for the season in question must be filled by 30 November prior to the December payment for that season.

NOMINATION DATE AND PROCESS

QSL accepts nominations for Accelerated Advances up until 30 November of the season in question. To nominate for 2019, just follow these simple steps:

- Log onto your QSL Direct account and select the ABN in question;
- Select the 2019 Season and click on the Season Preferences tab;
- Under the 'Advances & Cashflow' section, select **ACC** as the Advances Option; and
- Click on the 'Submit' button to confirm the change.

Remember, only Pricing Managers can nominate Accelerated Advances for the ABN in question.

For further information regarding QSL's Accelerated Advances payment option, please read the Pricing Pool Terms of the eligible pricing products, or contact your local QSL representative.

NEW MOSSMAN OFFICE

QSL has opened an office in Mossman.

Located at 31B Front Street, Mossman, our northern-most outpost is the base for our new Far North Queensland Grower Relationship Officer Amanda Sheppard, pictured below.

Growers are welcome to drop in and have a chat to Amanda. To book an appointment, call her on **0418 264 393**.





Guy Cowan
QSL Chairman

AGM: Success despite a challenging market

The 2019 Financial Year was another positive one for QSL, with improved safety results, above-market returns and continuing strong performance from our Operations team.

Speaking at QSL's Annual General Meeting in Brisbane on 22 October, QSL Chairman Guy Cowan said the Queensland sugar industry had faced a challenging market environment, with a considerable global surplus keeping the ICE 11 below the Australian cost of production for most of the reporting period.

"In this low price environment, the ability of Queensland sugar producers to capture added value is critical to our industry's viability, and we believe growers' freedom to choose their marketer has made an important contribution in this regard," Mr Cowan said.

"The increased range of products and tools now available to help our members manage the market and their cash flow has been a highly visible result of the recent evolution in marketing arrangements.

"However, it is the associated exponential increase in grower awareness – of their own operations, the wider market they operate in, and the tools available to them – which I believe will be the true legacy of the new competitive environment."

KEY HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE 2018/2019 FINANCIAL YEAR INCLUDED:

- QSL remained the largest marketer of Queensland sugar and the largest Australian sugar supplier to South Korea
- QSL-managed ICE 11 pools outperformed the performance benchmark by \$15.16 per tonne IPS
- The QSL pricing team filled 3753 grower pricing orders
- Marketing Choice was extended to Mackay growers, enabling them to directly access QSL's full range of products for the first time
- QSL launched an industry-first app
- The QSL Operations team received 3.94 million tonnes through the State's six bulk sugar terminals, and dispatched 100% of all shipments on time, in full and within specification
- QSL successfully renewed its finance facilities

Mr Cowan's full address as well as our CEO's AGM presentation are available online at www.qsl.com.au

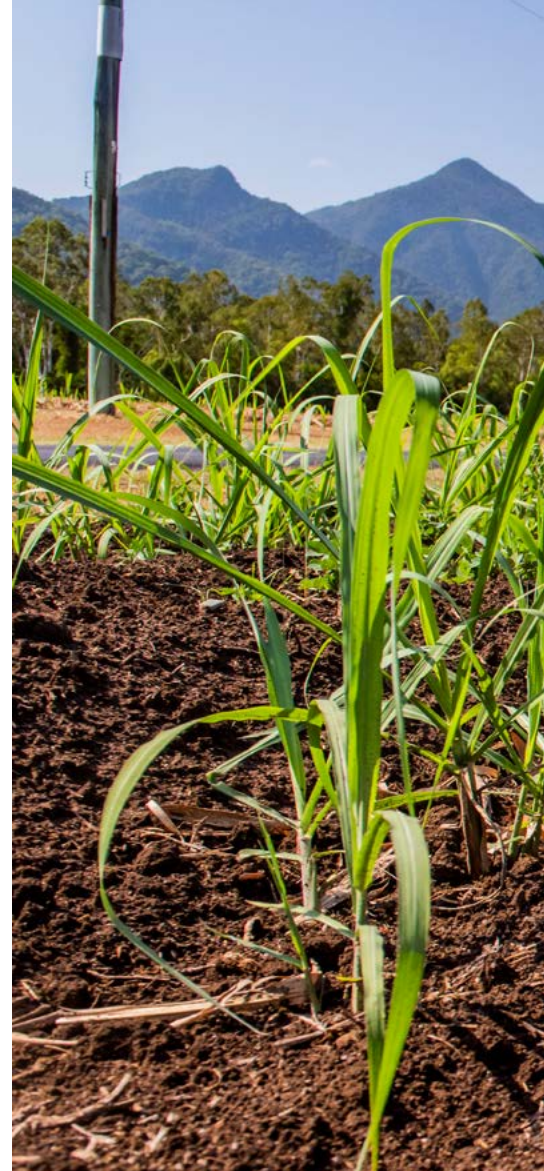
DISCLAIMER:

