

Soil Health & Crop Nutrition feature: care for the foundation of your crop

CANE

AUSTRALIAN

GROWER



CANEGROWERS
15 February 2016 Price \$9.95

**SMARTCANE BMP
...build a better
business**



**Road
rules for
wide farm
equipment**



**Decision
time looms
for 2016
pricing**



**Report
backs
power price
campaign**

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE FOR AUSTRALIA'S SUGARCANE INDUSTRY

EXTENDED FOR ONE MONTH ONLY!

HOE INTO THE SAVINGS.

Why not buy a new one?

ORDER BEFORE 20th MARCH 2016

1.5%

p.a.

with deferred loan repayments via
PFG Credit starting July 2016*



TERMS AND CONDITIONS*

- Equipment ordered by 20th March 2016
- Minimum 10% Deposit
- Delivery by 31st March 2016
- GST component repaid back into the loan after 3 months
- Structured loan repayments from July to December over 3 years maximum

Finance Package is applicable to all Howard and Maschio Rotary Hoes.

*To approved ABN applicants only. PFG Credit is a division of De Lage Landen Pty Limited ABN 20 101 692 040.
Note: Orders placed after 20/03/2016 can obtain a finance package at 3.00%p.a. for the same loan structure.



199 Australis Drive, Derrimut VIC 3030
P: 03 8353 3600 **F:** 03 8353 3699
W: www.howard-australia.com
E: info@howard-australia.com

A Division of PFG Australia Pty Ltd, ABN 820 9303 7533

QLD & NT:
South East QLD:
VIC & SA:
TAS:
NSW:
WA:

Marty Limmer	0427 433 400
Phil Myers	0417 319 321
Trevor Telford	0427 433 478
John Simpson	0417 265 050
Bill Pocklington	0427 433 473
Wayne Douglas	0400 236 892

CONTENTS

15 February 2016



Features

- 5 Time to fix the broken power pricing system
- 6 Industry Spotlight - Small scale growers, are they survivors?
- 7 Moving wide farm equipment by road
- 9 Decision time for 2016 pricing options
- 10 Soil Health and Crop Nutrition Feature
- 19 On Farm - Smartcane BMP: why seek accreditation
- 22 Better times forecast for Aussie agriculture

Cover picture:

CANEGROWERS Innisfail chairman Joe Marano, who has achieved Smartcane BMP accreditation. Story page 19.

Also inside:

- 2 CEO's comment
- 4 News in brief
- 8 QSL market update
- 12 SRA Snapshot
- 23 Classifieds
- 24 Rainfall report

Editor : Neroli Roocke

Design, subscriptions, advertising and classifieds:
Wayne Griffin

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

Published every second Monday by
CANEGROWERS

Level 6, 100 Edward Street, Brisbane,
Queensland Australia

ABN 94 089 992 969

Postal Address: GPO Box 1032, Brisbane,
Queensland 4001 Australia

Telephone: 07 3864 6444; Fax: 07 3864 6429

Email: info@CANEGROWERS.com.au

Website: www.CANEGROWERS.com.au

CANEGROWERS/Members Card Hotline 1800 177 159

AUSTRALIAN CANEGROWER ISSN 157-3039

Volume 38 Number 03

Printed by Printcraft

23 Links Avenue, Eagle Farm QLD 4009

Subscriptions

Yearly subscriptions for 25 issues (postage included)

Within Australia \$160 inc GST

Overseas (AUD) \$250

Elections – a time for change, renewal & reward

By Dan Galligan, CEO CANEGROWERS

Elections are definitely in the air in 2016. Queenslanders will go to the polls at least twice this year. Local Government elections are being held on 19 March and a Federal election needs to be held sometime in the second half of the year.

While they often do not receive anywhere near the same level of media coverage from state and national media outlets, we all know that local government elections and, in turn, local leadership has a profound impact on our daily lives and the success of our businesses.

As the saying goes, 'All politics is local'. This phrase simply notes that political outcomes are often a derivative of managing issues that are most relevant to the people who cast the votes that put our leaders in the positions.

For CANEGROWERS in our unique way, we too are preparing for a membership poll and a potential vote to decide the next Boards of our district companies which in turn determine the make-up of our Policy Council, which votes to elect our State Board.

The strength of CANEGROWERS has always been its system of drawing representation and leadership positions via a democratic process.

Every member of CANEGROWERS is eligible to nominate for the CANEGROWERS Triennial Elections and every member can vote.

This is a powerful characteristic for an industry organisation and supports our capacity to advocate on behalf of all growers, by growers who represent growers.

From the most experienced farmer to a relatively new entrant to the business of cane growing, farmers across the state who have a desire to have a say in the future of their industry, have a direct and transparent path to be able to make a difference.

There is, and there should be, a place for all types of voices.

Diversity and inclusivity should be embraced as they are characteristics that demonstrate our maturity and capacity to grow as an industry.

