

CANE

AUSTRALIAN

# GROWER

GROWING  
THE FAMILY  
LEGACY



Online nutrient management tool is increasing accessibility



Sugar prices soar increasing grower's optimism



ASSCT Conference provides opportunity to learn



STEER | PLANT | SPRAY | SPREAD | HARVEST | SHARE | ANALYSE

# YOUR NOZZLE-BY-NOZZLE



STEER | PLANT | SPRAY | SPREAD | HARVEST | SHARE | ANALYSE

# OZZLE ADVANTAGE



Take your spraying program to the next level of accuracy and performance with RightSpot™ precision technology from Ag Leader. Suitable for retrofitting to most self-propelled or trailed sprayers, RightSpot optimises the efficacy of your spraying program and helps to reduce spray drift and input costs.



## CONSISTENT DROPLET SIZE

Blended pulse technology minimises spray drift by maintaining consistent droplet size, independent of application rate and operating speed.



## INDIVIDUAL NOZZLE CONTROL

Instantaneous on/off control of up to 144 individual nozzles, ensuring crop safety and reducing input costs.



## WIDE SPEED RANGE

Maintain the desired droplet size and application rate across a wide range of operating speeds and conditions, increasing your productivity.



## AUTOMATIC TURN COMPENSATION

Reduce under- or over-application during turning for perfect weed control around turns, curves and boundaries.



## HIGH VISIBILITY TOUCHSCREEN

High visibility 30 cm touchscreen display for seamless, all-in-one control of your steering, planting, spraying, spreading, harvesting and decision support systems.

*FIND YOUR LOCAL DEALER AT [AGLEADER.COM](http://AGLEADER.COM)*

**Ag Leader®**

**MAKING FARMING EASIER**

# IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN!

LET LIQUAFORCE HELP YOU TO GET YOUR BEST RESULTS IN 2023 WITH THE SUPPORT OF **PLANTSTARTER 21**

A combination of enhanced efficiency fertiliser with organic carbon to boost nitrogen use efficiency, **PLANTSTARTER21** delivers faster plant uptake and safer application options to protect your planting investment.

PlantStarter21 also includes bio-stimulants from two different seaweed extracts to help increase root mass and support ultimate nutrient take up.

Independent research undertaken by the University of Southern Queensland shows PlantStarter21 to reduce nitrogen leaching by 24%, support up to 98% faster strike rate and 52% greater shoot length when compared to granular fertiliser.

Like all LiquaForce liquid fertiliser products, PlantStarter21 delivers the added advantage of allowing you to plant much more area per day with less labour and machinery required to get the job done, saving you time and money.

Get your plant cane away faster and stronger with PlantStarter21 and capture the full potential of your crop this season!

**LIQUAFORCE – MORE THAN JUST NPKS IN A BAG**

**ROOT EMERGENCE JUST 72 HOURS POST PLANT WITH LIQUAFORCE **PLANTSTARTER 21****



CALL OUR LIQUAFORCE AREA REPS FOR MORE INFORMATION OR LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!

**MACKAY REGION:**  
Don McNichol, 0429 540 066

**BURDEKIN REGION:**  
Robert Woods, 0429 658 318

**INGHAM REGION:**  
Cameron Liddles, 0427 765 711

**TULLY & FNQ REGION:**  
Maurice Shephard, 0457 924 762  
Jordan Villaruz 0404 787 144

# CONTENTS

---

## 04 *News Briefs*

Growers featured on ABC Landline

---

## 05 *Once in a generation sugar price*

2023 set to be a bumper year for Queensland's sugarcane industry

---

## 08 *CANEGROWERS workforce campaign*

Driving workers to the industry

---

## 10 *CEO Comment*

Sugar market creates opportunities for industry

---

## 12 *40 years in industry*

CANEGROWERS Mossman manager reflects on the winds of change

---

## 14 *From the Chair*

CANEGROWERS Australia and NFF working together

---

## 16 *Nutrition tool goes digital*

SRA launches it's first free eLearning program

---

## 24 *Growing the family legacy*

Young Proserpine growers making their mark

---

## 32 *Regional round-up*

---

## 40 *Policy updates*

---

## 44 *Legal updates*

---

## 46 *Classifieds*

---

## 47 *Rainfall report*

---



CANEGROWERS

**Editor:**

Robyn Devine

**Design:**

Justin Fulton

Articles appearing in Australian Canegrower do not necessarily represent the policies or views of CANEGROWERS.

**Published monthly by:**

CANEGROWERS, GPO Box 1032, Brisbane, Queensland 4001 Australia. ABN 94 089 992 969

Telephone: 07 3864 6444

Email: [editor@canegrowers.com.au](mailto:editor@canegrowers.com.au)

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

**Subscriptions**

Yearly subscriptions for 12 issues  
(postage included)

Within Australia: \$176 inc GST

Overseas (AUD): \$265

COVER IMAGE: Bessie and Sam Orr with their children Max, Bella and Vincent growing the family business.

Photo Credit: Alysha Lee

Read more on page 24

# NEWS BRIEFS



## ABC Landline showcases cane

*Australian Canegrower* readers may remember that the March issue featured the inspiring story of Mackay harvesting contractor Paul Schembri Jr and how perseverance and an unlikely friendship helped him overcome a life-altering injury.

The ABC Landline on Sunday 23 April was a pretty sweet episode with plenty of positive stories from Queensland's cane country showcasing Paul's journey and Tully grower Chris Condon spoke to Landline's Matt Brann about the amazing sugar prices currently on offer. If you missed the episode you can catch it on ABC iview - Landline.

## New home for Mackay biofutures industries

Mackay could become home to a new Queensland biofutures area focused on industries making products from sustainable plant-based resources.

The Queensland Government will investigate whether a suitable site in the region could be declared as a State Development Area (SDA).

It would be home to industries making food, fuel, feed and fibre products, by



adding value to plant-based output from traditional local industries, including sugar. The investigation will involve discussions with the local government and business sectors as well as public consultation.

It's possible a decision about a SDA could be made late in 2023 and work on a development scheme for an SDA could begin in 2024.

## Solving air travel's emissions dilemma

Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk's recent public vote of confidence in the sugarcane industry's ability to supply the feedstock for a biofuels revolution in Queensland is welcome recognition.

Announcing a second Sustainable Aviation Fuel project in as many weeks, Premier Palaszczuk declared Queensland "perfectly positioned to be a clean energy superpower because we have ... the largest sugar industry in the nation."

The government's desire to make Queensland a Sustainable Aviation Fuel hub fits perfectly within the industry's Sugar Plus roadmap.



## ONCE IN A GENERATION SUGAR PRICE SETS STAGE FOR BUMPER YEAR



**CANEGROWERS** Chairman Owen Menkens says a recent spike in the world sugar price, coupled with a drop in fertiliser prices, is setting up 2023 as a bumper year for Queensland's sugarcane industry.

"Just two years ago the sugar price languished below \$400 per tonne, not even covering the cost of production for many growers. It was a pretty grim time," Mr Menkens said.

"Fast-forward to today and that figure has doubled, with the prompt price hitting highs of \$804 per tonne in mid-April.

"The last time we saw the prompt price at \$800 was in 1980, more than 40 years ago, so growers are understandably excited.

While most growers have already priced their sugar from the 2022 season, and therefore won't be able to take advantage of that high, prices for the coming seasons are equally impressive and continue to rise.

As of mid-April growers could forward price their 2023 sugar at \$756 per tonne and their 2024 sugar at \$651 per tonne.

Adding to the excitement is a fall in global fertiliser prices, which had skyrocketed in recent years due to the war in Ukraine. However, thanks to a recent decline in demand and a drop in natural gas prices, fertiliser prices are falling on the global market.

"These falls haven't filtered through to the local market yet, as resellers offtake old, highly priced stocks. But if fertiliser prices continue to drop, sugarcane growers should find their input costs significantly reduced when it comes time to fertilise ratoons around August/September," Mr Menkens said.

With rising sugar prices and falling input costs, just two more pieces of the puzzle need to fall into place to make 2023 a bumper year

for Queensland's sugarcane industry – weather and mill performance.

"Of course, we can't control the weather, but so far Mother Nature hasn't been too harsh, with plenty of rain and no cyclones."

Mill performance is a thornier issue, however, and is particularly worrisome for growers, Mr Menken said.

"An extended season isn't good for anyone. Growers lose out as sugar content in their cane declines, making harvesting uneconomical. Unharvested cane also has a negative knock-on effect on future seasons.

"Mills also lose out, as they produce less sugar but must keep up staffing and maintenance levels. They also have a shorter off-season to carry out vital maintenance and capital works.

"Growers have put in the time, effort, and money over recent months to ensure a good crop is ready for harvest. And we know that mill staff across our districts are working feverishly with local contractors and suppliers to try to meet their maintenance schedules.

"It is in everybody's interest to pull together and work towards getting this next crop off in a timely and efficient manner." ■

## WORKING TOGETHER GROWING TOGETHER



The theme for the 2023 Australian Society of Sugar Cane Technologists (ASSCT) conference 'Working Together - Growing Together' was on point according to CANEGROWERS Senior Manager Membership Engagement & Innovation Matt Kealley, who said there is no better opportunity to share research, products and expertise within the sugarcane industry.

The conference brought together representatives from the growing, milling and research components of the industry to discuss current developments in research and technology. As well as the in-depth presentations, panels and keynote speakers, the conference included a highly successful agricultural field day held at the Sugar Research Australia (SRA) Meringa Station.

Matt said the ASSCT, held in this year in Cairns during April, provides the only forum where the sugarcane industry can come together to present and discuss industry research that can benefit growers and millers.

"It also featured keynote speakers, panels, and workshops on industry issues and opportunities such as diversification, mill reliability and the sugar plus roadmap," Matt said.

"Attending these sessions can help growers keep informed and gives the opportunity to stay up to date on the latest research, technologies, and best practices.

"The networking opportunities to meet and connect with researchers, extension professionals, millers, growers and key industry people in the Queensland sugarcane industry value chain is valuable and the field trips allow participants to see the research in action."

The SRA Field Day at Meringa provided participants with a meander through a wide range of current research areas.

The day was very well attended by growers, millers, extension staff, scientists and other industry professionals.

CANEGROWERS Farm Business Resilience Project Manager Chris Gillitt said the day included as many as 15 different practical demonstrations including two guided walks.

"One of these was a fascinating walk around the grounds to view the photoperiod houses and *Spectracane* facilities used in variety development," Chris said.



Kevin Powell doing the SRA tour discussing experiments on alternatives to imidachloprid

"Dr Felicity Atkin, from SRA, explained that the photoperiod houses were built to provide a means to extend the flowering period of cane used as parents for crossing. This is achieved by controlling the day length and temperature to improve flowering, which are then used for crossing to produce seeds which are then subjected to the rigorous selection process which narrows down potential candidates from up to 100,000 new seedlings!

"There was also a walking tour of the research being conducted on alternatives to imidacloprid for control of the cane grub pest. The progress was encouraging although some of the details of the products had to remain commercial in confidence until research is completed and products are able to be registered for use in sugarcane."

The demonstration of the Harvest Mate decision support tool online app attracted much attention with a lot of enthusiastic questions and answers discussed. The tool aims to simulate the economic cost and benefits (based on extensive harvesting trials and data) arising from a practice change in key harvesting parameters such as fan speeds and machine travelling speeds.



The app provides growers and contractors with a suite of relevant information to enable better decision making around how the crop is harvested, and also provides each party with data that can help them reach an agreement on implementation of the practice change and using that to negotiate the commercial arrangements to do so (considering costs, risk, and return).

Harvest Mate went on to win the best research paper at the ASSCT conference.

Participants could also “drop-in” with lead researchers who hosted discussions on topics such as progress with Yellow Canopy Syndrome (research on role of invertebrate vectors), SugarPATH BioSensors (device for detecting diseases in sugarcane), drone applications for research (sensors and artificial intelligence for strengthening variety performance analysis), AutoWeed (green-on-green spot spraying technology) and much more!

The Industry Roadmap and Panel Q&A session provided the opportunity to reinforce the important role that research, innovation and technology play in the industry’s vision for the future.

Dr Jason Eglington President of ASSCT and SRA Executive Manager Variety Development, Rachele Sheard Australian Sugar Milling Council CEO, Burn Ashburner CANEGROWERS Senior Manager Industry, Roslyn Baker SRA CEO, Stephen Ryan Australian Cane Farmers Association General Manager and Elton Miller Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (Queensland) Executive Director provided the insight into the industry’s road map for a sustainable future during the Q&A session.

“I would encourage growers to attend future conferences and to connect with the industry researchers at SRA,” Matt said.

Growers can check out the 2023 Abstract Book of the presented research at [www.assct.com.au](http://www.assct.com.au) ■

## KEY TAKEAWAYS AND RESEARCH OF NOTE

### Development of the decision-support tool ‘Harvest Mate’: agronomic algorithms

This paper examined the development of these algorithms and the functionality of Harvest Mate, a new tool that incorporates both agronomic and economic considerations to determine the most economically optimal harvester settings.

### Reviewing the results of soil tests identifies opportunities to improve nutrient management in the Wet Tropics

Records of available soil-test results for the Tully, South Johnstone and Mulgrave sugarcane production districts were collated and reviewed. It is evident that soil acidity and nutrient deficiency, specifically calcium and magnesium, are impacting the productivity of older ratoon crops and are likely to be affecting the performance of legume cover-crops grown during the traditional fallow period. Opportunities to alleviate soil-chemical constraints, overcome nutrient deficiencies and refine on-farm nutrient management were discussed.

### Profitability and environmental implications of innovative practice changes and irrigation improvements

The economic and environmental benefits of practice changes and irrigation improvements were explored based on three grower case studies in the Bundaberg, Burdekin and Mackay regions that consider grower investments in best management practices, including irrigation changes.

The economic benefit was positive for all farms, ranging from \$29 to \$377 per hectare per year.

The same data were used to calculate indicators of environmental performance (per tonne of harvested cane) using the Cane Life Cycle Assessment (CaneLCA) tool. There were reductions in fossil-fuel use, greenhouse-gas emissions, and a potential for water pollution curtailment.



## DRIVING WORKERS TO THE INDUSTRY

Growers and harvesting contractors on the hunt for employees ahead of this year's crush are getting a helping hand from CANEGROWERS, with a new workforce recruitment drive attracting workers to the industry.

The mainly social media campaign is targeting interstate workers, young travellers, grey nomads, armed forces and emergency services retirees, ag workers from other sectors, and even qualified international job seekers, in an effort to prevent a repeat of shortages that wreaked havoc in some districts in 2022.

"We suffered significant workforce shortages right across the sector in 2022," CANEGROWERS Chairman Owen Menkens said.

"Mill workers, farm hands, haul-out drivers, harvester operators, and truck drivers were all in short supply.

"While some areas were more badly affected than others, the overall shortage of workers contributed to the longer season length and around one million tonnes of cane being left in the paddock, unharvested."

*"We would love to get more Queenslanders working in the industry ... these are the people most likely to stay and be passionate about their region"*

CANEGROWERS is also targeting regional Queenslanders, especially students, and has been developing and promoting curriculum-aligned teaching resources that can help teachers inform students about the industry and the many career opportunities that exist.

