



February 2020

Welcome to the February edition of the newsletter. In this edition:-

Finally a break in the weather, the sugar Market update, Next Gen and more

CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE



Hi All

In December's newsletter we couldn't get wet and the fire dangers were extreme. Nothing changed until late January but it certainly changed for the better and now the cane won't stop growing, the dams are pretty much full & more rain is likely. It is great to have the weather playing its part and giving us all a chance to earn something for our efforts for 2020.

The sugar price is very good for 2020 with some individual pricing being done at \$440 to \$490 over the last month.

The international forecasting was completely off for the Thai crop which has fallen well short of pre-season estimates by some 35million tonnes. The counter to this is Brazil is experiencing a strong year for cane production and may be able to supply any deficit created. Still the price for this season looks to remain above \$450/tonne. We have a workshop on the 4th March to give a good update on the market.

MSF Sugar made a big announcement last week regarding their farm holdings on the Tablelands west of Cairns. The decision to divest their holdings was made by the parent company, Mitr Pohl.

We have had no suggestion in recent discussions or meetings concerning operations in this area of a similar action and have consistently been assured it is business as usual.

I'll be attending a pricing reference panel meeting next week that will allow an opportunity to speak to Mitr Pohl representatives in person.

With the local and state government elections coming closer we do need to be aware of candidates that support our industry. The cane industry has been a staple commodity produced successfully almost since the city was started and with political support can remain an important part of the local economy.

Jeff Atkinson, Chairman



MANAGER'S UPDATE

It's the time of year for training

Since returning from the festive break the focus has been around organising training.

Two weeks ago a Smartcane BMP workshop was run with over 30 attendees. The need for Chemicals training was identified when discussing the need for good practices with chemicals.

This last week of February has run a Pilot & Escort training course with 11 attendees.

The need for Chemicals accreditation has also seen strong interest with 18 growers now registered for two courses on the 5th & 6th March & 16th & 17th March.

The district is benefiting from extra help for the next few months with the additions of Tony Coutts-Smith & Tony McDermott as Technical support officers to the canegrowers team. They are focussing on progressing growers through the pre Audit stage of Smart Cane BMP. Both are focussing on critical components of the programme and helping set up record keeping habits with information folders to utilise. Soil testing and recommendations are also being looked at as well as Chemical usage practices and storage.

CANEGROWERS Marketing Information Service

Session

Prices are the best we have seen in 2 years and have been above \$500. What does this higher price environment mean for the upcoming marketing and pool choices?

The recent rally in sugar prices has spiked grower interest in reviewing their positions and pricing their sugar. Marketing is such a critical part of your business and to do well with marketing you need relevant information upon which to base your decisions.

A critical date for growers and marketers is the upcoming **Pricing Declaration Date of 30 April 2020** by which time you have to make your pool choices for the 2020 season.

To help you, our members, in this regard, CANEGROWERS Maryborough is pleased to advise that Dougall Lodge, who is a veteran of the sugar marketing industry and is on board with CANEGROWERS to deliver our exclusive "Members Only" service.



CANEGROWERS Maryborough will be hosting a (2 – 2.5 hrs max) workshop, that focuses on building the knowledge of how cane prices are set by the global sugar price, and how various in-season and forward pricing options can respond to different sugar market situations.

So consider investing 2 hours of your time, to better equip yourself for understanding the sugar market and equipping you to be better prepared to make valuable decisions for your business

The workshop is being held on 4th March at Canegrowers Hall, Maryborough with start time of 10:00am.

Next Gen Conference

A reminder for our younger growers that the Next Gen annual conference is coming up quickly and being held in Bundaberg this year. Registrations are open for the event being held on the 24th & 25th March (see page 4)

We've had an interesting summer with hot & dry conditions holding through December.

Hydration when it's hot

Not everyone can stay in the air conditioning when it's hot so we found some tips in an article dealing with hydration for any one working outdoors on page 7 of the newsletter.

Cam



Activities from the Office

Meetings since last edition.