There are opportunities at all levels to be involved in CANEGROWERS, from the District Boards to the statewide Policy Council, Qld Cane Growers Board and a myriad of special purpose committees that all work towards improving outcomes for cane growers.

The potential to play a role is limited only by the desire and capacity of the individual.

But it all starts with putting your name forward and giving it a go.

We encourage all members to consider whether they would like to make a contribution to the future of the industry.

Nomination forms and further details can be obtained from the Manager of each CANEGROWERS local company office or direct from the returning officer via elections2016@canegrowers.com.au or by calling 1800 177 159.

"The task of the leader is to get his people from where they are, to where they have not been," - Henry A. Kissinger. ■

"Farmers across the state who have a desire to have a say in the future of their industry, have a direct and transparent path to be able to make a difference."





**Stop your nutrients
going down the creek
this season and apply
AMORSIL AGRI
PRE PLANT SOIL CONDITIONER**

Improve moisture and nutrient efficiency

Amorsil Agri is best applied broadcast pre plant and incorporated into root zone. It is retained in the root zone for the life of your crop.

Amorsil Agri has a high cation exchange capacity and can significantly improve the efficiencies of applied nutrients by increasing nutrient and moisture retention at the root zone, without causing water logging.

Amorsil Agri increases soil aeration; improves plant resistance to Biotic and Abiotic stress; and reduces the leaching of fertilisers into the environment.

For more information simply call Nutrifert on 1300 562 182

nutrifert.com.au

NEWS IN BRIEF

PACIFIC TRADE HORIZON WIDENS

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement has been signed and it is now up to the signatory countries to follow their domestic treaty-making processes before it can enter into force.

For Australia this means a Joint Standing Committee on Treaties inquiry and consideration by Federal Parliament.

TPP aims to eliminate 98% of tariffs among the 12 countries involved. The Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, **Barnaby Joyce**, says the agreement could drive stronger profits to Australian agricultural and food producers.

"We're a step closer to the benefits that will flow from the world's largest ever regional trade agreement—an agreement including five of our top 10 trading partners," Mr Joyce said.

"These countries represent 25% of world trade, 36% of the global economy

and around a third of our agriculture exports. This agreement gives us preferential access that will have real, tangible outcomes for exporters of most of our main export commodities."

Among the immediate benefits is the first new quota access for sugar to the United States in 20 years. 65,000 tonnes have been added to the existing quota of 87,000 tonnes along with the potential for additional allocation based on US needs.

There were also some positive outcomes into the Japanese market with reduction of the levy on high polarity (raw) sugar.

Minister for Trade and Investment **Andrew Robb** says tariff cuts across a range of industries will also place downward pressure on the cost of imported goods for households and businesses.

The Federal Government says the TPP also sets in place common rules for labour, the environment and for the first time in a trade treaty, rules to combat bribery and corruption. ■



QSL AND WILMAR IN COURT

A Federal Court case involving Wilmar and QSL has been ruled in favour of the milling company.

This case was over changes to the QSL constitution and doesn't affect the amendments to the *Sugar Industry Act* which guarantee competition and choice in sugar marketing.

In December 2015 QSL held an extraordinary general meeting which passed changes to its constitution affecting the way mill owner directors would be appointed to the Board.

They had the effect of excluding Wilmar, Tully Sugar and MSF from having a say.

Milling companies which have not given notice of termination of their Raw Sugar Supply Agreements could continue to be involved and, in fact, have a greater say in appointments.

Wilmar objected to the amendments and brought Federal Court action claiming they were unfairly discriminatory.

The Court agreed and has ordered QSL and Wilmar to prepare new amendments to QSL's constitution that would satisfy everyone by 8 February.

If agreement cannot be reached, the Court will move to make a determination on how the constitution should be varied. ■

SAFE OR NOT?

Quad bikes are popular for recreation and work in Queensland but they can be dangerous.

In fact, 7,900 Queenslanders were hospitalised after quad bike accidents from 2003-2011.

In an effort to reduce these numbers, the Office of Industrial Relations has commissioned TNS to conduct research to better understand the perceptions and behaviours of families, workers and volunteers using quad bikes.

Everyone is encouraged to complete the ten-minute survey in the next two weeks using this link:
<http://bit.ly/1TCff0>

The market research is being carried out in accordance with the Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld), responses will be kept strictly confidential and any information provided will only be used in a way that avoids individual identification. ■

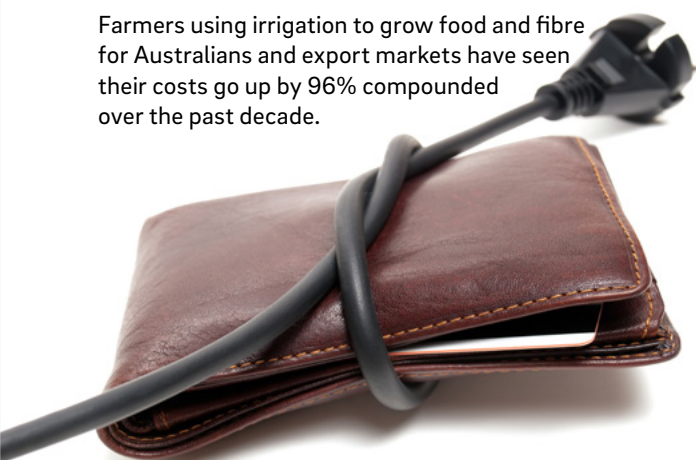


Time to fix the broken power pricing system

More evidence pointing to the need for an urgent overhaul of the electricity pricing system has been laid before power companies and the Queensland Government.

