CANEGROWERS along with other industry members of the **National Farmers' Federation** has developed a strong platform for the **2022 Federal Election** campaign that puts agriculture and regional communities in the spotlight.

The platform has 5 key areas of ideas, proposals and requests which you can read about here
www.timetothrive.com.au

There are some additional, specific commitments under those key areas that CANEGROWERS is also seeking from the political parties to benefit the Queensland sugarcane industry:

Plan for Smarter Regional Growth

We know the sugarcane industry can grow, that there are export markets to expand into and opportunities for sugarcane to power new, diversified businesses boosting employment in regional communities.

- ▷ Allocate resources such as from the proposed $1.1 billion Regional Development Precinct Priority Fund for infrastructure and a revitalised Northern Australia Agenda to support key initiatives of the Sugarcane Industry 2040 Roadmap towards a diversified industry

- ▷ Continue and expand funding to $3.5 million over five years to fully support the sugar industry's trade strategy via the Australian Trade and Market Access Cooperation (ATMAC) program

- ▷ Ensure all new trade agreements include new market opportunities for Australian sugar

- ▷ Commit to enforcing trade rules through action in forums such as the World Trade Organisation

- ▷ Reduce electricity and water prices so the full potential of the assets can be realised for optimum cane production to supply expanded markets for sugar and new processing opportunities

- ▷ Commit to a coordinated approach between government and industry for the control of pest animal and plant species and significantly increase the funding to the national biosecurity system

Partner for a Healthier Environment

Sugarcane growers have a proven commitment to environmental responsibility and sustainable production systems. Growers have invested in projects to support good water quality for the Great Barrier Reef and embraced Smartcane BMP, the industry's best practice verification program which is recognised internationally as a standard for sustainable sugar. The next step is to appropriately measure and reward environmental performance.

- ▷ Support the future of the Smartcane BMP program which requires funding of $7 million over five years to continue

- ▷ Fund $500k p.a. over four years to further industry development of a sustainable sugar supply chain underpinned by blockchain technology to demonstrate Australia's capacity to meet existing global demands for sustainable sugar

- ▷ Support a $1 million fund to develop tools to allow sugarcane growers to assess and capture the benefits of existing carbon and reef credits scheme and to invest in new methodologies which capture the opportunities of market-based offsets without risking industry productivity

- ▷ Fund an additional $50 million over four years to support further research into effective water planning and management in northern Australia to ensure a focus on optimising the use of existing irrigation schemes

Connect Every Australian

The sugarcane industry has a culture of innovation and technology adoption – GPS, drones, digital mapping and imaging are helping growers farm smarter. There is plenty of scope to further unlock the benefits of technology and connectivity for efficiency, productivity, profitability and environmental benefits.

▷ Identify sugarcane areas requiring network improvements within the proposed Regional, Rural and Remote Telecommunications Fund

▷ Enable sustainable and innovative electricity use including regulatory reform to enable local power grids and peer-to-peer trading of excess power when generated through cogeneration within the cane sugar processing sector

Secure Australia's Farm Workforce

The ability of the sugarcane industry to grow into the future to supply expanded export markets and new processing and manufacturing opportunities will depend on the availability of a farm workforce, the encouragement and development of skills and professions within local communities for the whole supply chain and, where necessary, access to overseas recruitment programs.

▷ Support programs such as AgCAREERSTART which attract Australians to work in the sugarcane industry

▷ Invest $150,000 in the development of a sugarcane industry career landscape map that details and communicates the enormous range of opportunities for school leavers and job seekers

▷ Assist with $250,000 for five years towards CANEGROWERS partnership with the Primary Industries Education Foundation developing and promoting curriculum-based sugarcane industry information in schools

▷ Support and continue to develop the AgVisa by engaging partner countries to participate in the program

Give Farmers a Fair Go

Sugarcane growers are the foundation of Australia's sugar industry, supporting $1.1 billion of economic activity in Queensland alone each year while operating farm businesses in a commercial environment subject to external costs and pressures.

▷ Continue to support the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission Agriculture Consultative Committee

▷ Commit to protecting growers from unfair market or business practices

▷ Sponsor the introduction of a legislated right to repair for farm machinery that will ensure farmers get a fair price for the repair and maintenance of farm-businesses related equipment

▷ Develop an agenda to work with Queensland to reduce the regulatory burden on normal farm management practices and improve incentive pathways for best practice

Read the full list of ideas, proposals and requests under these 5 key areas in the NFF's election platform www.timetothrive.com.au

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Sugarcane growers need a government that will partner with farmers to ensure the future is strong, fair and sustainable – that builds on our place as leading sugar exporter while seizing opportunities for more regional businesses and jobs.

For more information:

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Time to Thrive.
Stronger regions for all Australians