- * District Managers teleconference held 13/01/2020
- * Meeting with sunshine coast grower on drainage & council issues 23/01/20
- * Feral Pig Strategy meeting (no 2) held 30/01/20.
- * Attended Wide Bay Burnett Land Priority workshop in Bundaberg 03/02/20
- * MCPS committee Meeting 03/12/19
- * District Managers Teleconference held 09/02/20

Upcoming Events

- 4th March– CANEGROWERS Sugar Market Update .10am at canegrowers hall, Maryborough.
- 5th March– SRA southern region update in Bundaberg.
- 5th & 6th March- Chemicals use & storage training at SDS training Facility Nerada Road Tinana.
- 16th & 17th March– Chemicals use & storage training. At SDS training facility Nerada road Tinana.
- 23rd & 24th March 2020- Regenerative cane Farming Forum in Cairns–
- 24th & 25th March 2020- NEXT GEN Case IH Step Up 2020 conference, Bundaberg—
- 24th April Maryborough Cane Productivity Services dinner and awards night. Is back! Venue is Maryborough RSL. Book early.



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INNOVATION STEWARDSHIP FARM BUSINESS

SAVE THE DATE
24 - 25
MARCH 2020

at
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Sport & Convention Centre
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FARMING IN A CHANGING CLIMATE 2020

**WELCOME FUNCTION
SPEAKER SESSIONS
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CONFERENCE DINNER**
at the Bundaberg Rum Distillery

COME AND JOIN A
SHOWCASE OF INNOVATION
AND TECHNOLOGY FOR
NEXT GEN FARMERS IN A
CHANGING CLIMATE

CONTACT

 Ainsley Gattley | **Conference Coordinator**
nextgenfarmers@gmail.com | 0488 197 400

 Gerard Puglisi | **Next Gen Officer**
gtpuglisifarming@bigpond.com | 0428 988 136


ACFA: Harvesting the Next Gen



Crop Forecast

Whilst it is tempting to try and predict the effect of the welcome February rain on our 2020 crop, our best option is to wait until late April / early May before compiling the grower's block estimates. We are working on having all farm maps and block data prepared for a mail-out in the last week of April. Your help in completing these estimate forms as soon as possible will greatly assist us in planning our season.

In the meantime, the satellite based GVNDI imagery project continues this year and it will be interesting to again compare the model's estimate predictions against our growers' estimates. We may contact some growers to do a comparison once this year's model is available.

Long Service Leave

Please be advised that Chris Coutts-Smith will be taking Long Service Leave from February 28th, returning immediately after Easter (April 14th). Most of this time he will be out of the country and un-contactable.

Dannielle will be handling routine Cane Supply matters in his absence. She can be contacted on 0417 247 020 or

danniellenitschinsk@msfsugar.com.au

For higher level cane supply matters, Hywel Cook is the best contact. He is available at hywel-cook@msfsugar.com.au

Thanks,
Chris

Cane Supply Contacts (estimates, mapping etc):

Chris Coutts-Smith..... 0409 269 189

Dannielle Nitschinsk..... 0417 247 020

Don't forget that "moogle" will give you access to your specific farm data and results.

MSF Sugar Maryborough farms Update

- The crop, in general, has responded well to the late rains and with close to optimum growing conditions the crop is likely to average 73tons/ha.
- Our cane planting program for 2020 season is 569ha's. We split our planting program into an Autumn and Spring plant. Main reason is to reduce workload pressure through the year.



- Fallow crops we have in at this stage are cotton and soybeans. This will be our last year of cotton which is planned to be harvested in March.

Irrigation has been in full swing throughout the season. We have used approximately 5000ML on this year's crop so far.

- There is a noticeable and considerable difference between the cane under the pivots and outside of the pivot circles.

We are participating in an ongoing electricity saving project through installing variable speed drive motors for improved operating efficiency.

Jon Dixon.