*Continued next page ►*



"Ideally, we would love to get more regional Queenslanders working in the industry, as these are the people most likely to stay long-term and be more passionate about the vitality of their region," Mr Menkens said.

"As part of our long-term strategy to encourage young people into the industry, we have created resources that will help teach primary and secondary-aged students about the Queensland's sugar industry.

"We are an industry of many and diverse opportunities. People with little knowledge of the industry might think being a farmer or a mill worker are the only career paths available, but in reality we have so much more to offer.

"From working in the paddock, operating farm machinery, to careers in agronomy, research and development, milling operations, sugar marketing and trade, laboratory technicians and chemists, sugar terminal operations and logistics, policy development, advocacy, communications, and so much more.

"There really is something for everyone in Queensland's sugar industry."

To list a position vacant advertisement or check out work wanted ads, visit the Work in the Industry page on the CANEGROWERS website:

[www.canegrowers.com.au/page/jobs](http://www.canegrowers.com.au/page/jobs) ■

# VITALROOT®

- increased tillering
- faster emergence
- more shoots & roots

Cane trial – Plant cane, Alloway QLD, 2021				
Treatment	Product rate / Ha	Average cane sticks / plot @ 15 Nov 22	Mean cane yield (T/Ha) @ harvest	Extra return^ (\$/Ha)
Untreated	–	30.90	136.5	
VITALROOT (infurrow)	2 L/Ha	36.10	151.6	<b>\$427.76</b>
VITALROOT (infurrow) + BIOZYME (foliar)	2 L/Ha 0.5 L/Ha	36.26	154.7	<b>\$854.22</b>

Variety: SRA11 | Planted: 6 Sept 2021 @ 9T/Ha, billet planting on 1.5m rows  
Harvested: 15 Nov 2022 | VITALROOT applied in-furrow with propiconazole fungicide. BIOZYME applied by foliar application 4 weeks post-emergence.

^ Calculated using cane payment formula  
sugar price x 0.009 x (CCS – 4) + 0.6.  
VITALROOT RRP \$15/L & BIOZYME RRP \$26/L.  
Trials performed by Eurofins Agrosience Services



## SUGAR MARKET ON THE MARCH – AN OPPORTUNITY WORTH NOTING

BY DAN GALLIGAN  
*CEO CANEGROWERS*

**Australian cane growers are more exposed to impact of the global sugar market than any of our competitors. Growers in our industry survive without any protection from government policy or subsidies.**

This is not the case for many of our competitors in other parts of the world. The sugar market has many influences, the largest of which continues to be supply and demand fundamentals. Despite a persisting trend to demonise sugar in the diet, sugar consumption continues to be on a steady rise in many parts of the world. The steady, not spectacularly but consistent, growth in consumption has been the backbone of our continued success for decades. But the market is a volatile beast and times of high prices are often met with periods of lows and dramatic market corrections. Exactly when and how big this correction this may be is something that only the trade analysts and market forecasters can comment on. At the industry level for CANEGROWERS it is as important to try and predict how long this period of good prices might last as it is to try and analyse why the market is where it is now and when will these conditions exist again.

Through our Business Essentials training, Market Information Services and regular global engagement with sugar buyers, traders and colleague producers we seek to gain and provide insight to growers about how best to take advantage of available good pricing. For CANEGROWERS the organisation we also seek to see this as an opportunity to invest in the services and human capital that will secure the

future of the industry. This may be through leadership programs, training and education strategies for schools and staff, policy work with member meetings, policy committee sessions with growers and work to look at our technology platforms to increase services and communication to members.

The global sugar market is highly complex and subject to a wide range of factors that can impact prices. While increasing demand for sugar is a significant driver of price increases, changes in weather patterns and government policies can also have a significant impact. Regardless of whether it is for individual growers or CANEGROWERS as an organisation, seeing this time as inevitably temporary and viewing it in the context of the market conditions of the past as well as the projections for the future, means that it is all about capturing the opportunity. Being optimistic but not naive will position us to make the most of very positive market sentiment. Let's hope the effort in our mills and harvesting crews to deliver a good harvest and milling season will see the industry and all growers reap the benefits of this high price moment in time. ■

*“Precision Ag is about putting your dollars where they’ll have the most benefit”*



Tim Rethus, Third Generation Farmer, Victoria.



For the Rethus family on their 5,500 ha farm, John Deere Operations Center™ has been a game-changer. Having the knowledge of where machines are and how they are performing at their fingertips in real-time has improved operator efficiency and fleet logistics.

Seamless flow of yield and quality data into Operations Center has delivered insights that are enhancing nutrient management strategies and unlocking new grain marketing opportunities.

**Hear more in our Q&A with the Rethus’ and the benefits you too can gain with Precision Ag at [JohnDeere.com.au/GotWhatItTakes](http://JohnDeere.com.au/GotWhatItTakes).**

**It’s easy to start. Download the free Operations Center mobile app today.**



App Store



Google Play

## WINDS OF CHANGE

As she approaches retirement, the Manager of CANEGROWERS Mossman reflects on her four decades of industry and grower service.

### Q&A

**Evelyn Matthews**

*Manager, CANEGROWERS Mossman*

#### How did you start with CANEGROWERS?

I was engaged in September 1983 to work for Mossman District Cane Growers Executive and Mill Suppliers Committee as a Clerk/Typist. Even then we were a small office with two people: the Manager, Mr Campbell and a Secretary, Ms Doreen O'Shea. I became the third employee and I was trained by Doreen for 12 months before she retired.

I learned all manner of jobs from answering the telephone, typing out letters and dictation from meeting minutes to setting up harvesting groups, calculating pays, maintaining harvest and grower data and computing the finances of the organisation. I also worked for the Mossman Cane Growers' Co-operative Society Limited as we maintained their grower shareholding and share register.

At the time I started work the board of the Executive was also the board of the Co-operative Society as both were grower organisations. The Co-operative eventually became Town & Country Limited and folded as a company in 2019.

#### Tell us about some of the other changes you've seen ...

The changes in the workplace over the years have mainly been around improved technology both with phone systems and of course with computers replacing typewriters and then laptops, iPads and smart phones.

When I started in 1983 we had desktop electric calculators, a manual typewriter, a telex type machine that kept the offices connected and landline phones.

We completed the organisation's finances manually and had cash books, ledgers and journals. We also did the harvester group pricing, price changes and wages manually for all the harvesting groups until this was handed over to the mill to be incorporated into their automatic cane payment system.

While the mill was starting to computerise and make certain functions automated,

some data and statistics remained manually recorded for some time.

Changes within the industry were also considerable over time, but it is surprising how many issues seem to come back around for a second go. Along with the obvious changes technology brought with improved machinery and automation, I saw practice change locally in moving from burnt cane to green cane harvesting and the reduction of harvesting contractors as machinery got bigger and better.

During my years with CANEGROWERS, Mossman Central Mill, a grower-owned and operated mill for over 100 years, expanded onto the Tablelands and brought cane down for processing. It faced financial collapse, was sold in 2012 to Mackay Sugar Ltd, then sold again back to growers in 2019 and began bringing cane down to the coast once again.

I also saw a number of mills close in the industry and one brand new mill built on the Atherton Tableland.

In my time I have seen growers struggling on less than \$300 per tonne sugar price to the current \$600 plus per tonne of sugar but still struggling due to the increase of input costs.

I have to say that it has taken this long for me to see a sugar price being quoted in excess of \$800 per tonne for the first time, so now I feel like I probably have seen it all.

The marketing and regulatory changes have been one of the biggest changes with





1983 (L-R) Evelyn Matthews with then Secretary Doreen O'Shea and Manager Mr Colin Campbell.

considerable impact on the industry as a whole. Seeing the industry move from the high regulatory environment with statutory bodies, with statutory agreements and statutory marketing arrangements between growers and mills, to an almost fully deregulated environment had a big impact on the way the industry did business.

Everything had to become more commercialised and business-structured but one thing that didn't change was the recognition of growers' interest in the sugar produced from the cane they supplied. Ultimately, this resulted in the current marketing arrangements in place and the ability for Australian sugarcane farmers to forward price their share of the interest in sugar on the world market.

While the industry was changing, the administration and structure of the local representative bodies were changing also. We were no longer a statutory organisation linked to the Queensland Cane Growers' Organisation but a company governed by its own board and constitution. I was appointed as the Manager and Company Secretary of the Mossman Canegrowers Limited company in 2005. I have worked with five different chairmen and still remember each for their outstanding ability to commit to representing and serving the local growers.



### What is the best part of the job?

The best and worst part of the job are probably the same thing: dealing with a bunch of growers and the vast number of things that impact them and their businesses. It makes the job interesting, especially when you throw into the mix the many different personalities of people involved. However, the majority of the time they came together, got the job done and reached an outcome. It is hard when agreements cannot be reached and conflicts are taken further, but the CANEGROWERS organisations have always punched above weight and in a vast majority of cases have come out with wins for growers and members.

It was a good way to get to know the community, especially in the early days when growers were such a big part of the community by sitting on the local Council, sporting or local volunteering at the shows, school fetes and parades.

Also, getting the opportunity to deal with a variety of people across regions has built good friendships and working relationships with many other offices and staff.

Looking back over the time in this job I am happy I got the job in 1983, was happy to stay in the job until today and now, as I think of retirement, I can say I wouldn't have missed this experience for the world. ■

# Improve your soil

**Kennedy Creek  
LIME**  
Pty Ltd

Your crops depend on a strong foundation of nutrient-dense soil. Aglime helps you achieve that. After years of rigorous testing, KCL Aglime has proven to be effective and fast reacting - enhancing your soil to provide crops with better access to essential trace elements and nutrients.

**Talk to your agronomist about 'gyplime'  
– a 50/50 mix of gypsum and aglime.**

**CALL US TODAY – 0417 074 395 | [WWW.KENNEDYCREEKLIME.COM.AU](http://WWW.KENNEDYCREEKLIME.COM.AU)**

# FROM THE CHAIR

*By Owen Menkens CANEGROWERS Chairman*



**I recently attended the National Farmers Federation (NFF) Members Council in Canberra. The members council come together twice a year to ratify policy positions and issues.**

The role of the Members Council is to make policy decisions which support and endorse policy matters affecting the Australian agricultural, pastoral, fishing, forestry and horticultural sectors of the economy. The Members council is led by the President Fiona Simson and include one member from each commodity council and one from each state farming organisation. I attended in my capacity as the chair of CANEGROWERS Australia which is the peak commodity council for sugarcane growers in Qld and NSW.

The NFF Members Council has seven committees through which the policy formation is developed by farmers for farmers. CANEGROWERS Australia has representatives on all the committees and are intimately involved in the policy direction they formulate. I am on the Trade Committee which is chaired by Fiona Simson. Through this committee we have a close relationship with the Minister for Trade and Tourism Don Farrell and the Assistant Minister for Trade and Manufacturing Tim Ayres as well as their staff. These relationships are important for our goal of gaining more international access for our sugar as well as reducing tariffs and subsidies on sugar worldwide. Trade is a complex area of policy work that relies on relationships across the world. Australia has long been a leader in this regard through our involvement in what is known as the Cairns group of farm leaders, who collectively represent countries who all desire a more liberalised, rules based trading environment. CANEGROWERS leads the trade direction of the sugar industry in collaboration with ASMC through the Agricultural Trade and Market Access Cooperation (ATMAC) project and associated funding from the Federal Government.

At the Council itself we had presentations from Senator Murray Watt Minister for Agriculture, Senator Tim Ayres and Senator David Pocock who is an independent senator from the ACT. NFF provides a very efficient and important mechanism for CANEGROWERS to have close access and form relationships with the Government, the opposition but also the independents. This is especially important when we look at the tenuous political balance in the Senate. There were also presentations from all the committees covering a wide range of topics connected to the sector.

The Labour government's decision to phase out live sheep exports was a big issue with the ministers getting strongly challenged to alter their position. This issue underlines the importance of maintaining our industry's social licence against a backdrop of extreme views from people and activities groups who seem intent on shutting down agricultural industries. In our industry we have faced similar pressures but through our adoption of Smartcane BMP, and being on the front foot to respond to these pressures, we have managed to reduce the outrage and therefore avoid catastrophic consequences. One of the greatest advantages from our membership of the NFF is the opportunity it provides for us to meet with other industries to see where we are at and how we can improve at our business to service the needs of growers.

Learning from other like-minded organisations allows us to share knowledge and compare approaches. Your organisation, CANEGROWERS, certainly stacks up well against our peers when we look at the innovation shown by growers to lead the development of a whole sugar sustainable supply chain approach and associated trade initiatives. All representatives at NFF are there to learn from each other but also work collectively to do the best job we can for agriculture in Australia. This philosophy of collective action and a view to working together for the benefit of all is a common approach by CANEGROWERS and our members and it is therefore no surprise that we feel so at home at the NFF table. ■



**High Yield**

**Weeds**

**High ESP**

**High Soil  
Compaction**

**Low Yield**

**Poor Crop Vigour**

Invest in precision with Vantage BMS

**1300 TRIMBLE**  
**vantage-bms.com**



SCAN ME!

# What's your variability?

Make the most of your cane crop  
with data-driven decision making.

Get real-time yield data with Vantage BMS's custom Sugarcane Yield Monitoring System and accurately measure, monitor, and report on your crop's yield, year-on-year.

# INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY

The SIX EASY STEPS® nutrition tool has gone digital.

It's been 20 years since the SIX EASY STEPS® science-based nutrient management tool was introduced to the sugarcane industry and in the past decade, it's been critical to enabling the adoption of best practice nutrient management on-farm.

Until this year, the course was only available via face-to-face workshops and one-on-one extension support.

In February, Sugar Research Australia (SRA) launched its first free eLearning program for growers: the Online Sugarcane Nutrient Management (OSNM) program, which is based on the SIX EASY STEPS® workshops. More than 120 growers have enrolled and around 50 have received their certificates.

Project Manager, SRA's District Manager Southern, Lisa Devereaux, is delighted with the uptake.

"There were two key drivers for SRA in developing the online program," Lisa said. "SRA and our stakeholders are committed



Lisa Devereaux, Project Manager and District Manager Southern with Hywel Cook, Executive Manager, Industry Services

*"By completing the OSNM program, a grower can be considered an Appropriate Person to develop a N&P Budget for their own farm under the definition of the Queensland Government's Reef protection regulations"*



Morrisey Ag's Principal Agronomist John Panitz talks to growers at the SIX EASY STEPS workshop in Bundaberg about the correct method to sample cane leaves for nutrient analysis



Growers work on a nutrient and phosphorous plan for their farms. The face-to-face workshops were an opportunity to introduce the growers to the Online Sugarcane Nutrient Management program and encourage them to enrol

to supporting sugarcane growers with tools to help them adopt improved farming practices to increase their productivity, profitability and sustainability. That includes nutrient management based on knowing and understanding their soils and the nutrient processes on their farms.

"This is particularly important now that the Queensland Government has mandated that sugarcane growers must have a farm nitrogen and phosphorus budget to calculate the amount of fertiliser they can apply.