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

PAYING PEANUTS

WET TROPICS GROWERS TURN TO PEANUTS FOR CASH COVER CROP

Mossman's Glen, Scott and Michael Fasano are among the growers in the far north turning to peanut fallow crops as they work to improve soil health and reduce fertiliser use while developing a new income stream.



The trio harvested their first peanut crop in June and say the results have been encouraging.

"They're a hardy plant, once you get the seeds to germinate they'll grow in our loose sandy soils and they can handle rain and being in water in the low spots at that stage," Scott Fasano said.

"For us it's about getting more organic matter into our soils and breaking the monoculture so if we can do that while also making some money it's a win-win situation."

The Fasanos and another new peanut grower, Gordonvale cane farmer HJ Way, said a wet start to the growing season had been challenging, as had the learning curve.

His planting was delayed until March because of the rain.

"I won't be leaving it that late again," he said. "We had a lot of issues, learned a lot and I'm ready to try again next year at an earlier time and using a few different breeds."



"These days I can dig in the soil and find worms again. Fertiliser use has reduced to 120-130 units of nitrogen per hectare and the yield has stayed about the same."

"We've grown fallow crops, mainly cow peas, for the last 10 years for their soil health benefits.

"These days I can dig in the soil and find worms again. Fertiliser use has reduced to 120-130 units of nitrogen per hectare and the yield has stayed about the same.

"So to find a cover crop that can also be a cash crop ... it's worth the extra work to give it a go."

Aloomba's **Paul Rossi** is one of the few Wet Tropics cane farmers to have produced peanut cash crops for many years.

He says the benefits to soil health and his income have made peanuts a fixture in farm management plans since switching from cow peas and beans 16 years ago.

"It was part of a bigger change, with the move to wider 1.8m rows and controlled traffic three years later," he said.

"Peanuts have helped with damaging nematodes. Counts over the years have shown we've almost wiped them out.

Continues page 14 ►



Pictured: (left) CANEGROWERS Mossman Chairman Glen Fasano (centre) with sons Scott and Michael; (above) Aloomba grower Paul Rossi swapped cow peas for peanuts 16 years ago.



Pictured: Gordonvale cane farmer HJ Way is ready to give peanut fallows another go after encountering some difficulties first time around.

"You can barely pick them up in the peanut fallow now."

He uses 130 units of nitrogen per hectare on his ratoons but only 65 units on plant following a peanut crop. He's seen no reduction in yield or sugar as a result.

"The nitrogen benefits, like other legumes, are reasonable in peanuts even though you harvest them," Paul Rossi said.

"I've trialled zero and 65 units of nitrogen in six-row strips across a block after peanut fallow and the results came back

no different, so where I can I'll replicate that now in blocks with a uniform peanut canopy."

He says diligence and the right soils were crucial to success with peanut fallow crops.

"You need friable soils and you've got to be onto it for about 20 weeks from planting to harvest.

"There is regular spraying and I'm constantly putting on minute amounts of trace elements.

"This year we had a lot of grubs and the rain led to poor germination and a less successful crop but it's been a while since a year like that."

Michael Waring, WTSIP's Regional Extension Support Officer, said fallow cover crops benefit soil structure by improving organic matter and biological diversity in the soil.

"Better soil structure improves plant available water and allows soil to drain more freely, which reduces water logging," he said. ■

Article supplied by Wet Tropic Sugar Industry Partnership (WTSIP).



Sugar industry inspires art

The beauty of aspects of the sugar industry in the Mackay and Plane Creek districts has been captured in oils and other media at this year's Pioneer Valley Arts Exhibition.

CANEGROWERS Mackay has been a long-time sponsor of the Sugar Cane Industry Section of the arts exhibition and competition.