Useful Contact Information

Maryborough Cane Productivity Services

- Yolande Kliese— Mobile 0487 017 811

<u>Maryborough CANEGROWERS</u> <u>Office</u> 106 Bazaar Street, Maryborough Qld 4650 <u>2020 Office Hours</u> : (From 13th January 2020) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monday: 8:30am – 4:00pm • Tuesday: 8:30am – 4:00pm • Wednesday: 8:30am - 1:00pm • After 1:00pm—Urgent matters call Cam's mobile • Thursday: 8:30am -- 4:00pm • Friday: 8:30am – 4:00pm 		<u>Postal</u> PO box 172 Maryborough Qld 4650
Cameron Waterson	District Manager	Mobile: 0427 577 557
Email address:		Office: (07) 4121 4441
		Cameron_waterson@canegrowers.com.au
Tony Coutts-Smith	BMP Technical Support Officer - <u>mob</u> 0419 675 442	
Tony McDermott	BMP Technical Support Officer - <u>Mob</u> 0478 470 035	
<u>DISTRICT</u>	<u>DIRECTORS</u>	<u>Contact Number</u>
Jeff Atkinson	Chairman	Mobile 0428 212 792
Ashley Petersen	Deputy Chair	Mobile 0418 787 032
Roger Bambling	Director	Mobile 0419 788 376
Adam Doyle	Director	Mobile 0407 627 424
Isaac Schmidt	Director	Mobile 0417 868 377
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Heat Stress and Workers

Heat stress occurs when heat is absorbed by the body faster than it can remove it. Several factors can contribute to heat stress, such as the type of work, the surrounding air temperature/humidity level and the physical condition of the individual.

Personal factors that may contribute to heat stress include inadequate rest periods, insufficient water consumption, inappropriate clothing, medical conditions climatic conditions, age and fitness. Environmental factors that can contribute to heat stress are high air temperatures, radiant heat from hot objects including the ground, higher relative humidity levels and low air movement.

Ways of preventing heat stress in the work place include wearing appropriate clothing, drinking at least one (1) litre of water per hour, taking breaks in the shade, ensuring food consumption and avoiding alcohol and caffeine. These when combined with engineering controls like the creation of shaded area, using machinery where appropriate and reducing radiant heat by insulation.

There are several types of heat related illnesses. **Heat Cramps** are painful muscle cramps that may also be part of other heat related illnesses. **Prickly Heat** is a blockage of the sweat ducts from prolonged wetting of the skin. **Heat Fainting** occurs when blood vessels dilate to increase heat transfer away from the body and reduces the flow to the brain. **Heat Exhaustion** is a serious condition with affected person's complaining of weakness, nausea and or giddiness and usually looks pale and may be breathless. **Heat Stroke** is a medical emergency due to raised core body temperature. They are usually confused and may stagger or collapse.

Steps to maintain hydration



Thirst may not trigger drinking until fluid that is equal to one or two percent of body weight has been lost at which level, workers are at an increased risk of developing heat related illness. Food must be consumed at meal breaks in order to replace electrolytes and maintain energy.

Ways to maintain adequate hydration:

- ☐ Start work in a well hydrated state and maintain this with regular drinking to keep pace with sweat losses. To improve hydration a conscious effort needs to be made to drink fluids at a faster rate than they are being lost through sweating and other means.
- ☐ Workers exposed to heat stress need to drink between 600 millilitres and one (1) litre of water per hour in summer.
- ☐ Manual task workers: approximately one litre per hour of plain cool water (supplemented by frequent meal breaks) and machinery operators 600 millilitres per hour of water.
- ☐ Drink 150 – 250 millilitres of cool fluids every 15 minutes, rather than consume a single one (1) litre drink every now and again.
- ☐ Increase intake of fluids if urine is dark (the normal colour should be pale yellow).
- ☐ If dehydrated, do not recommence work until fully rehydrated. ■

Full information about heat stress can be found at the Workplace Health and Safety Queensland website www.worksafe.qld.gov.au or call 1300 369 915.