"In the Wet Tropics, the Burdekin and Mackay Whitsunday regions this came into operation in the 2022 season while in the Fitzroy and Burnett Mary regions this must be developed in the 2023 season."

Lisa said initial registrations were from growers who are already familiar with online learning and were interested in being recognised as an Appropriate Person to calculate their N&P Budget. The program

uses an external Learning Management System (LMS) platform called TalentLMS, which allows for self-paced learning.

"The program is not quick to complete," Lisa said. "It takes the average person more than 10 hours to finish. But growers can, of course, complete a section and come back to it later without losing their place or the progress they have made.

"Of course, face-to-face learning suits many growers better and we encourage them to attend our SIX EASY STEPS® workshops which will continue to be held in the districts.

However, the program is designed as a digital learning resource that adds value to face-to-face learning. In addition, there is an online community forum as part of the program that gives growers the chance to ask questions where they don't follow something which is not always possible in the limited time available for a workshop.

The OSNM program's development was funded through the Queensland Government's Queensland Reef Water Quality Program and SRA. ■

# CC WELD SOLUTIONS

## We solve your welding and wear problems

Phone today: 0413 700 175 | E: [mick@ccwelds.com](mailto:mick@ccwelds.com) | [www.ccwelds.com](http://www.ccwelds.com)

**CORODUR WIRE**

- FE40+ Tungsten Carbide - initial point of contact
- 160-OA Extreme Abrasion
- 64-OA High abrasion/will run out of position
- 607TIC High load bearing + impact/moderate abrasion
- 151-OA Smooth Running Chrome Carbide Wire

**At least double the life over most other hard facing wires**

**CORODUR**

## GROWER ACCOLADE

A national award has recognised cane growers in the Cairns region for their innovative efforts to improve water quality on the Great Barrier Reef.

The grower-driven Project 25, overseen by the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre (RRRC), has been awarded the 2023 National Banksia Sustainability Award - Agriculture and Regional Development Award, topping a highly competitive field of some of Australia's best social and environmental sustainability initiatives.

The program has seen CANEGROWERS Cairns region work with Professor Damien Burrows and Dr Aaron Davis from James Cook University's TropWater to establish a network of water quality monitoring sites in the Mulgrave and Russell Catchments.

What sets it apart is its citizen-science approach, which allows growers to observe nitrogen concentrations in runoff from their own properties.

CANEGROWERS Cairns Manager Sarah Standen said grassroots engagement established a framework of trust.

"The growers were involved in the project; hence they believe the results," she said. "They knew exactly what was happening, they moved machinery when it flooded, they were beside scientists learning what was happening at the coal face so there was never any disbelief in the numbers.

"Growers were a part of the system - the sampling and the integrity of the data - and so they never doubted the results."

Chairman of CANEGROWERS Cairns, Stephen Calcagno, said the project has led to sustainable change in farming practices at both individual and basin levels.

"Even the scientists have a better understanding of where the major losses are, which is usually during the first or second flush of the wet season," he said.

"We are now going to a whole-of-catchment approach to develop water retention areas. For instance, the Babinda



L to R – Back Row – Paul Gregory, Barry Stubbs, Jeffrey Day.  
L to R – Front Row – Neil Maitland, John Ferrando, John Piccolo (holding Award), Sarah Standen, Stephen Calcagno, and Joe Bonso.

*"Growers were a part of the system - the sampling and the integrity of the data - and so they never doubted the results"*

Swamp Drainage Board is looking at holding back that first flush in a minor event - diverting it through wetlands and weirs to slow it down and allow the nitrogen to be absorbed. Growers remain heavily involved and invested in these solutions."

Mr Calcagno said the model is easily replicated and is now being rolled out across other catchments of the Great Barrier Reef.

"I think the RRRC and TropWater and the growers within the area should be congratulated," he said. "When we started on this journey it was new and now it's an accepted template. Everyone uses it within the industry when they design their water quality monitoring systems." ■

The Banksia Foundation's Sustainability Awards have been highlighting Australia's brightest leaders, change-makers, and innovators for 34 years. This year's message was 'For humanity to survive, biodiversity must thrive.'

# PETITION DEMANDS FAIRNESS IN COUNCIL RATES

Bundaberg Regional Ratepayers Association are seeking support for their petition to the Queensland Government to make mandatory on all Queensland Councils the document 'Guideline on Equity and Fairness in Rating for Queensland local governments'.

The Guidelines leapt into the headlines in 2020 when farmers right across the Bundaberg region were hit with "bolt from the blue" council rates increases of up to 235%.

In a battle with Bundaberg Regional Council to reverse the rates decision, a

consortium of farmer groups brought to their councillors' attention the Guideline, which sets out the rights and wrongs of setting rates.

Now, with ratepayers across the region reeling from the latest round of general rates, a call for the Guideline to be made mandatory is being put to the whole of Queensland.

Bundaberg Regional Ratepayers Association President Janette Young said: "This is a fundamental document and a right of all of us to have equity and fairness in the level of rates applied to all of our

properties. To do that, it seems that we have to go to State level and ask, that the Guidelines become more than that – they need to be a requirement on our council."

Mrs Young, President of the Association, is Principal Petitioner and Member for Burnett Stephen Bennett has sponsored the petition.

It reads: Queensland citizens draws to the attention of the House, Queensland councils generate approximately 65% of their operating income through rates revenue. There are established Queensland Rating Guidelines which include principles on predictability, fairness and equity in rating decisions, but no legal obligation on councils to follow these guidelines or to provide justification for rating decisions. As a result, councils' approach to rating decisions is inconsistent across the State and often lack transparency and accountability in this area of decision-making. This is leading to rate bill shocks in many local government areas across Queensland which are hurting business and industry and impeding potential investment and economic growth.

Your petitioners, therefore, request the House to legislate the Guideline on Equity and Fairness in Rating for Queensland local governments to ensure all Queensland councils are bound by its principles.

The petition will close on 15 August 2023, and is at: [www.parliament.qld.gov.au/Work-of-the-Assembly/Petitions/Petition-Details?id=3868](http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/Work-of-the-Assembly/Petitions/Petition-Details?id=3868) or find out more at [www.bundyrarra.au](http://www.bundyrarra.au). ■

**MAXSIL**  
Boosts Yield

The missing ingredient for plant health and growth.

**High Potency, Patented Silicon\* Fertiliser**

**But not all Silicon Nutrients are created equal!**

The only way to measure the efficacy of a silicon nutrient is through the amount of soluble, or "plant available silicon" it contains. MaxSil™ leads the competition with over **20 times the amount of plant available silicon**, making it the highest potency silicon product available in the market today. You use less and pay less per hectare.

MaxSil™'s unique patented formula helps your crops receive the nutrients they need for optimal growth, resulting in stronger, more resilient plants with better resistance to environmental stress and disease.

With over 10 years of R&D dedicated to sugar cane, banana, and horticultural, MaxSil™ is the solution for healthier crops that boosts yield.

Extensive trials in **Far North Queensland** confirm the remarkable efficacy of MaxSil™. Our high purity silicon-based plant nutrient has been scientifically formulated to deliver optimal results. Maximize your crop potential with MaxSil™ - the ultimate, high-potency plant nutrient.



maxsil.com.au



**Experience the difference for yourself!**

Order by calling us on 07 3351 6956, or email us at, [admin@maxsil.com.au](mailto:admin@maxsil.com.au)

Whether you're a returning or new customer, we'd love to hear from you!

\*According to Australian Health & Safety regulations, amorphous silica (MaxSil™) poses no threat to human health. MaxSil™ has been officially approved for use as a powder as-well as a pellet.



# QSL GROWER PRICING UPDATE

## Sugar Market & Currency

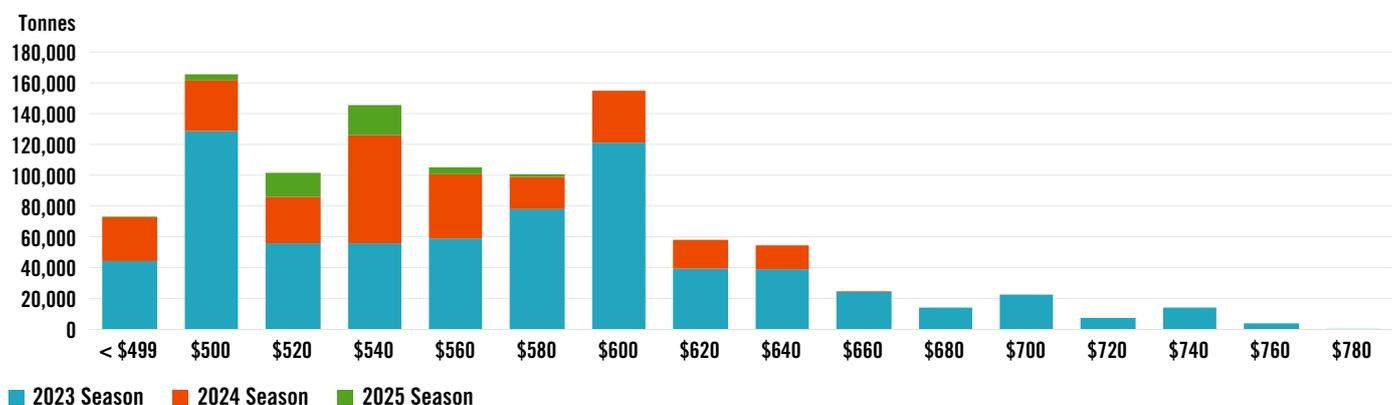
Influence	Commentary	Outlook
Brazil	Sixty-three mills have begun harvesting for the 2023/24 Season, with estimates sitting around 580-600 million tonnes of cane after plenty of rain. However, there are concerns around logistical constraints as large grain exports are already causing delays at Brazilian ports.	
India	Only 194 mills remained operational through the middle of April, with mills closing much faster than expected in Maharashtra and Karnataka. Thirty million tonnes of sugar has been produced this season so far, with forecasts estimating 32.8 million tonnes will be produced by the end of the season.	
Thailand	Only one mill remained crushing in early April as the Thai harvest comes to a close. Approximately 11.2 million tonnes of sugar was produced, which is significantly less than early season forecasts of greater than 12 million tonnes.	
Speculators	Despite sugar rallying hundreds of points higher, speculators have barely moved their net-long position (211,950 lots as of 11/04/23), indicating commercial buyers of sugar are doing the heavy lifting after becoming desperate for supply and being forced to buy expensive sugar.	Neutral
Currency	The AUD has traded in a 66-68 US cent range for weeks now as markets try to understand the outlook for interest rate programs both in the US and Australia. The RBA left interest rates on hold in April after 10 consecutive rate hikes.	

The outlook ratings above are in relation to AUD/tonne sugar prices.  A bullish outlook is considered positive.  A bearish outlook is considered negative.

## Grower Pricing

- > The highest grower-managed pricing levels achieved by growers across all growing regions using QSL products to date (all gross price actual/tonne) are:
  - 2022 Target Price = \$690 / IFC/SMHC \$810 (May23)
  - 2023 Target Price = \$765 / IFC \$780 (Jul23)
  - 2024 Target Price = \$650 / IFC \$675 (Jul24)
  - 2025 Target Price = \$580 / IFC \$595 (Jul25)
- > Key Dates:
  - **20 June:** Last day to achieve 2023-Season Target Price Contract orders before your pricing window is automatically extended and roll adjustments apply. Also the last day to achieve or roll pricing allocated to the July 2023 ICE 11 contract in the 2023 Self-Managed Harvest Contract and Individual Futures Contract.
  - **30 June:** Last day to qualify for QSL's 2022-Season Loyalty Bonus. See your local QSL team for details.

## QSL GROWER-MANAGED PRICING FILLS – 2023, 2024 & 2025 SEASONS



This chart captures all pricing achieved as of 18.04.23 by growers from across all sugarcane growing regions using QSL's Target Price Contract, Individual Futures Contract and Self-Managed Harvest products. Prices quoted at AUD/tonnes actual gross.

*Disclaimer: This report contains information of a general or summary nature and is based on information available to QSL from many sources. While all care is taken in the preparation of this report, the reliability, accuracy or completeness of the information provided in the document is not guaranteed. The update on marketing and pricing activity does not constitute financial or investment advice. You should seek your own financial advice and read the QSL Pricing Pool Terms, which are contained on QSL's website. Nothing contained in this report should be relied upon as a representation as to future matters or that a particular outcome will be achieved. Information about past performance is not an indication of future performance. The information in the report is current as at the time of publication and is subject to change, as the information is based on many assumptions and is subject to uncertainties inherent in any market. QSL does not accept any responsibility to any person for the decisions and actions taken by that person with respect to any of the information contained in this report.*

# ATTENTION STL G-CLASS SHAREHOLDERS



## MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

### Unhappy with STL's plans to remove QSL as operator of the industry's bulk sugar terminals and become a monopoly owner-operator?

Send a message to the Sugar Terminals Limited (STL) Board and support QSL's efforts to fight STL's plans by assigning your G-class share proxy to QSL.

Assigning your STL G-Class proxy to QSL does not reduce your STL shareholding, and you will still own your STL shares and receive any dividends paid during the proxy period.

However, your G-class voting rights will be transferred to QSL for the proxy period, adding your voice to the thousands of other grower proxy votes already assigned to QSL.

### PROXY ARRANGEMENTS

- Only STL G-Class shareholders can assign their proxies to QSL.
- These proxies will expire on 31 December 2023, with voting rights automatically reverting back to the shareholder after this date.
- Participating shareholders can nullify their proxy arrangement with QSL at any time.

For more information or to assign your proxy to QSL, please contact your local QSL team or call 1800 870 756.

#### Far North Queensland

Daniel Messina  
0429 660 238

Amanda Sheppard  
0418 264 393

#### Central Districts

James Formosa  
0437 645 342

Sonia Ball  
0418 978 120

Karen Vloedmans  
0429 804 876

#### Burdekin

Russell Campbell  
0408 248 385

Kristen Paterson  
0438 470 235

Hugh Leeson-Smith  
0429 054 330

#### Herbert River

David Matsen  
0447 062 213

#### Southern Queensland

Glenn Harris  
0409 601 349

## KEEPER OF HISTORY

The Australian Sugar Heritage Museum is dedicated to preserving and promoting the stories of an ever-evolving industry. Support from within the sector is vital to its success.

What do Australian tennis player Nicole Pratt, former Socceroo Steve Corica and rugby league great Billy Slater have in common?

They all grew up on sugarcane farms.

The trio makes up just a small fraction of the dozens of elite sportspeople with links to the Australian sugar industry, the details of which are set out in one of many special exhibitions at the Australian Sugar Heritage Centre in Far North Queensland.

Opened in 1988 as a bicentennial project in the town of Mourilyan, the museum is operated by CANEGROWERS Innisfail and run by volunteers.

Other exhibits examine pioneering harvesting, milling methods and machinery as well as the process by which raw sugar is made.

Inside, you can see vintage tractors, steam locomotives, harvesters and other cutting implements, a replica blacksmith's station, a replica cutters barracks, and video displays.

The people who've helped build the industry are also recognised, including the innovators, indentured South Sea Island labourers and European migrants.