This year the winners were:

1st Prize - Farleigh Sugar Mill by Pamela Berrigan

2nd Prize - Sarina Valley by Janet Ambrose

3rd Prize - Bumpers by Renie West

The Pioneer Valley Arts Exhibition is held each year at the historic Badilla Art Gallery in the Marian cane growing area 64 km west of Mackay.

This year 44 entries were displayed over two weekends in October. ■

Pictured: 1st prize winner Pamela Berrigan; art exhibition entries.



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World-class tech setting the benchmark for irrigation efficiencies in Australia

Supplied by Lindsay Corporation

Lindsay Corporation, a leading global manufacturer and distributor of irrigation and infrastructure equipment and technology, has announced the launch of two new, customer-driven irrigation solutions designed to help Australian growers improve productivity and conserve resources.

The release of Next Gen Zimmatic® Controllers and a new Pivoting Lateral will give growers greater control over their irrigation, save energy and help increase irrigable land.

"We're excited to be launching these two new products, both of which will provide efficiencies for growers at a time when they need it the most," said **Richard Hall**, Lindsay's Regional Manager for southeast Asia, Australia and New Zealand.

"Australian farmers are looking to maximise yields with fewer inputs and this state-of-the-art technology helps them make the most of their valuable irrigation water, while boosting productivity at the same time."

Next Gen Zimmatic Controllers are designed to make remote monitoring and control capabilities even more accessible. They're simple to use and provide quick adjustments to water depth, allowing growers to be responsive to weather conditions.

The full range of Next Gen Zimmatic Controllers includes the 500C, the 700C and the 712C. Features include:

- **Smart barrier automation** that provides a simple method for irrigating part circles, enabling the pivot to automatically reverse, return and stop at your original starting point.
- **Simple yet sophisticated Advanced Plan creation** – making it easier than ever for growers to create custom, accurate irrigation programs unique to each field.
- **Smart alignment** that provides real-time, visual feedback when confirming machine alignment.
- **Over-the-air serviceability** making software and firmware updates and addition of future feature enhancements easier than ever.
- **More end gun areas and management capabilities.**

- **Additional input and output ports** for immense flexibility in adding other accessories and sensors.
- **An easier-than-ever interface** based on mobile app design principles provides users with intuitive operation in the field and via the FieldNET™ mobile app.

Each controller comes FieldNET-ready, allowing farmers to view and control their irrigation systems from virtually anywhere.

FieldNET is the industry's leading remote irrigation management tool, featuring integrated water, fertiliser, chemigation and scheduling solutions that reduce costs for growers by saving water, energy and time in the field.

Zimmatic 9520PL is a new Pivoting Lateral that is a cost-effective, yet technologically advanced solution to irrigate more land with tremendous flexibility.

Its exclusive optical barrier offers more programming flexibility than physical barricades, and GPS technology enhances accuracy, saves time and requires less maintenance than furrow-guided machines.

The Zimmatic 9520PL is ideally suited to irrigating high-value crops especially on large, irregular-shaped fields where multiple traditional centre pivot and lateral-move systems may not be cost-effective.

"The grower decides how to use this product most effectively and this customised control gives them the ability to irrigate in difficult areas - meaning farmers can meaningfully increase the amount of land they can irrigate which is a huge step forward," said Mr Hall.

Both the Zimmatic 9520PL and Next Gen Zimmatic Controllers are expected to be available in Australia by the end of the calendar year.

"We are proud that Lindsay continues to lead the way in developing innovative irrigation solutions in response to the changing needs of farmers - particularly during this challenging period when Australian growers are becoming more reliant on equipment that produces on-farm efficiencies," concluded Mr Hall.

For information about the complete line of Zimmatic and FieldNET products and services, talk to your local Zimmatic dealer, or visit www.ZimmaticANZ.com ■



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IRRIGWEB SIMPLIFIES RECORD KEEPING

By Terry Granshaw, Smartcane BMP Facilitator Burdekin

Technological solutions are helping growers get to grips with their record-keeping and boosting Smartcane BMP accreditations in irrigation-reliant areas like the Burdekin.

To gain accreditation in the industry's best management practice program, Smartcane BMP, growers must successfully complete three core modules: soil health and nutrient management; weed, pest and disease management; and irrigation and drainage management.

In regions blessed with reliable rainfall, where growers irrigate infrequently or not at all, the bulk of the irrigation module is largely not applicable.

However, in areas like the Burdekin, where sugarcane relies on irrigation, this module becomes more relevant and important for productivity.

The added complexity and time required to ensure irrigation practices are at, or above, industry standard has seen a steadier increase in the number of accredited growers than in some of the non-irrigated districts.

The uptake of technology, like IrrigWeb and monitoring tools, together with the support of Smartcane BMP facilitators has greatly increased the number of Burdekin growers who are now close to becoming accredited.

In recent times, around 20 growers have completed accreditation using the irrigation scheduling and record keeping tool, IrrigWeb, which has been developed specifically for sugarcane.

IrrigWeb users enter information about their paddocks – soil type, time of planting or ratooning and harvest date – and record irrigation events against those paddocks.

Rainfall is captured automatically from local weather stations, or the growers can enter their own rainfall numbers.

IrrigWeb uses all of this information to calculate how rapidly the cane is growing, how much water is being used

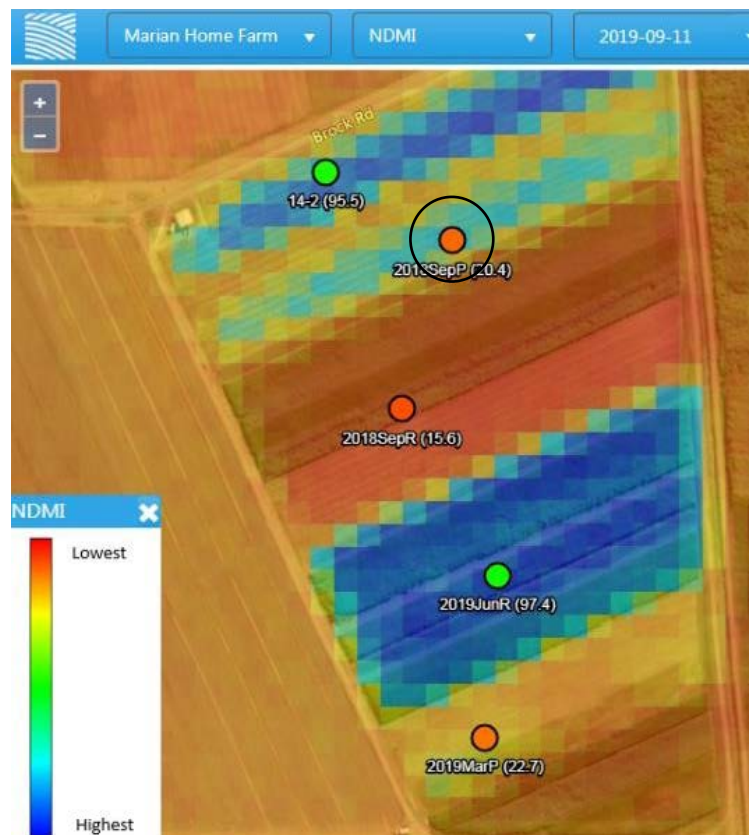
by the crop, and an estimate of the next irrigation date.

The scheduling report which indicates when blocks will next need watering is also emailed weekly.

Through funding from the Smartcane BMP program, Farm Water Futures and Burdekin Productivity Services, BPS is able to provide its members with free access to the program.

Recently there have been some changes made to the functionality and feel of IrrigWeb. These changes include:

- Addition of a map function which allows users to visualise the moisture status of their crops via a coloured dot (below left).
- Inclusion of satellite imagery of normalised difference vegetation and moisture indices (NDVI & NDMI). NDVI is an indication of crop vigour or how well it is growing.



NDMI provides an indication of moisture stress levels (below right).

- New, simplified water-use report that shows total water application (irrigation and rainfall), run-off and deep drainage.
- New yield report that calculates tonnes of cane grown per megalitre of water applied - if the user has recorded their yield data.
- The ability to choose what information to include in the weekly scheduling email.
- The option to have the map set as the default landing page.

The mapping and imagery functions provide users with a different perspective on the soil moisture status of their crop. For example, the images on page 18 show how the NDMI imagery can be used to compare the IrrigWeb soil moisture deficit (coloured dots) to the crop's moisture stress level.

The circled example is a paddock where IrrigWeb calculates that the soil water level is low (orange dot), while the paddock colour (blue) shows that the crop is not stressing.