"What a lot of people appreciate when they come in - especially visitors from interstate or out of the country - is the fact that we've got information that talks about the industry as it is



Chair Sam Spina and students at the museum

*"We are the repository for the history of the sugar industry in Queensland, going back more than a century"*

today, followed by the history behind what we do today," said Museum Chairman, Sam Spina.

"It is a really great contrast from what we used to do in the past and how it's evolved."

The Museum not only shares the stories behind the industry but also researches, collects and interprets documents, recollections and objects.

As such, it's become a go-to for researchers in arts and

publishing industries. For instance, a push pull trolley from the venue was recently used in the production of *The Black Hand*, an investigation of Australia's early mafia history which is due to broadcast on ABC TV this year.

Chairman Sam Spina said the Museum is always open to people wanting to contribute their own histories and there are plans to digitise catalogue collections to make them more accessible. However,

the centre needs the support of industry to achieve its goals.

“We have so far been unable to do that because of our volunteer base,” he explained.

“There are around 4,000 farming families in the state and if we had each of those through on an annual basis, that’s a big start for us.

“Cane farmers who’ve driven past for years and finally stopped in have said it’s so interesting.

“We need the support of the cane farming community in Queensland to maintain the museum’s integrity, otherwise it will just fall by the wayside.”

Mr Spina believes maintaining the ability to

document and record the next era of the industry is just as important.

“Because we grow a product that can be turned into things like jet fuel, I believe we are on the cusp of a paradigm shift,” he said. “It won’t just be about producing sugar, as the industry continues to move forward.

“The next 100 years or so promises another period of evolution.”

To find out more about the Australian Sugar Heritage Museum, head to [sugarmuseum.com.au](http://sugarmuseum.com.au). ■



*Chair Sam Spina guiding students through the museum*

# CONTINUING THE LEGACY

*Words and photos by Robyn Devine*

While Bessie Orr might not have been raised on a farm, the CANEGROWERS Proserpine director has spent her life surrounded by cane, growing up in nearby Airlie Beach where her parents worked in the fishing industry, but since meeting her partner Sam, Bessie has taken to sugarcane like a duck to water.

The young Proserpine growers Bessie and Sam Orr are not only passionate about growing sugarcane they are invested in the harvesting side of the industry with both working for LOS Harvesting business alongside Sam's dad Mark. The Orr family is steeped in tradition in the Proserpine district with Sam's grandparents, Lillian and George Orr first purchasing land in the 50s on the banks of the ever-changing Proserpine River.

Embracing the wealth of sugarcane growing knowledge and experience that is at their fingertips, Bessie and Sam chose to bring up their children, Max 9, Bella 7 and Vincent 3, in the idyllic location and in the Orr family home, which is now

housing its fourth generation of Orr growers.

It's not just the outdoor lifestyle that keeps this young family an active member of the community, the flexibility of the work and being part of a family business is attractive to them and in Sam's case the love of farming runs deep.

Sam explained that like so many kids growing up on a farm he started working with his dad Mark and grandfather George as a teenager, loving every minute of the experience.

"This is my grandparents' farm, they built the current family home in 1964 and as a kid I was always involved on the farm," Sam said.





*The four generations of Orr family all work together to run the family business*

Sam did his apprenticeship as an electrician at the local Proserpine mill and did work during the offseason for over a decade at the mill consolidating his knowledge of the industry processes.

For Bessie the role of a growers' representative seemed to choose her as she wasn't necessarily looking for any active role, but there was an opening on the Board, as a director was retiring, and she was strongly encouraged to seize the opportunity.

Bessie agrees she is wearing a lot of hats, director on the CANEGROWERS Proserpine Board, an executive member of the Young Farmers Group, Secretary of the local Rural Fire Brigade, working, mother and wife but

her thirst for knowledge and a drive to better understand the industry is becoming a passion for her.

Balancing all her roles can be hectic but she enjoys the learning curves and rising to the challenges that come from the work / life balance that she and Sam have chosen.

"I enjoy the director role, I've been in it for about 12 months, it's very interesting and the Board has been very supportive, and both the district managers I have worked with have been great."

"I've learnt a lot more about the industry since taking on the role, not just in regard to growing sugarcane but from other aspects of the industry including the milling side of things, as well as understanding pricing and the pros and cons of the different varieties," Bessie said.

"It's provided another viewpoint, I now know more than just the bookwork side of the business and it makes me want to

be more involved in the industry, to make it more of a career."

After building their first home in Cannonvale, they eventually decided to sell up and move on to farm and in 2011 bought their first farm together, and then purchased a second farm in 2020.

"We moved to the family farm where Sam's grandmother Lillian lived upstairs and we had the granny flat for about 18 months until she moved into Proserpine," Bessie said.

After starting their family, Bessie preferred to be a stay-at-home mother and take up an active role in the family business.

"I took over the role of bookkeeping for the harvester company, LOS harvesting, that my father-in-law Mark is in a partnership as a joint enterprise with three other growers and Sam runs the operation, drives the harvester as well as operating the planter during the early plant each season along with the off-season maintenance," Bessie said.

"We have around a hundred hectares ourselves but combined the family farms around 300 hectares together," Sam said.

"We have our own business, we work for ourselves, the flexibility and the lifestyle are attractive. It's in our blood.

"Growing up on a farm, it's a great outdoor lifestyle and we're the third generation to live in the family home."

Bessie agreed that on farm living for her young brood is a great life.

"The kids love it, they go out on motor bike rides, tractors, swim in the river and plenty of room to run around, it's a free-range life," Bessie said.

"They love being part of it. Off they go with their lunchboxes and work shirts enjoying rides in the harvester and tractors and helping out on the farm with irrigation and working the ground."

It's always a busy time on farm for the family, there's running three family farms to start with and then they do their own planting, fertilising as well as harvesting and still have time to do some contract work.

Discussing the long 2022 season and this year's current challenges, the Orr family all agreed that increased input costs, weather, mill performance and workforce shortages are all part of the chatter amongst growers in the district.



*"As 100% irrigators the cost of power is an issue. It's a real challenge, with in some cases a 300% increase in energy costs"*



*The original home still houses the Orr family*



*Bella and Vincent love to help out on farm*



*Hodge Industries 3 row planter helps the Orr family work smarter not harder. Photo supplied by Bessie Orr*

"As 100% irrigators the cost of power is an issue. It's a real challenge, with in some cases a 300% increase in energy costs," Mark said.

"Five years ago it cost roughly \$2/tonne to irrigate and now it's around \$6/tonne."

"Each year you try to improve the way you do things and the equipment you use, making improvements to the pumping system to make it more efficient but there's a limit to what you can do without spending huge dollars," Sam said.

Sam and Bessie are not afraid to embrace new technology and learn from others if it's going to assist in their farm management practices, over the years

they have partaken in trials in the district.

"We bought a new planter about two years ago, made locally by Hodge Industries in Mackay, and it's doubled our capacity," Sam said.

"We can plant three rows at a time with the new planter."

The Orr family are optimists and Sam explains that there are still plenty of opportunities around for farming businesses despite the ongoing challenges of day-to-day farming.

"With the current global sugar price at the moment you shouldn't let it slip through your fingers, don't hold back too much is my point of view," Sam said.

"We've tried to price in 2024 and even some for 2025 so we don't lose that opportunity that's there

*"We can plant three rows at a time with the new planter"*

right now. Who knows how long that will last before the curve comes down."

While their future seems bright the young couple are concerned about what lies ahead for the district, with farms being split in some cases into smaller lifestyle lots and the challenges of the younger generation having limited access to get on farm.

Bessie is a strong advocate for young growers and as part of her role in the Young Farmers Group she shares information and event knowledge to the younger growers in the district about what's happening in the world of farming.

"We use social media and other platforms to let them know what is happening in the district, who is doing workshops, presentations or trials that may be of interest," Bessie said.

"The group provides a good network to bounce off each other and give young growers a voice and support." ■

# CANEGROWERS INSURANCE

## MORE THAN JUST FARMS

Protect your home, business and family with our range of insurance options

**BUSINESS PACKS | PUBLIC LIABILITY | HOME & CONTENTS | FARM, PRIVATE & COMMERCIAL MOTOR  
LANDLORDS | BOAT | CARAVAN | CYBER RISK | PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY | MANAGEMENT LIABILITY  
EARTH MOVING EQUIPMENT | MOBILE PANT & EQUIPMENT | CONTRACT WORKS  
CORPORATE TRAVEL | TRADIES PUBLIC LIABILITY & TOOLS**



↘ For more information contact  
your local CANEGROWERS Office



[www.canegrowers.com.au/page/insurance](http://www.canegrowers.com.au/page/insurance)

**Steadfast**  
THE STRENGTH YOU NEED



**CANEGROWERS  
INSURANCE**

# BETTER UNDERSTAND

## YOUR CANE'S VARIABILITY WITH THE CUSTOM SUGARCANE YIELD MONITORING SYSTEM

For more than 50 years, Rapisarda Enterprises has been growing sugarcane and more on their 2800-ha sugarcane and cucurbit family farm. The operation employs 50 full-time staff and incorporates many Trimble systems and custom solutions from Vantage BMS.

Growing up on the farm, André Rapisarda developed a keen interest in agriculture, leading him to study Sustainable Agriculture (Horticulture) and Agribusiness at the University of Queensland.

After his studies, Andre returned to the farm with a clear goal of increasing cane yield; identifying, isolating and applying the correct amount of ameliorants and fertiliser to lower and higher-performing field areas.

Partnering with Vantage BMS, Australia's largest Trimble Agriculture dealer, Rapisarda Enterprises implemented the Sugarcane Yield Monitoring System for the 21-22 and 22-23 seasons.

With no ready-made aftermarket yield monitoring solution for sugarcane, Vantage BMS developed the custom system to allow cane farmers to understand their yield variability.

The system has various sensors mounted on the cane harvesters and works in conjunction with the Trimble TMX-2050™ display system to show real-time yield data when harvesting.

This data is then synced with the Trimble Ag software, which uses the yield calibration routine to accurately match the relative yield to the mill weights.

The Custom Sugarcane Yield Monitoring system helps farmers like Rapisarda Enterprises of Clare, North Queensland, to make decisions on soil amelioration and fertiliser application to increase efficiencies across their operations.

"We adopted Vantage's Sugarcane Yield Monitoring System to accurately measure the cane's crop yield and to identify areas of our fields that are lower yielding," says André.



*Andre Rapisarda of Rapisarda Enterprises with Vantage BMS General Manager, Michael Munro, at the Rapisarda's family farm in Clare North Queensland.*

"The system has helped us make decisions on the amelioration of the soil and with the fertilising of our sugarcane operations," says André. "We adopted this system due to increasing input costs and the current high value of sugar."

"The raw yield data comes into the Trimble Ag Software online," André explains. "I then clean the yield and create zones. The number of zones depends on the extent of the variability. Once I am happy with the zones, I allocate a per-hectare rate of either fertiliser or gypsum to each zone."

By using a range of Trimble precision agriculture technologies from Vantage BMS, Rapisarda Enterprises continues to increase yield, lower input costs, and boost productivity.

Rapisarda Enterprises grow 170,000 tonnes of sugarcane per year and

hope to see this increase through their investment in precision ag.

"We began working with the Rapisarda's in the 1980s and, since then, Rapisarda Enterprises has installed a number of systems across their fleet of machines and in their operations," says Michael Munro, General Manager of Vantage BMS.

"We will continue developing our end-to-end Sugarcane Yield Monitoring System, to allow cane farmers like the Rapisarda's to continuously understand their yield variability, better," states Michael.

To learn more about how Rapisarda Enterprises utilises the Custom Sugarcane Yield Monitoring System, contact your local Vantage BMS representative on 1300 TRIMBLE or visit [www.vantage-bms.com.au](http://www.vantage-bms.com.au) ■

# YOUR FARM, YOUR WAY

## You know your farm and what you want to achieve.

Smartcane BMP recognises how you farm and supports improvements you want to make.

Talk with your district facilitator about how they can help you.



*Adrian, Innisfail*



**SMARTCANE BMP**

Contact your district facilitator to find out more.



# TIME TO GET INVOLVED

## FOR YOUR INDUSTRY



When it was first launched more than a decade ago, the Smartcane BMP program had a very clear purpose - to help growers adopt industry best practice in a bid to protect water quality in local catchments while maintaining or increasing farm productivity and profits.

Fast-forward 10 years, and while protecting water quality is still an objective of the industry-led program, Smartcane BMP has evolved to become so much more.

Today it is a central pillar of the industry's capacity to deliver on our potential, as a driving force for diversification and a selling point for international trade that seeks certified sustainable sugar.

Whether it's the industry's ambition to gain greater access into lucrative markets in the US, UK and Europe, or government's goal of turning Queensland into a "green energy superpower" with sugarcane as a feedstock, commercial partners, end-users and government agencies all want to be assured of one thing, that the cane we grow is produced sustainably.

Of course, we already know that we have a sustainable industry, with many farmers demonstrating their desire to adopt best practice. Indeed, for most farmers adapting farming practices is the only way to stay in business.

Whether we like it or not the reality is that it is not enough to know we are sustainable, to drive our industry forward we must be able

to prove our sustainability credentials, and that's where Smartcane BMP comes in.

The evolution of role of BMP continues with research also showing that not only has the program helped protect water quality in our local catchments, the practices adopted to achieve this have also reduced the industry greenhouse gas emissions.

As a result, international sustainability benchmarks Bonsucro and VIVE have both recognised Smartcane BMP accredited farms as producing sustainable sugar.

With all this effort by growers it is clear that we want to gain market recognition. This is why CANEGROWERS and KPMG developed technology to

track sustainable sugar from the farm to the end user.

All the pieces of the puzzle, which have been developed and refined over a decade, are falling into place.

None of it is possible without the effort from growers to adopt and be committed to the program. Continued adoption by growers will be required to make our industry a world leader in the production and export of sustainably produced sugar. ■

# CANEGROWERS REGIONAL ROUND-UP

Supplied by CANEGROWERS district offices

## MOSSMAN

**The final growers' estimates for the 2023 crop are in and the total is close to the mill working estimate at 719,000 tonnes of cane.**

For the first time this year, we see a monthly rainfall less than the monthly average. The March total of 333.6mm is about half the monthly average. The storms and rainfall events have noticeably dropped away over March and April and growing conditions are at their best with sunshine and warm, humid days.

The plans for the 2023 crushing are slow coming together. As toll-crush arrangements were not final at the time of writing and some growers were experiencing difficulty getting harvesting contractors to take on more cane. Two harvesting contractors ceased operations and the decision to operate Mossman mill as a 5 day operation rather than 7 day

continuous will push our harvesting capacity to its limits. Even with the shorter work week it looks like finding sufficient employees will still be a challenge for both Mossman mill and harvesting contractors.

Wet Tropics Waterways held their Shared Solutions – Cross Sector Responses to Waterway Health Forum at JCU Cairns campus on 13 April 2023. The event was well attended and covered a vast range of topics and had many interesting speakers. After a welcome and official opening by Senator Nita Green, Special Envoy for the Great Barrier Reef, we heard about work The Everglades Foundation does in Florida to change water flow and quality in the Florida Everglades; from speakers who focus on improving water quality in the urban space with floating wetlands and filtered runoff from construction sites; from

speakers in the agricultural sector who map underground paleochannels tracking old waterway systems, who spoke of outcomes from the Wet Tropics MIP project. Two banana growers who got to plan, design and implement innovative farm practices and drainage for sediment and nutrient retention on a greenfield site showed how it impacts water quality and then went on to retro fit these designs onto their existing farms. We also heard from the indigenous community, the local government association and the education and research community about how they

approach improving water quality.

On 17 April QSL had a Grower Update meeting in Mossman and QSL staff spoke about factors driving the ICE 11 and currency markets, sugar price outlook and global sugar production forecasts. Growers were also invited to a Council initiated Agricultural Opportunities and Options Workshop held on 21 April 2023. The workshop was an interactive session looking at the current state of agriculture in Mossman and projecting some thought into the future of the industry, attitudes to land use change and adding value.



Mossman WTW Forum - Q&A speakers panel

## CAIRNS

**The region has experienced intermittent rain and sunshine over the last weeks.**

Regarding the crop, the early cut cane is looking good, however the late cut that was inundated by water, particularly the lower reaches, has certainly been negatively affected.

The new SRA varieties are looking exceptional. Some good news for CANEGROWERS Cairns Region and the Project 25 Grower driven water monitoring project in the Russell Mulgrave Catchments, was the news that the Reef and Rain Forest Research Centre who oversees Project 25, was awarded

the National Banksia Sustainability Award - Agriculture and Regional Development Award on account of Project 25. This was a wonderful outcome and more of the story will follow.



L to R - Paul Gregory, Barry Stubbs, Sheridan Morris, Sarah Standen, Jeffrey Day & Stephen Calcagno (holding the Award)

## INNISFAIL

**At the time of writing, growers in the Innisfail District are experiencing much welcomed rain following unusually hot, dry weather over the Easter period.**

On 13 April, CANEGROWERS representatives attended the Wet Tropics Waterways' Shared Solutions Forum in Cairns. The one-day event brought people from different industries and

backgrounds together to explore and share solutions for managing waterway health in the region. CANEGROWERS Innisfail, is one of 50+ Partners of the Wet Tropics Waterways initiative who are committed to improving water quality and waterway health in the Wet Tropics.

Preparations are underway for the Company's Annual General Meeting which will be held on 11 May.



CANEGROWERS Innisfail's Deb Telford, Cairns grower Lance Rodman, CANEGROWERS' Elisa Westmore, CANEGROWERS Mossman's Evelyn Matthews, Carola Bradshaw, program coordinator for the lower Herbert Water Quality Program for CANEGROWERS Herbert River and CANEGROWERS Cairns Region's Joel Tierney attended the successful Wet Tropics Waterways' Shared Solutions Forum.

## TULLY

**The Tully Sugar Mill is preparing to commence crushing early again this year with a planned start in late May.**

The Tully Variety Management Group will host its Pre-Season Meetings early next month, which will include the launch of

the 2023 TVMG Tully variety guide, and Tully Cane Productivity Services will report on the 2023 Seed plots and any other related issues.

The Tully Cane Productivity Awards were held at the Tigers Leagues Club this month. The event was a great opportunity

for growers to celebrate the successes of 2022 and catch up before the 2023 crushing season.

Tully Cane Growers met with the local Council this week to discuss a range of matters including unsealed roads and future capital works.



Nutrien Ag - Winners

## HERBERT RIVER

**Temperatures in the Herbert for the first half of April were well above the average for this time of year.**

The district has since experienced widespread showers and thunderstorms with rainfall totals between 30 and 100mms, which was welcomed by all growers as it seems to be drying out quite quickly.

The indicative start date for the 2023 season is 20 June and CANEGROWERS Herbert River are yet to discuss this further

with the mill and it is too early at this stage to gauge.

A few key events for members in late March and April included Relative CCS workshops, CANEGROWERS Herbert River AGM and a presentation provided by STL CEO, Chairman and Directors directly to our members.

It was a good turn up at the CANEGROWERS Herbert River AGM held at the CANEGROWERS Herbert River conference room on Monday 17 April. The guest speaker Lesley

Yates from the Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association (AAAA) spoke about warranty rights and right to repair.

Women in Sugar Herbert held their AGM recently and announced the committee as follows:

- President - Leah Russo
- Vice President - Caroline Pace
- Secretary - Zenan Reinaudo
- Treasurer - Leanne Bonassi
- Media Officer - Sara Barbagallo

The Women in Sugar Herbert Facebook page which is [www.facebook.com/WISHwomeninsugarHerbert](https://www.facebook.com/WISHwomeninsugarHerbert)

The Major Grants Program has granted approximately \$1.1million to date in the first two rounds and another \$550,000 to be granted in the third round which has just completed the round assessment. Total contribution to the local economy including growers' contribution will be approximately \$3.7million.

## BURDEKIN

**The Burdekin's planting season had commenced in earnest in April, somewhat later than desired due to a combination of the late 2022 season finish and the wet season which delayed ground preparation and cutting plants. Just as planting started to get underway, further late rain was received from a heavy downpour which dumped up to 170mm of rain in some areas causing heavy cane to lodge and delaying planting by a further 2 to 3 weeks.**

Wilmar held a meeting with grower collectives on 18 April where they advised that the budgeted 2023 season crop estimate is 8.4 million tonnes, an estimate that was unexpected. The increase is due in part to an additional 2,000 ha of land under cane and 1,134ha of standover from the 2022 season. This would be the largest crop since the 2016 season when the Burdekin harvested 8.7 million tonnes of cane. Based on this estimate and the completion of maintenance and capex projects, (the latter running about one week behind schedule) Wilmar provided the following budgeted start and finish dates:

Mill	Start Date	Finish Date
Inkerman	7/6/23	27/11/23
Invicta	6/6/23	21/11/23
Kalamia	8/6/23	21/11/23
Pioneer	6/6/23	21/11/23

Preseason commissioning will commence at most sites in



early May and Wilmar advised that the option of cane transfer will be kept open, but there have been no transfer dates locked and they will review the position at week 6. Further updates will be provided should these dates change due to wet weather or mills not being ready. Wilmar have advised that some labour shortages in their business will be filled via the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme.

On the subject of labour shortages, some harvesting contractors are yet to fill vacant haulout driver positions which if unresolved by 6 June could possibly see bin allotments not being filled and cane being left in the paddock. There were issues with driver shortages in the 2022 season and this has worsened for the upcoming 2023 season as the good drivers have already been secured or have gained more stable employment in other industry sectors.

Members of the CBL Board met with the Council on 18 April to

provide them with an industry update and to discuss the recent 2023 revaluations of Burdekin sugarcane land where cane land recorded an average increase of 15% in valuations from the period 1/10/20 to 1/10/22 and how Council intends to manage the impact of this increase when setting rates in the 2023/2024 budget. We discussed a reduction in the rate in the dollar to offset the valuation increase and to keep the absolute dollar value of general rates collected from sugar cane land unchanged.

The Burdekin cane farm rate in the dollar of 3.810c is the highest rate in Queensland and compares to the median cane farm rate across all Cane Farm Councils of 1.244c and average rate of 1.753c. The Council to its credit is in a strong financial position with no borrowings and \$69m in the bank and in our opinion, there is a significant overreliance on cane farm rate revenue in the Council's budget revenue base. For these reasons it is imperative that the

new Burdekin Council cane farm rate for 2023-24 is reduced to ensure no rate bill shock to cane farms from land valuations. The Council have confirmed that they will review the rate in the dollar charged for sugarcane properties as a result of the recent annual valuations as part of its budget deliberations.

Global sugar prices are at mouthwatering levels and fertiliser costs are coming down which bodes well for a profitable 2023 season. Grower confidence levels are high, and this combined with a larger than forecast crop for the 2023 season, means the Burdekin sugarcane industry and community which relies on it should be on track for a good year - subject to the usual discerning eye on wet weather and mill performance!

## PROSERPINE

**With good rains continuing across the Proserpine district, the 2023-24 crop is promising. Some uncertainty remains in the late ratoons and growers also hope that the opening stand-over is better than expected. This has made the initial estimate difficult to quantify with possibilities of the initial 1.7m tonne estimate climbing to over 1.8m tonnes of cane.**

Slightly below average rainfall is still expected over winter which would hopefully result in good CCS levels. Coupled with some of the best sugar pricing in years, growers anticipate an exceptional year being largely dependent on a successful milling season.

The mill remains on track with most of its repairs and maintenance program, but with the short off-crop, current mill opening dates are tentative. There have already been some challenges with mud filters, boiler tubes, rotors and cooling towers but maintenance on these is progressing well. Importantly, staff recruitment strategies are progressing but accommodation in the region is in short supply. Growers have been encouraged to contact the mill should they have accommodation available for new staff.

The CANEGROWERS Proserpine Board has been busy with various meetings involving STL, QSL and Wilmar leadership. At the April Board meeting, it was decided that CANEGROWERS would increase support to the Proserpine Young Farmers

Group through venue and administrative functions. This group remains key to the future of Proserpine and is hoped will grow from strength to strength. On the other side of the grower spectrum, two Proserpine growers participated in the OCGO History Project interviews towards the end of March. Although it will be some time before the Project is finalised, local growers are looking forward to the results which will be testament to the rich history of cane growing in the region and throughout wider Queensland.

CANEGROWERS Proserpine has been assisting with the final development stage of the online tool and App named 'Harvest Mate'. A workshop was held on 11 April and participants were keen to use the tool this

season. Industry wide feedback has been extremely positive with the official launch planned for the opening day of the ASSCT Conference in Cairns.

Budgeting processes are in full swing with CANEGROWERS, Sugar Services Proserpine (SSP) and the Irrigation Cooperatives. SSP are also recruiting for a new agronomist but as with many other sectors this remains a significant challenge. Several harvesting groups have registered staff for the Pilot/Escort Driver training course (19 April) hosted by CANEGROWERS Mackay. Growers are encouraged to follow CANEGROWERS Proserpine Facebook page where such courses and events will continue to be advertised.

## MACKAY / PLANE CREEK

**With the crush planned to begin in early June in Mackay and Plane Creek districts, the push is on to attract labour to support growers and harvest contractors.**

Members- don't forget to post your positions vacant on the local jobs board at [www.mackaycanegrowers.com.au/farmers-notice-board](http://www.mackaycanegrowers.com.au/farmers-notice-board). This also will get a hard copy placed in reception, noticed by people visiting our offices and looking for cane industry work. The jobs board gets featured in print

media ads, as well as promoted through social media.

As you read this, CANEGROWERS Mackay's annual Haulout Operator training courses will be underway, with two courses being funded by the Queensland Government Skilling Queenslanders for Work program.

Funding aside, these courses are only possible with the support of the grower-members who deliver the training. For many years, this has been led

by Yukan grower Ron Gurnett, who also makes his property and machinery available for training. He has been supported in recent years by fellow growers Glen Brady and Zac Borg, but in the sixteen year history of the course, there have been many more who have supported it. Their efforts are something deeply appreciated by CANEGROWERS and by the local industry.

The course is a great program, and it is important that we as a

grower organisation – and the members that make it live- continue to devise and back solutions that solve our own problems, such as the perennial issue of sourcing experienced workers.

CANEGROWERS Mackay was pleased to see a second running of the Business Essentials course in Mackay in April. It is a strong suite of tools and strategies to build the resilience of farming enterprises and keeping our industry strong.

On other fronts, representatives are continuing to liaise with mills re the 2023 crush and progress with the maintenance season. Staff have been assisting members with information as they navigate the process of objecting to new Land Valuations, along with individual concerns on other matters. Any growers requiring assistance with any issues are

encouraged to call 4944 2600 to get the ball rolling on a solution. Keep an eye on our Facebook page and weekly CEO Updates for emerging training and industry opportunities.



Ron Gurnett

## BUNDABERG

**The weather has been kind to most of the district with some handy and timely rainfall and with a late start to the hot weather it has been good to see it remain hot further into the year.**

Early harvested cane and autumn plant are looking tremendous with even some of the later harvested cane catching up.

The cane that was harvested after mid-November has struggled and will present some headaches as to what to do with it, the weather and temperature from here until the time it is harvested will dictate the outcome, with the price of sugar

being at such a high it may also help to make a decision.

With sugar prices and the dollar lining up, there have been some extraordinary pricing opportunities available for those that have taken advantage of the QSL Grower Direct Portal. Bundaberg growers were invited to attend an information session presented by QSL CEO Greg Beashel in Bundaberg on 27 April and the Board of Bundaberg CANEGROWERS met with QSL representatives prior to the grower meeting.

With some growers locking in significantly higher priced forward pricing sugar for this year, it is time to consider whether 'Top Up' crop insurance

is required. Any losses incurred from a fire, be they accidental or arson, are covered under the CANEGROWERS Crop Insurance program with the current level for the 2022 season set at \$45/t cane or 90% of the value of the crop, whichever is the lesser. While the rates for 2023 crop insurance have not been set, recent high prices have seen a number of growers access near record high sugar prices for 2023 and beyond and growers may also wish to 'Top Up' for the 2023 membership year.

What also needs to be considered is that any loss that is incurred now will affect the 2023 production. While there is no indication from QSL as to the prices for 2023 harvest pool,

given the high forward prices that have been achieved, 'Top Up' insurance may help in case of a fire over the next couple of months. Growers will need to apply for 'Top Up' insurance by contacting Matt Leighton on 4151 2555 and completing a short application form.

The 2023 harvest is rapidly approaching with 29 May the start date for mill owned pre-season cane and the grower core season to start on 19 June. In the lead up to the crushing, Bundaberg CANEGROWERS has been in negotiations with millers and transporters to assist in getting the best outcomes for this year's harvest.

## ISIS

**The countdown to the 2023 crushing season is now on with Isis Mill working toward a 6 June start date. We are hoping to have an accurate crop estimate very soon with an early indication of a crop between 800,000 to 850,000t.**

We have been working closely with Isis Productivity Limited and assisting growers with their farm application records for fertiliser and chemical products. We have commenced working one-on-one with growers offering customised record

keeping templates to ensure their records are reef regs ready. We have also started drafting a new Electricity Comparison Tool to share with growers in readiness for the introduction of new tariff options in July and preparing fire permits for the

upcoming crushing season. Our board together with the Isis Mill Board and Maryborough Canegrowers is preparing to meet with QSL CEO Greg Beashel to hear QSLs view on STLS decision to terminate the terminal operations agreement. All three

organisations met as a group with STL last month. The CANEGROWERS Isis board will continue to work on achieving the best outcome for our members.

The Isis Sugar Partnership recently met to discuss many local issues including an audit of available cane land and how we link growers through leasing arrangements. We have noticed a marked increase in the number of enquiries around

farm lease arrangements and the partnership agreed to work together linking lessors with lessees. The partnership also discussed including CANEGROWERS Maryborough representatives in our district planning and future partnership meetings.