Further investigation showed that no irrigations had been recorded against that paddock and this was causing IrrigWeb to 'think' that the crop was stressed.

When the irrigation events were recorded for that block, both images showed the same soil moisture status.

The NDMI images may also pick up issues with irrigation or water penetration. If a grower has been recording their irrigations and IrrigWeb is calculating that the soil moisture status is adequate, but the imagery suggests that the crop is under some stress it could indicate that there is a problem with soakage or infiltration and that the applied water is not being taken up by the plant.

IrrigWeb is a useful tool that provides growers with a platform for scheduling and recording irrigation events.

The crop imagery can provide further information and insights into the adequacy of irrigation or as a reminder to enter when irrigation occurred.

At the end of the season, reports showing how much water has been applied to each paddock, and the cane grown with that water can be printed.

These reports can be used to further refine irrigation management to increase water use efficiency.

All of this information not only assists growers with achieving Smartcane BMP accreditation in the Irrigation Module, but also has resulted in increases in productivity and profitability for growers.

For more information about IrrigWeb please contact Burdekin Smartcane BMP facilitators Jasmine Connolly or Terry Granshaw on (07) 4790 3600. ■

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SCIENCE REVIEW OF 2,4-D COMPLETED BY APVMA

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) began a review of 2,4-D in 2003, primarily due to issues of spray drift and the environmental risks associated with the more volatile (short chain) esters (ethyl ester, butyl ester and isobutyl ester forms).

The review has already resulted in regulatory action by APVMA in 2005, 2013, 2018 and 2019 to strengthen label instructions, label restraints and label warnings in order to reduce the risk of undesirable chemical spray drift. The full review has now been completed and it contains a number of recommendations in relation to toxicological, occupational health and safety, and environmental issues as well as residues.

In relation to toxicology, the APVMA has reaffirmed that, handled appropriately, the active constituents and registration of products containing 2,4-D, its salts and esters:

- Would not be an undue health hazard to the safety of people exposed to it during its handling or people using anything containing its residues; and
- Would not be likely to have an effect that is harmful to human beings.

With respect to occupational health and safety, the report confirmed that the use of 2,4-D does not pose an unacceptable risk to human health provided the label conditions include:

- Recommendations for suitable combinations of clothing, personal and/or respiratory protective equipment that limit the exposure of workers;
- Additional limitations for formulations with 2,4-D DEA, including restrictions on use rates and certain equipment, in particular the elimination of its use by backpack spray;

- Limiting the use of 2,4-D products by backpack spray to a maximum work rate of 4.0 kg a.e./day to limit potential exposure to dioxins.

In terms of environmental risk, the report noted the high toxicity of 2,4-D to aquatic plants. A spray drift assessment was conducted according to APVMA's newly updated approach to spray drift management. This confirmed that spray drift risks can be adequately mitigated by mandatory buffer zones.

A runoff assessment was conducted by APVMA's accepted method to refine estimates of pesticide loss to waterways. This estimated the surface water concentrations in runoff from information on the specific agricultural use, soil types, slopes in the different regions, regional rainfall and streamflow. These studies have led to proposed restraints in the use of 2,4-D in some regions and for some purposes.

For sugarcane, this will impose no-spray windows at certain times of the year, with these windows varying by region, product, application rate and spray method (banded versus broadcast). For example, use of GROUP 8B products (700g 2,4-D/L as the DMA/MMA or DEA salt), would be limited as per the below table.

The APVMA invites submissions from the public on the proposed 2,4-D chemical review decisions by 31 January 2020. CANEGROWERS will make a submission after consulting with the district organisations, Sugar Research Australia, productivity services and other industry partners. ■

TIMING RESTRICTIONS PROPOSED FOR SPRAYING

Rate (L/ha)	Region	Timing Restriction DO NOT APPLY DURING THESE MONTHS
Up to 1.5L/ha	Wet Tropics	No timing restriction
	Burdekin	No timing restriction
	Mackay/Whitsunday	October to November
	Mary/Burnett	October to November
	Northern NSW	No timing restriction
Up to 3.2L/ha	Wet Tropics	October to December
	Burdekin	September to October
	Mackay/Whitsunday	August to December
	Mary/Burnett	April to January
	Northern NSW	October to November



Sweet day out for NSW school kids

The New South Wales Harwood and Broadwater sugar mills recently hosted local school groups for a Schools Open Day.