L-R – Isis Sugar Partnership Meeting with Jeff Plath Deputy Chair Isis Productivity, Peter Hawe CEO ICSM, Darren Harney Chair ICSM, Mark Mammino CANEGROWERS Isis Chair, Sean Tobin Deputy Chair ICSM and Tyle Bengtson Chair Isis Productivity - by Joanne Hall CANEGROWERS Isis Manager

## MARYBOROUGH

**With irrigation back in play and hot conditions promoting growth, the crop has continued to develop well.**

Soybean crops are starting to reach harvest time and of course that means a preference for low rain at present.

The Mill has advised of the logistics provider for Cane Haulage for 2023 and 2024, De Gunst Transport is confirmed as contractor and have conducted one meeting in Maryborough so far with interested parties for subcontract of trucks and drivers for the season.

Interestingly they have been providing logistics to Mossman and Tableland for the last few

seasons and this should mean a strong understanding of the need for efficient transport.

One of the “known issues” to overcome is the unique access some farms have for reaching their Designated Loading Pads. With our logistics heading toward a software program called FREDD, local knowledge will need to be added to NHVR routes to ensure trailers get to the right spots the best way. Expect some calls soon from mill staff to help understand these routes.

Mill maintenance seems to be on track and the upcoming bus tour 3 May will provide a further update and likely start date.



Trailer maintenance has also been progressing well with a new set up next to the mill site. All repair and maintenance will be carried out in Childers from this year on and the transloader will be the focal point for

activity. Some changes to the set up include a fuel tank, bigger turn around area, parking area for limited trailers.

Pre-Season estimates for all Isis Central Mill supply area remain at 1.3 million tonnes.

## ROCKY POINT

**There is not much to report from Rocky Point at present, with CSA negotiations with the miller still dragging on.**

The Collaborative Agreement we have in place with the Fire Ant Suppression Team has seen

most growers in the district have their headlands treated, and further bait supplied to growers for self-treatment around houses and sheds. This is all in preparation for aerial baiting of the fire ants across the district in May. We are very pleased to

finally see some action in the district to combat the growing fire ant problem.

We are currently planning another CANEGROWERS/SRA field day on 16 May to cover Harvesting Best Practice (Harvest Mate), results of recent RSD trials

and an update on Southern cane varieties.

The district is in need of some decent rainfall to help the cane crop and soybeans along.

# VALE GRAHAM DAVIES AM

The sugarcane industry has farewelled a leader of the sector.



Photo supplied by Mackay Sugar Limited

Former Mackay Sugar Chairman Graham Davies AM is being remembered as an instrumental leader in the sugarcane industry, with his influence in the formation of Mackay Sugar Cooperative cited among his greatest legacies.

Tributes have reflected on Mr Davies' more than 40 years of service in leadership positions. He has been commemorated as the driving force in the merger of the Mackay District mills and the acquisition of Pleystowe mill to form Mackay Sugar Co-operative in the late 1980s.

CANEGROWERS Mackay Chairman Kevin Borg extended condolences to Mr Davies' family on behalf of the organisation, acknowledging his enduring legacy as an industry leader.

"Mr Davies leaves a legacy of leadership of significant change to Mackay's sugar industry," he said. "He was instrumental in the rationalisation of Mackay Sugar Limited. It was a controversial move, but he had a vision, believed in it and was able to deliver it, which is a rare quality."

Prior to the merger, Mr Davies was a long-term board member and subsequent chairman of Racecourse Mill Co-operative.

He and his family have been growers and suppliers to the Racecourse Mill for many years. Following the amalgamation, Mr Davies became the inaugural chairman of Mackay Sugar Co-operative Association Limited and subsequently Mackay Sugar Limited between 1988 and 2003.

He was also a representative of numerous sugar industry association working parties and boards, including Queensland Sugar Limited.

In 2011, Mr Davies was made a Member of the Order of Australia in recognition of his service to primary industry, particularly the Australian sugar industry through executive roles, and to the development of agri-business and regional communities.

Hundreds of mourners attended his funeral on April 21. ■

## REPORT YELLOW CRAZY ANTS

CALL: **1800 CRAZY ANT**

P: (07) 4241 0525 | E: [yca@wtma.qld.gov.au](mailto:yca@wtma.qld.gov.au)  
W: [www.wettropics.gov.au/yellow-crazy-ant](http://www.wettropics.gov.au/yellow-crazy-ant) | Facebook: @ycawettropics



# SPOTTED ANYTHING UNUSUAL?

EXOTIC PLANT PEST HOTLINE  
**1800 084 881**

## Are you giving your crops a good hard look?

Growers are key to protecting Australia's sugarcane farms, industries and the communities that rely on them. Early detection and reporting of suspected exotic pests and diseases can reduce the impact of these pests and disease on the sugarcane industry.

Call the **Exotic Plant Pest Hotline** on  
**1800 084 881** or visit [phau.com.au](http://phau.com.au)



CANEGROWERS



Plant Health  
AUSTRALIA



## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE – A GAMECHANGER FOR AGRICULTURE?

*Membership Engagement & Innovation*

MATT KEALLEY

One of the main principles of sugar pricing, which is covered in the CANEGROWERS Business Essentials program, is knowing your production costs and converting this to a sugar price.

If you are armed with this information, you will have a good idea of what sugar price you need to make a profit.

Table 1 from the Sugar Price Ready Reckoner in the CANEGROWERS Budget Tool shows the sugar price (\$/t IPS sugar) with different \$/t cane production costs and CCS.

The \$/t cane production cost needs to come from a budget. This is clearly forward looking using the best estimate of future expenditure.

Many growers have quite stable areas under cane and inputs do not vary wildly. However, tonnes cane per ha and input prices can fluctuate and significantly affect production costs per tonne cane.

Table 1 shows an expected cost of production of \$38.00/t cane which shows in the center of the rows with costs ranging from \$31/t cane to \$44.00/t cane.

The CCS is dependent on the season however it makes a significant difference to the required break-even sugar price. In table 1 the expected average CCS of 13.70 units is shown in the center of the columns with a range from 12.95 units to 14.45 units.

The constant (\$0.66 in this case) is part of the cane payment formula from the cane supply agreement relevant to each region.

This is a negotiated figure developed over time but needs to be accounted for in determining the breakeven sugar price. The district CANEGROWERS office will be able to supply this.

It can be seen that at a production cost of \$38.00/t cane and CCS of 13.7 units the breakeven IPS sugar price is \$428/t sugar.

Nobody can predict the future and table 1 tries to provide the opportunity to get a "feel" for what a good sugar price is to lock in a profit.

It can be seen that if things go badly and production costs go up to \$44.00/t cane (this would be about a drop of 20 tonnes cane per ha or costs going up by \$6.00/tonne cane) and CCS drops to 12.95 units then the breakeven price of \$538/t IPS sugar is required.

Table 1 is looking at the 2023/24 season but can also be used to have a look beyond this. As at 14 April 2023 the QSL future sugar prices (actual) available were 2023 - \$736, 2024 - \$648, 2025 - \$569 and 2026 - \$519.

Nobody knows if these prices will go up or down but they are likely to be above your costs of production. If so it is recommended that growers have a good discussion with their advisers to make decisions of what prices to lock in.

In order to have tools you or your accountant can use to determine your costs of product to convert to a sugar price and what other issues to consider in your pricing decisions attending a Business Essentials workshop is highly recommended. ■

Table 1.

ENTER YOUR EXPECTED FIGURES	
Production cost \$/t cane	<b>\$38.00</b>
Average CCS	<b>13.70</b>
Constant in the cane price	<b>\$0.66</b>

**PRODUCTION COST \$/T CANE**

**PRODUCTION COST \$/T CANE**

	12.95	13.20	13.45	13.70	13.95	14.20	14.45
<b>\$31</b>	\$377	\$366	\$357	\$348	\$339	\$330	\$323
<b>\$32</b>	\$389	\$378	\$368	\$359	\$350	\$341	\$333
<b>\$33</b>	\$401	\$391	\$380	\$370	\$361	\$352	\$344
<b>\$34</b>	\$414	\$403	\$392	\$382	\$372	\$363	\$354
<b>\$35</b>	\$426	\$415	\$404	\$393	\$383	\$374	\$365
<b>\$36</b>	\$439	\$427	\$415	\$405	\$395	\$385	\$376
<b>\$37</b>	\$451	\$439	\$427	\$416	\$406	\$396	\$386
<b>\$38</b>	\$464	\$451	\$439	\$428	\$417	\$407	\$397
<b>\$39</b>	\$476	\$463	\$451	\$439	\$428	\$418	\$408
<b>\$40</b>	\$488	\$475	\$463	\$451	\$439	\$429	\$418
<b>\$41</b>	\$501	\$487	\$474	\$462	\$450	\$439	\$429
<b>\$42</b>	\$513	\$499	\$486	\$474	\$462	\$450	\$440
<b>\$43</b>	\$526	\$511	\$498	\$485	\$473	\$461	\$450
<b>\$44</b>	\$538	\$523	\$510	\$496	\$484	\$472	\$461



## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE – A GAMECHANGER FOR AGRICULTURE?

*Membership Engagement & Innovation*

MATT KEALLEY

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming various industries, and agriculture is no exception. I believe sugarcane is poised to benefit significantly from the integration of AI technologies in the farming system, the supply chain, through technology and the use of data. AI, which refers to the simulation of human intelligence in machines, has the potential to revolutionise sugarcane production by improving efficiency, precision, and sustainability.

One notable example of AI in agriculture is Chat GPT, a large language model developed by OpenAI. Chat GPT is a cutting-edge technology that uses machine learning algorithms to generate human-like text responses based on input prompts. It has been trained on a massive amount of data and can generate coherent and contextually relevant text in real-time.

The application of AI such as Chat GPT in sugarcane can bring about several advantages. It can enhance crop management through predictive analytics. By analysing vast amounts of data, such as weather patterns, soil conditions, and historical yield data, AI can generate insights that can help growers make more informed decisions. For example, it can provide real-time information on the optimal time for planting, harvesting, and fertilising, leading to improved crop yield and better utilisation of inputs and resources.

AI can aid in disease and pest management. Sugarcane crops are often vulnerable to diseases and pests that can significantly impact yield and quality such as cane grubs, RSD and pachymetria. AI can analyse data on disease and pest prevalence, and provide early warning systems to farmers, enabling

them to take proactive measures, such as targeted pesticide application or crop fallows, to mitigate the risks.

For irrigated cane growing districts, AI can optimise irrigation practices by analysing data on soil moisture levels, weather conditions, and crop water requirements to generate precise irrigation recommendations, helping farmers use water more efficiently which can lead to improved production and reduced electricity costs.

AI can also facilitate labour management in sugarcane farming. Farm labour and contracting is a significant cost in sugarcane and managing the workforce and its logistics can be complex. AI can assist in managing tasks, such as scheduling and allocating resources, which can streamline operations and reduce labour costs.

In addition to the operational benefits, AI can also contribute to sustainability in sugarcane farming. Using AI insights to optimise timing and application of inputs, such as fertiliser and pesticides, can support productivity, leverage sustainability and contribute to the long-term viability of the sugarcane industry.

Despite the potential benefits, it's important to note that the integration of AI also raises ethical, social, and regulatory considerations. For example, data privacy, security, and ownership are critical concerns that need to be addressed. Growers need to ensure that data used by AI technologies are securely stored and used in compliance with relevant regulations and ethical standards. Additionally, the potential impact of AI on employment in agriculture should be carefully considered, and measures should be taken to mitigate any negative consequences.

AI, including technologies like Chat GPT, has the potential to be a game-changer for agriculture and the sugarcane industry in Queensland. It's a technology that is seeing exponential growth and has application on farm and throughout the supply chain. The question remains – where could AI have the greatest impact? ■



## DIVERSITY OF ENVIRONMENTAL PAYMENTS ON OFFER FOR FARMERS.

### *Sustainability & Environment*

MICK QUIRK

The federal government has introduced legislation to establish a biodiversity trading scheme. This means farmers and other land managers could earn credits for activities that have a high likelihood of improving the conservation of native plants and animals. This scheme is most relevant to the more extensive land uses, such as grazing, where significant areas of native vegetation have been retained.

However, even intensive farming systems like sugarcane may have opportunities through feral pest control, constructing or restoring lagoons or wetlands, or managing riparian areas. Scaling up these activities so that there are real benefits will be the challenge. For example, feral pig control requires concerted efforts by many landholders in an area to have any lasting benefit for both farms and the local environment.

The idea of farmers receiving payments for actions that improve biodiversity is not new and there is experience with many types of incentive and grants programs. The Coalition government initiated work on a national biodiversity 'market' and the current government is taking this work forward.

Biodiversity markets are not favoured by some scientists and conservation groups, as the funds tend to get sprayed across many areas and issues rather than being focussed on the areas and issues that will give most environmental benefit per dollar spent.

The proposed scheme is an example of a market-based instrument (MBI), the design and use of which we have covered in earlier policy updates. Compared to grant programs, MBIs are designed to use market principles to get the biggest environmental benefit for the least cost. For example, the reverse auction tenders used by the Reef Trust 'bought' reduced N inputs to

sugarcane crops by selecting offers from growers that were the most cost-effective.

The proposed biodiversity scheme has a lot in common with the Australian Carbon Credit scheme and the Reef Credits scheme. These all seek to establish a self-sustaining market that buys and sells 'certificates' that, respectively, represent credited units of improved biodiversity, reduced greenhouse emissions, or improved water quality.

Such contrived markets may only survive where they remain bank rolled by the government or where non-government demand for certificates is driven by related government policies. For example, demand for Australian Carbon Credit Units is sustained by the Safeguard Mechanism that requires our largest emitters to reduce their emissions. The recent reform of this mechanism will further boost demand.

The hope for an ongoing biodiversity market is based on predictions of more than \$100 billion of public and private investment into biodiversity improvement in Australia over the next few decades. It is worth noting that such schemes always seem to start with unbridled optimism and little tolerance for reality checking.

CANEGROWERS will continue to work with the NFF to seek a biodiversity scheme that is as efficient and effective as possible.

### **ARE MARKET-BASED SCHEMES GOOD FOR THE SUGARCANE INDUSTRY?**

CANEGROWERS believes participation in MBI projects or schemes is an individual grower's choice. But to assist growers in their understanding and assessment of any scheme, the Policy Council recently endorsed a formal position. This position includes the attributes that any market-based environmental scheme needs to meet if it is to be taken seriously. These include:

1. The scheme will not lead to significant reductions in cane supply.
2. There has been strong involvement of industry in its development.
3. Robust science underpins the scheme, and this informs estimates of costs and benefits.
4. Administration costs for participating growers are minimised.
5. Full transparency in protocols, calculations, verification, registers, and prices.

Reef Credits is currently the scheme of greatest relevance for growers but we remain concerned about its impacts, reliability and credibility in relation to points 1, 3 and 5. On many occasions, we have offered to work with the proponents of Reef Credits to address our concerns. But with little result. ■



## CANEGROWERS Legal Advisor

CHRIS COOPER



### FARM MANAGEMENT DEPOSITS – A VALUABLE TAX MANAGEMENT TOOL

The farm management deposits (FMD) scheme allows eligible primary producers to set aside pre-tax income from their primary production activities during years of high income. The income can then be drawn in future years as needed.

Although not really a legal topic, it is pleasing that the world market sugar price conditions suggest it worthwhile that I make some comments about Farm Management Deposits (FMD).

### WHAT ARE FMDS

FMDs are special financial deposit accounts that can be established by individual growers with certain financial institutions. Growers can claim a tax deduction for deposits made into a FMD account in the year in which the deposits are made.

When the grower subsequently withdraws on those accounts, those withdrawals are included in the grower's assessable income in the year in which the withdrawal was made.

### ELIGIBILITY

Only individual growers (including a partner in a partnership and a beneficiary of a trust) are eligible.

Companies and similar incorporated entities that are growers are not eligible.

The grower must have no more than \$100,000 in off farm income and there is a cap of \$800,000 for FMDs.

### CONDITIONS

There are a range of conditions that attach to this tax management scheme.

The Commonwealth Department of Agriculture manages the policy arrangements and the Australian Taxation Office is responsible for the



administration of the tax arrangements.

If a grower who holds a FMD retires or otherwise ceases to be a primary producer, then the funds in the FMD must be withdrawn within 120 days and will be assessable income within the year it is withdrawn.

That time frame may be a consideration when taking the step to no longer be a primary producer.

### **WARNINGS AND REMINDERS FOR ESTATE PLANNING**

A FMD is for individuals only and an FMD will form part of the estate of a deceased grower who holds an FMD at the time of their death.

Depending on how the Will of the deceased is drafted, the benefit of the FMD might not necessarily be dealt with as intended. The funds held within a FMD must be withdrawn on the death of the holder. The amounts withdrawn will become assessable income for the estate.

Such a scenario could give rise to some unintended consequences if the terms of the Will don't make provision as intended.

### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

The use of FMDs can be a valuable tool for some growers to minimise tax, but care needs to be taken with their use.

The Department of Agriculture and the ATO have useful resources on their web sites.

Financial and accounting advice together with legal advice should be considered when entering into or exiting FMD arrangements.

This article contains general advice only. The particular facts and circumstances of each case always need to be taken into account.

Any grower wishing to discuss aspects of this article or any other legal matter should contact your local CANEGROWERS office or call CANEGROWERS Legal Adviser, Chris Cooper, for free initial legal advice. ■



FIRST 5 LINES FREE FOR CANEGROWERS MEMBERS!

Book online 24/7 at [www.canegrowers.com.au](http://www.canegrowers.com.au)  
or email us at [ads@canegrowers.com.au](mailto:ads@canegrowers.com.au)

Next deadline is 20 May 2023

As a FREE service to CANEGROWERS members, Australian Canegrower will print suitable classified advertisements UP TO 5 LINES FREE, FOR ONE ISSUE ONLY. A charge of \$5. 50 will apply for each extra line or part thereof. A charge will apply for advertising of non-cane growing activities. Advertisements must relate exclusively to cane farming activities, such as farm machinery, etc. Advertisements from non-members are charged at \$11 per line incl GST. Only prepaid ads will be accepted.

### MOSSMAN-TULLY

7 Tyne heavy duty: Camuglia Ripper with bar for 5 Rubber tynes GC- \$4000. 2000LT Diesel tank with BHP legs GC- \$1200. Hodge 2 Fan Blower with cane toppler VGC- \$3000 Phone no. 0429 681 264

Fiat 980 2WD-3,500hrs, Fiat 1000 2WD - 5,000hrs, John Deere 4040 2WD - 3,600hrs, Chamberlain JD 4080 2 WD - 5,000hrs, Case 2590 2WD - 5,700hrs, Michigan 110-14 Elevator Scraper-New engine & Spare engine, D Massey Ferguson 3635 4WD - 5,500hrs, 6tonne tipper bin, Silvan Euro Spand CX2 Spreader, Portable bulk bin, Hustler Super Z Zero turn mower, Bunning Lowlander Mk 40-60 Ag Spreader(near new), Complete tracks to suit cane harvester, Half tracks to suit cane harvester, and Fuel trailer tank. Mulgrave Area 0407 160 673

2012 Case 8800 fulltrack cane harvester fitted with Trimble GPS and new walking gear. All in good condition. Near new 6t side tipper. Mulgrave Area Ph: 0407 160 673

07 Case 7700 lots of mods tripple sai chopper motors 10 blade lift drums; 2x case 97 powerhauls 10ton l/hand tip & suspension w/cummins qsb 6.7l engines & upgraded cooling packages; Fiat 140 tractor. Call 0429795883 or fb messenger Scott Warland

Toft 6000 harvester \$20k Liquaforce 5 row applicator \$25k stainless steel 25000L tanker on tandem axle trailer \$15k 10 tonne side tipper \$12k kubota 8580 \$22k rotary hoe grubbers rollers ploughs plus more call Rodney 0429984920

# SNG

MACHINERY SALES

## USED MACHINERY FOR SALE

SECONDHAND 2021 8810 AUSTOFT HARVESTER - MANY EXTRAS

EATON PUMPS TO SUIT  
7700 & 8800 SERIES  
All machines located in Ingham.

### WE ARE HIRING:

COUNTER SALES POSITION AVAILABLE

Contact us via phone or  
email for further information.

SNG Machinery Sales  
90 Origlasso St, Ingham  
07 4776 6003 (Parts)  
07 4776 1066 (Sales)  
[admin@sngmachinerysales.com](mailto:admin@sngmachinerysales.com)  
[www.sngromano.net.au](http://www.sngromano.net.au)

Rotocult 1 shot cultivator \$7,000 ONO + GST.  
Ph: 0149 988 158

2022 Case 9900 Harvester Ph- Craig 0436 332 044

2018 Case 8810 Harvester Ph- Craig 0436 332 044

2 of 2019 Case Puma 210 cut with 14T GTB Razor  
Tippers Ph- Craig 0436 332 044

2 of 2021 Case Puma 225 Cut with 16T GTB Razor  
Tippers All Articulated units Ph- Craig 0436 332 044

Austoft plant cutter \$20k+ 2006 TM140 \$45k+  
Liquaforce 5 row Applicator \$25k+ 25000L stainless  
steel tanker trailer w 3 inch honda pump \$15k+  
Silvan 15m 1100L sprayer \$18k+ kubota 8580  
\$20k+ 100" howard rotary hoe \$3k+ heavy roller  
\$1000 grubber \$500 4 furrow plough \$500  
Call Rodney 0429 984 920

International 866 Tractor \$11,000, 1000 Litre plus  
Diesel Tank on Stand \$1800, 2 Ripper Coulter's  
each \$1900, Single Fertiliser Box Stool Splitter \$700,  
Implement Rollers Each \$200, 3 Row Scratcher  
\$700, Line Marker \$500, Ph 0412 968 434, 186 Ross  
Road DEERAL.

2006 Case 7700 Track Harvester. 10.3Lt  
Iveco Motor 3,500hrs. Very Good Condition  
Ph: 0467 198 700 AH: 4067 1498

Multi-Weeder \$350; Cane Drill Marker \$250; Silvan  
600L Water Tank \$300. Ph: 07 4065 2165

Howard 80 inch Ripper Rotary (new blades & new  
ripper tips) \$3,300. GST incl. 2 x second hand  
Tractor tyres. 20.8 38 8 ply \$100 ea. GST incl.  
Ph. 0438 988 858

John Deere 7330 Premium, 150 HP, IVT  
Transmission, Power Beyond Row, Crop Tyres,  
8,100 hours, comes with rear hubs and spacers.  
In excellent condition. \$68,000 (plus GST)  
Ph: Clinton 0439 965 921

John Deere 7520 Premium Cab, IVT Transmission,  
Power Beyond, Row Crop Tyres, 9,000 hours, In  
excellent condition \$60,000 (plus GST) Ph: Clinton  
0439 965 921

Toft 6000, CAT 3306DI, Rotary Chop, Bent  
elevator, standard toppler. Good condition for age.  
Ph: 07 4067 5327

Silkwood Implements whole Stick plant cutter with  
topper \$5,000 Includes GST Ph: Ron 0407 667 819

Quantity of used Harvester track plates - curved and  
flat Ph: Ron 0407 667 819

2015 Case 280 Magnum Ultimate 1750 hrs-equipped

with Case Trimble FMX 1000 GPS \$300,000 includes  
GST Ph: Ron 0407 667 819

2012 Case iH Magnum 340. 4950hrs, Hydraulic Top  
Link 4 Remotes, Trimble RTK GPS Included. G/C  
\$230,000 + GST. Ph: 0408 700 555 or 0447 226 739.

2011 John Deere 7200R FWA tractor, 5,915hrs, G/C,  
Trimble GPS, rear PTO, 3PL, front weights, tinted cab,  
\$120,000 + GST. Ph: Peter 0427 976 416

Billet Planter Harvester - Austoft 7000 optimised for  
billet planting \$50,000+ GST. Ph: 0439 852 185 or  
0448 918 422.

Kubota M9540 4850 Hrs G/C \$38,000 + GST. Two  
Ford 5000 articulated tractors coupled to 4 t side  
tippers \$10,000 each + GST. One Ford 5000 tractor  
\$8,000 + GST. Ph Jamie 0427 089 009

2010 Austoft A8800 Cane Harvester, New Motor,  
1800 hrs, Walking Gear has done 1 Season, \$90,000  
inc. GST ono. Ph: 0407 630 499 or 0428 453 640

### HERBERT RIVER - BURDEKIN

Holden Commodore Ute 2012 SSV Redline v8  
6litre 6 speed gear box. Immaculate condition  
220ks. \$26,000 photos available. John  
0417070844

Loader Moore Scoopmobile.perkins 6 cyl 354  
MotorRuns nice No faults No cracks in 1 metre  
dirt bucket new tyres.\$18000. Photos available  
John 0417 070 844

Case 5150 4wd w front end loader \$18,000. 100  
hp. chamberlain canelander \$3,500. Massey  
ferguson 178 \$8,000. Fert box 2t drop on top  
\$950. Back blade suit 100hp no hydraulics  
\$500. Phone John 0417070844. Photos  
available. All items plus gst if applicable.

For sale Mulcher Nobili BNE 210 \$5,500 O.N.O  
Phone 0747765114

2015 Austoft 8800 harvester. Good condition.  
Ph: 0499 888 919 or 0429 989 502

15KW WEG Mining motor High Efficiency E3  
415 Volt 3 Phase 1470RPM. \$1300 Neg inc  
GST. This motor was manufactured in Feb  
2018 and was in service for 3 years until the  
switchboard was completely upgraded to fit  
a VSD for better pump control. Motor was in  
perfect working condition when taken out of  
service and has been sitting in the shed since  
then. Motor is complete with a taperlock and a  
4 belt drive pulley. Current replacement cost is  
\$2,150.00 bare motor ex Melb. without pulley.  
Ph: Mario 0429 181 276

MF178 Tractor. Reasonable running condition - Multipower, no canopy, new mud guards \$10,000. Chain driven Row. Fertiliser box 1.5 tonne. trailed \$1,000. 3pl Back blade no hydraulics. \$600. Chamberlain Canelander Tractor good for spare tractor or tow boat \$4,000 Ask for photos. Ph: John 0417070844

M135 4WD, 15,000hrs. Good Condition. \$35,000 inc GST. Ph: 0407 636 055

2015 Austoft 8800 Harvester. Good Condition. Ph: 0499 888 919 or 0429 989 502.

International 1086 Trike (146HP). Tractor was manufactured as a trike from the factory and has the genuine front pedestal and twin front wheel set up. Complete with full set of front weights, standard 3 point linkage as well as a locally produced mid mount implement toolbar. Tractor is in good operating condition other than the aircon which does not operate. Selling due to lack of use and taking up shed space. \$12,000 + GST. Ph: 0429 181 276 for more information or photos.

#### MACKAY-PROSERPINE

Southern cross LAH 7 stage turbine pump. Please phone 0407 595 218.

4040 John Deere for sale. Ph: 4954 1174 for price.

4080 Chamberlain tractor, air-con cab with John Deere engine, in good cond. 4280 Chamberlain tractor with John Deere engine, good for spare parts only. Ph: 0409 264 351 for price.

Hodge billet planter for sale with double chains and single axle bin, stainless steel fertiliser box all in good condition. \$22,000 plus GST. Ph: 0417 714 209 or 0428 165 142

Farview Engineering 6 tonne side tipper, new tyres. Ph: 0407761364

2 x number 8 irrigation sprinklers with fittings. 15/5" Alum pipes with ajax fittings, galv pipe trailer, 5" bench etc, Nelson big gun for water winch. Ph: 4959 7207 or 0428 597 207 for price.

John Deere 8300 tractor 1998 model 8552 hours Has had engine and front differential rebuild Dual wheels, A5 gps and base station Good condition. \$65,000 Inc gst

1 international 414 for sale, tyres 90% tread, engine needs repairs, \$1,000. Ph: 4954 1174

Newton 10 tonne elevator bin for sale. Ph: 4954 1174 for price.

Hodge billet planter for sale with double chains and single axle bin, stainless steel fertiliser box all in good condition. \$22,000 plus GST. Ph: 0417 714 209 or 0428 165 142.

2016 Case 8800 Track Harvester; 4887 Hrs; Good Condition. PH: 0408755453 Proserpine

Goldacres 800Ltr spray unit with in-cab controls, 110 LPM pump, near new condition. No boom. Spare new solenoids included. Good condition. \$3,200 + GST ono. Ph: 0419 646 235.

Southern Cross centrifugal pump and 6 cylinder ford engine on a double axle trailer \$5500 Ph: 0437 184 822

Water meter never used SIEMENS BRAND (no before or after the meter pipework required) 150 MM FLANGED, TABLE D/E Ph: 0411 196 860

## Rainfall Report

Brought to you by  Australian Retirement Trust

LOCATION	RECORDED RAINFALL (mm)			
	Month prior (Mar 2023)	Month to date (1 Apr -20 Apr)	Year to date 2023	Year to date 2022
Whyanbeel Valley (Mossman)	375.4	13.8	330.4	2008.4
Mareeba Airport	118.6	73.8	797	633.3
Cairns Aero	416.4	11.4	1266	1455.4
Mt Sophia	618	47	1896	2271.7
Babinda Post Office	no data	no data	no data	2700.6
Innisfail	382	146	1824.4	2209.8
Tully Sugar Mill	420.7	166.1	1860.9	2606.3
Cardwell Marine Pde	179.2	114	1530.3	1508.4
Lucinda Township	155.8	91	1196.8	1471.6
Ingham Composite	195.4	143.8	1293.8	1465.3
Abergowrie Alert	123	44	689	992
Townsville Aero	88	111.8	917.2	827.3
Ayr DPI Research Stn	84.2	189.8	975	655.5
Proserpine Airport	126.4	70	1291.4	974.2
Mirani Mary Street	285	41.6	1165	940.6
Mackay MO	46.8	100.8	946.4	1010
Plane Creek Sugar Mill	86.4	85.4	1031.2	1158.6
Bundaberg Aero	108.2	28.8	345.4	492.3
Childers South	100.8	47	295.4	411.5
Maryborough	137.4	12.2	288.4	577.9
Tewantin RSL Park	86.2	14.4	196.8	759
Eumundi - Crescent Rd	no data	no data	no data	874.2
Nambour DPI - Hillside	58.4	11.8	11.8	990.4
Logan City Water Treatment Plant	61.8	40.2	215	525.6
Murwillumbah Bray Park	44.1	10.6	377.2	810.8
Ballina Airport	124.6	77.2	520	811.9
New Italy	73.5	36	352.5	663.1

Zero indicates either no rain or no report was sent. These rainfall figures are subject to verification and may be updated later. Weather forecasts, radar and satellite images and other information for the farming community can be accessed on [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au). Weather report sourced from the Bureau of Meteorology Recent Rainfall Tables.