With the sugar industry being a major local employer and contributor to the economy of northern NSW, Sunshine Sugar set about engaging the next generation of workers, thinkers and leaders to see and learn first-hand how this important local industry works and the value it creates for the people of the Northern Rivers.

Around 250 students from the Clarence Valley toured the Harwood Sugar Mill, the oldest continuously operating sugar mill in Australia. Students were shown the sugar making process from the cane trucks tipping freshly harvested cane into the shredder, through the milling train and all the way to the raw sugar shed where around 70,000 tonnes of sugar is stored.

At Broadwater, around 120 students from schools across the Richmond Valley saw their local sugar mill in action. Broadwater is the largest mill in NSW, crushing cane from around 15,000 hectares of surrounding cane farmland. ■



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Don Mizzi 741 model on Fiat 750 special turbo plus MF102 half-tracks to suit. Ph: 0438606578 (Mackay).

Celli Tiger spike hoe, 2.5m wide with hydraulic crumble roller and oil cooler. Very good condition. Ph: 0438606578 (Mackay).

6t side tipper Ian Ritchie, Excellent condition \$15,000 + GST. Ph: 0478719294.

2015 Case Track Harvester 8800, Trimble GPS, shedder topper, hyd. adjustable fronts 1.50m to 1.85m. Balance valve fitted to front suspension; iFit engineering chopper drums; Glenella Engineering taper locks on chopper gears; Blackey Bisalloy elevator floors; greasing system fitted; Tungsten on front shoes; floating side walls & base cutter discs. Track transporter; 2x6t side tippers; V10 Mercedes motor; Robot running gear. All in good condition. Ph: 0427617807.

2016 Case 8800 Track Machine, 2200 Hours, EHS 8 Blade Choppers, Trimble GPS, Blackey Bisalloy elevator floors, Standard Topper, 2 speed wheel motors, Pro Rata Engine Warranty. Very tidy machine. Ph: 0428182464 or 0427541030.

KUBOTA BX2670 4WD, 26hp, 187hrs, Front End Loader with GP Bucket, 60" Side Discharge Mower, 170kg Counterweight, \$19,990 Inc., Ph: 0428236165.

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Farmers son needs a starter boat. Approximately 4 metres. About \$6,000. Ph: 0488535847.

STL shares wanted. Ph: 0408448227.

4WD tractor. 140 - 160 HP. Cairns. Ph: 0740568158.

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Cane farm, Silkwood area. 27.82 ha total, 27.62 under cane on 1 freehold title. 5 yr av 97 t/ha. 7.5 kms from Kurrimine Beach. Shed and bore water. Ph: 0417647002.

Cane farm Tarakan Road ABERGOWRIE 270 acres freehold Genuine enquiries pls. Ph: 07 4777 4633 or 0408608664.

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 0408880724.

Rainfall Report

brought to you by Sunsuper

Location	Recorded rainfall (mm)		Average rainfall (mm) January–October	
	7 days to 9am			Year to date
	21.10.19	28.10.19		
Mossman	0	0	2493	1897
Mareeba AP	0	3	637	751
Cairns	0	30	1966	1729
Mt Sophia	0	76	2855	2894
Babinda	0	115	2720	3753
Innisfail	0	39	2982	3135
Tully	0	0	2262	3647
Cardwell	0	5	1943	1807
Lucinda	0	15	2266	1831
Ingham	Tce	12	2662	1717
Abergowrie	0	7	1911	1561
Townsville	0	0.4	1757	933
Ayr DPI	0	0	948	780
Proserpine	0	0	1427	1136
Mirani	0	1	1427	1252
Mackay	0	0	1065	1293
Sarina (Plane Ck)	0.2	0.2	1382	1423
Bundaberg	5	0	289	795
Childers South	2	0	293	687
Maryborough	35	0	507	940
Tewantin	5	2	985	1425
Eumundi	0	0	524	1383
Nambour	22	4	954	1376
Woongoolba	14	0	605	1088
Murwillumbah	0	0	527	1284
Ballina	0.2	0.6	866	1510
Woodburn	0	0	261	1161



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.

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*Traveller who is over 85 should have a medical clearance to travel.

[^]At the time of journey you must be medically cleared to travel.

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