6 Tonne west tool cane trailer. Ph: 0408 192 495 for price

Diesel Tank on 2 wheel trailer 4500 Litres Ph: 0411 196 860

6 and 8 inch cast iron flanged Gate Valves. New never used. Ph: 0411 196 860

Howard AH 120" Rotary Hoe. New blades, oil cooler, hydraulic lift crumble roller. Always kept in shed. In great condition. \$12600 +GST. Ph: 0428 761 324

1973 Ford 5000 2wd with 4ton Newton side tipper \$11000 +GST .3m niemeyer nr1411 Power Harrows \$5600 + GST. Ph: 0437 184 822

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

2 fan stripper \$500. Moller single chain planter \$4000. Roberts 6T goose neck trailer \$5000. Grubber & box \$300. Hodge upright planter \$3000. Ph: 0408 776 336 OR 4959 1765 after 7pm

Case 8810, 2018 model cut 4 seasons, low hour low tonnage machine, owner driver. Ph: 0427 271 278.

#### BUNDABERG-ROCKY POINT

2 x Single axle Hi lift tipper bins, one 8 tonne and another one 7 tonne \$12,000 plus gst Phone 0413 584 728

Daily row rake and centre row ripper. \$150 plus gst. One tonne bag lifter. \$150 plus gst. Ph. 0457447561

Massey Ferguson harvester 305 \$5,000, stick plant cane cutter 3 point linkage \$600, 2 fan stripper \$500, whole stick planter \$500, spinner weeder \$600. All + GST. Ph: 0402 781 765

Howard rotary hoe 90 inch reasonable condition \$3,000. Bonnel single stick cane planter good condition \$1,000. Aged billet planter weathered condition \$2,500. Belt spreader 3 ton bin good condition \$15,000 Phone 0437266711.

2 x Single Highlift tipper bins, 1 x 8 tonne and 1 x 7 tonne \$120 ea plus gst Ph: 0413 574 728

Bonel whole stick plant cane cutter 3 point linkage \$200 plus GST. Ph: 0457 447 561.

Plant cane cultivator 2 x 1.6m row w/ 3 weeder rakes and tines \$2,200 incl GST, Land plane w/ 4m. hyd. tilt blade \$4,400 incl GST, 2x1.6m. row cultivator w/ 10x 30ml. tines \$2,200 incl GST. Ph: 0408 761 463.

JD 2010 3520 harvester 7700hrs GC \$175,000 + GST. Ph: 0418 881 343.

Case 8810, 2018 model cut 4 seasons, low hour low tonnage machine, owner driver. Ph: 0427 271 278.

HBM billet planter set up for dual row or single. \$9,000 + GST. Ph: 0413 584 728.

2 row Bonnel fertiliser box with ground drive, 1½ inch tynes, \$1,100 + GST. Ph: 0413 584 728

#### WANTED

Fertilizer box drop on stool type Tableland -Mossman -Tully Ph. 0439951110

Wanted 6 Cylinder Turbo Cat Motor – Phone 0417 193 385

Wanted a vintage 3 ton cane railway bin to display at the Childers historical complex QLD. Anything considered even parts. Email: Darrensbrengun@outlook.com Contact Number: 0402122790

Wanted 1996 - 2004. Toft / Case 7000, wheeled cane harvester. Phone 0420600943

WTB Tractor with FEL 100-140 HP up to \$50k. QLD Area. Call Peter 0427760449

Cane stripper in good condition. Ph: 0407 675 361

Double 5 or 6 tonne side tipper with load sharing hitch. With or without tractor. Ph: 0418 379 253.

Weeder rake. Preferably heavy-duty frame, looking to modify. Condong area. Ph: 0438 428 113.

14 tonne elevator bin and tractor 50klm box or more. Preferably JCB. Ph: 0400 794 857.

Flat bed trailer approx. 3000 x 2100. Mackay/ Sarina area. Ph: 0439 752 381.

Service truck/trailer set up for harvester. Must have a good compressor. Ph: 0437 503 818.

#### PROPERTY - FOR SALE

2 Tableland Farms 59.145ha and 23.395ha 9 (203.65 acres) on 4 Titles Walkamin area. 304 megs Tinaroo irrigation water, 65ha CPA, 10ha avocado and mangos, 2 houses, sheds, machinery, center pivot and hard hose irrigator. Soil and climate suitable for vast array of other crops. Ph 0439951110

FOR SALE BY TENDER: 103 OLD GOWRIE CREEK ROAD, ABERGOWRIE. Freehold Cane Farm Land 52.961 ha (CPA 49.49ha). One split level brick veneer dwelling & two sheds on the property. TENDERS CLOSE: 5:00pm Monday 15th May 2023. Tender packs available from Firth Lawyers 07 4776 6600, email: admin@firthlawyers.com.au.

Cane farm to lease Munburra, Sunnyside or Oakenden areas. Have own equipment. Ph: 0408011983.

Cane Farm for sale: 117 acres, fully irrigated, extremely good bore, Kinchant Dam water and

creek water, frontage Peak Downs Highway, Eton and no house. Ph: 4954 1174 for price.

15km South of Cairns Looking for a large parcel of land (approx 115 Acres) only 3Km from Edmonton. Currently growing Sugar Cane this farm would also be suitable to run cattle or horses or grow fruit trees or alternate crops. With over 1.5km of Wrights creek frontage this gives you access to your own fishing and crabbing spot. Ph: Steve 0410 600 247

Cane land at Gollogly' Road, Hawkins Creek. 2 Separate parcels. 1st parcel: 57 acres. 2nd Parcel: 47 acres. Sell as one parcel. Priced to sell .Contact 0747761750 after 7pm. Mobile 0409411149. Genuine buyers only. Ingham area.

Cane farm for sale, 31.94ha, 2 combined lockable sheds, boundary on Russell River, Bartle Frere. Ph: 0418774849

Established Sugar Cane Farm in the Highleigh area of Gordonvale 25 Km South of Cairns City. Regarded as one of the premiere farms in the district averaging over 100 tonne/ hectre. The farm is well managed with 20 acres fallow, 20 acres plant cane and regular rotation of ratoon crops. Situated only 4km from the township of Gordonvale for shopping, schools, medical and general farm supplies. Ph: Steve 0410 600 247

Sugar Cane Farm - Mulgrave Valley - 218 Acres for sale. Situated less than 4kms from Gordonvale Township is this existing sugar cane farm with 2km of river frontage. Farming area is approx 185 acres of fertile land with average yield in excess of 5000 tonnes. With good rainfall in the area there is no need to irrigate. Ph: Steve 0410 600 247

Cane farm, 89 hectares, 220 acres at Como Road on Trebonne Creek, 5 minutes from the Ingham CBD. Contact Felix Reitano Real Estate on (07) 4776 5007 or felix@reitano.com.au

Cane farm to lease Munburra, Sunnyside or Oakenden areas. Have own equipment. Ph: 0408 011 983.

#### PROPERTY - WANTED

Want to buy farm in Victoria Plains, Eton, Pleystowe area. Ph 049 00 29 387

Wanting to buy/lease cane farm. Close to Racecourse mill, Tekowai, Alexandra areas. Ph: 0438 545 251.

Wanting to buy/lease cane farm in the Septimus area. Ph: 0417 607 722.

**WORK IN THE INDUSTRY POSITIONS:**  
To see all the current Positions Vacant and Work Wanted advertisements visit: [canegrowers.com.au/page/jobs](http://canegrowers.com.au/page/jobs) – if you are looking for workers let us know.

# Sweet Days HOT NIGHTS

POWERED BY  
 PacificHydro

*festival*

**FRI  
27  
MAY**

## BURDEKIN CULTURAL FAIR

featuring **FIRST FIRE**

A night that brings together our diverse community with an amazing line-up of cultural performances, fun activities for the kids and authentic street food from around the world. A highlight of the evening will be the lighting of the first cane fire for the 2023 sugarcane crushing season!

**AT HOME HILL SHOWGROUNDS  
5:30PM - 11PM FREE ENTRY!**

for festival updates,  
information and  
how to get involved,  
please visit:  
[sweetdayshotnights.com.au](http://sweetdayshotnights.com.au)

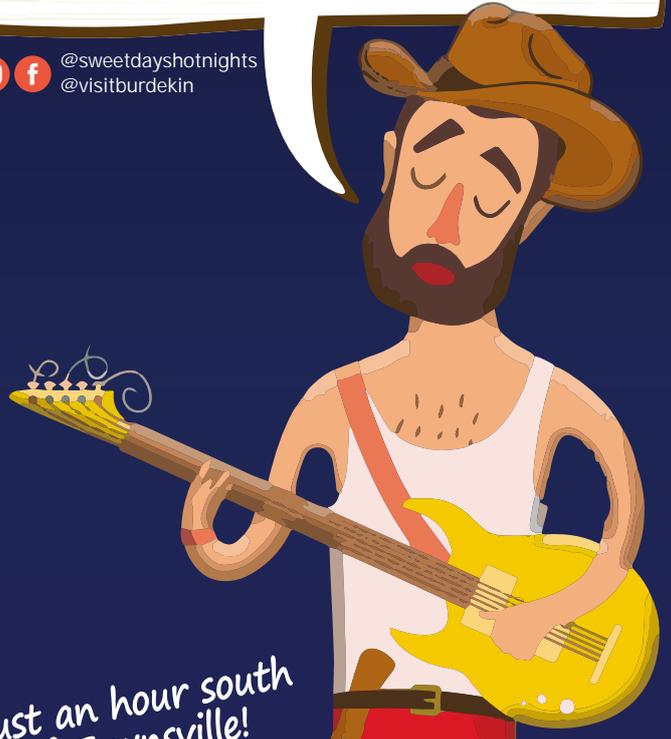
  @sweetdayshotnights  
@visitburdekin

**SAT  
28  
MAY**

## AUSTRALIAN HAND CANE CUTTING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Experience a test of skill and endurance from a bygone era as hand cane cutters compete for the winning title. Bring the whole family to enjoy live music, free children's rides and activities and a variety of food vans.

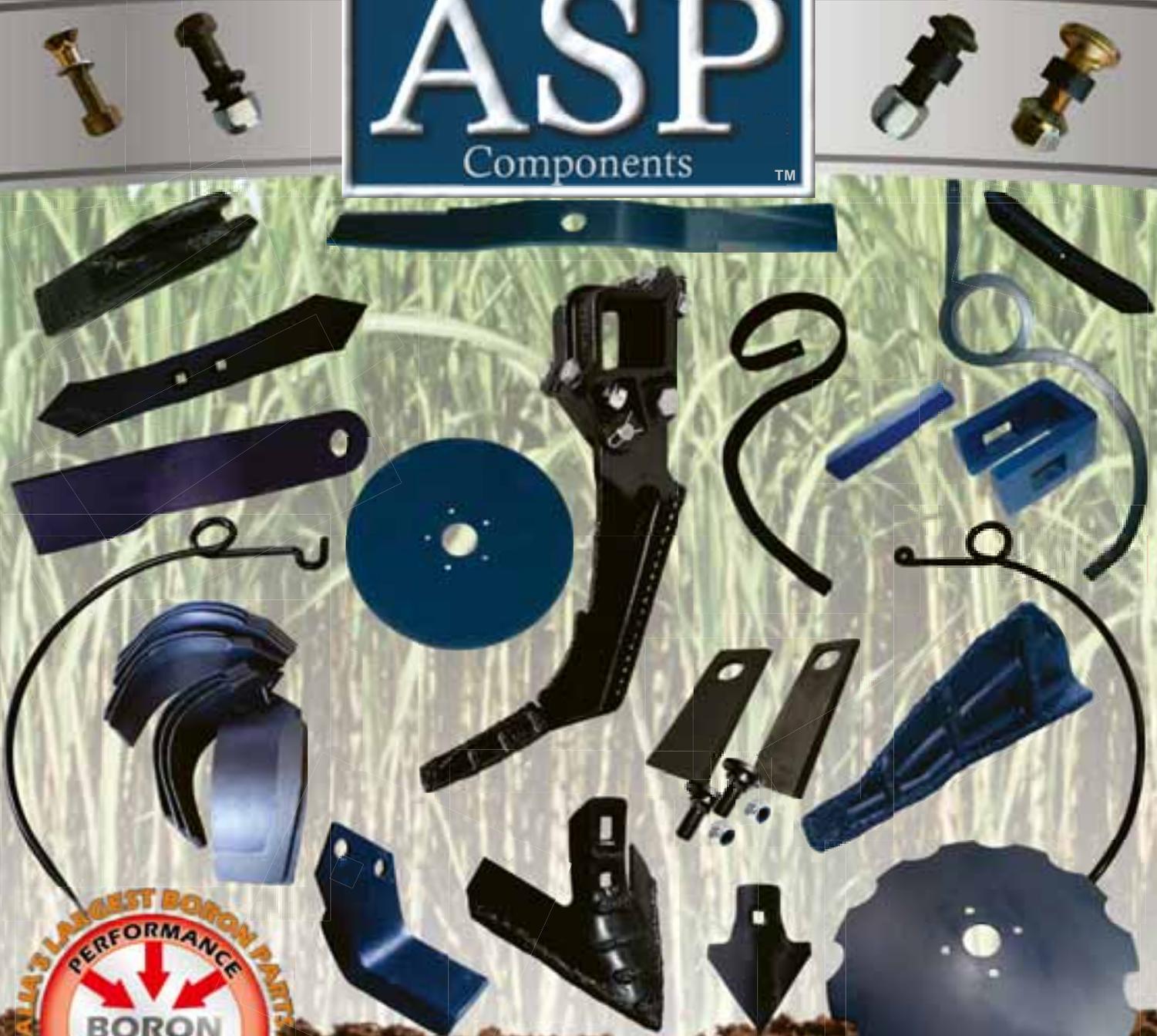
**AT HOME HILL SHOWGROUNDS  
11AM - 4PM  
ADULTS 18+ TICKETS \$5 • UNDER 18s FREE!**



Just an hour south  
of Townsville!



**Rotary Hoe Blades, Power Harrow Tines, Ripper Legs & Parts, Ripper Points & Sweeps, Discs & Coulters, Weeder Rakes, Coil Tines & 'S' Tines, Ride On Mower Blades, Slasher Blades, Mulcher Flails & Hammers, Harvester Points, Slip Down Points, Clamps & Wedges etc**  
**Huge Range of Quality Parts at Affordable Prices!**



**Ph: 1800 253 229**

**[www.asproducts.com.au](http://www.asproducts.com.au)**

**Email: [sales@asproducts.com.au](mailto:sales@asproducts.com.au)**