A Queensland Productivity Commission (QPC) draft report on power pricing agrees with CANEGROWERS' assessment that escalating network costs are the main driver of skyrocketing electricity prices – accounting for 82% of the 87% increases across all customer categories.

Farmers using irrigation to grow food and fibre for Australians and export markets have seen their costs go up by 96% compounded over the past decade.



The QPC found the current pricing model with fixed and variable charging is, "not equitable and does not support least cost provision of network services".

It pointed to the need for more efficient electricity tariff structures which reflect the true cost of providing power.

"The current system is failing the Queensland economy, threatening the viability and international competitiveness of irrigated agriculture and putting regional jobs at risk," CANEGROWERS CEO Dan Galligan said.

For rural Queensland an important step will be to introduce tariffs that reflect the different demands that irrigators and other users place on the network.

CANEGROWERS believes an efficient and equitable regime would see a significant reduction in prices for agriculture, which doesn't need to use power at critical peak times. This would in turn drive up usage across an under utilised network.

"Under utilisation on an over capitalised network is driving prices higher, exacerbating the problem. Turning this around through more specific and flexible tariffs would result in greater productivity and profitability," Mr Galligan said.

"The QPC draft report is another pointer to what needs to be done. CANEGROWERS will be providing more advice to the QPC prior to the finalisation of its report at the end of May." ■

TASKFORCE URGED TO CONSIDER EL NIÑO TARIFF

State Parliament's Rural Debt and Drought Taskforce has been urged to consider a plan to minimise the impact of dry weather on irrigated agriculture.

The Taskforce has been to regional centres hearing about the financial problems faced by agriculture, local government and communities in drought in a bid to identify strategies to rectify problems.

In Bundaberg - a region which spent 13 months up to April 2015 under a drought declaration - CANEGROWERS Senior Vice Chairman Allan Dingle urged the Taskforce to take into consideration an El Niño drought tariff proposal which CANEGROWERS put to the Palaszczuk Government in October last year.

Mr Dingle said current policy is to waive fixed charges for electricity used to pump water for farm or irrigation purposes for the period of a drought declaration and offer deferred payments to those experiencing financial difficulty.

Mr Dingle and CANEGROWERS want to see this policy extended to all periods when an El Niño weather event is declared by the Bureau of Meteorology as a proactive measure to prevent farmers struggling as dry conditions escalate.

"This policy would maintain the economic viability of Queensland's irrigated agricultural sector during and throughout expected periods of below average rainfall at no more cost to government or Ergon," Mr Dingle said. ■

WORK SMARTER NOT HARDER

**FAST
BREAKDOWN
OF CORN
& CANE
TRASH**

SPEEDTILLER®
By K-Line Agriculture

- ✓ LOWER OPERATING COSTS
- ✓ LEVEL SEEDBED PREPARATION
- ✓ OPERATING SPEEDS FROM 8 – 12 KM/HR (APPROX.)
- ✓ 3 ROLLER OPTIONS AVAILABLE

**K-LINE
AGRICULTURE**
— Better by Design —

1800 194 131
www.k-line.net.au



Burn Ashburner

CANEGROWERS
Manager - Industry

“We seem to be back to the old get big or get out conclusion. However, small scale growers are resilient survivors”

SMALL SCALE GROWERS are they survivors?

The ABARES report, *Australian sugarcane farm businesses: financial performance 2013-14*, shows that 44% of cane farming businesses produce 12% of the sugarcane and 11% of the businesses produce 45% of the sugarcane.

There is often a lot of speculation about the pros and cons of the distribution of farm sizes in the industry.

One view is that the industry focuses disproportionately on the needs of small scale growers because they hold the numerical advantage in voting situations.

This view generally assumes that small scale growers are in some way holding back the industry.

Another point however is that small scale growers fill a vital role in providing that last 10-15% of production which assists the rest of the industry remain viable.

Clearly the mills benefit from every tonne of cane regardless of the farm it comes from or if that farm is profitable or not and all growers benefit because the mill is viable and their share of overheads in the value chain, such as for sugar terminals, is reduced.

So where do the small scale growers sit in all of this?

Table 1 shows the total farm cash costs per ha and farm operating profit per ha.

The ABARES breakdown of the survey into regions, business sizes based on ha under cane and the bottom and top performing businesses based on return on investment (ROI) are sorted from the lowest operating profit to the highest.

The farm cash costs exclude interest, farm lease costs, depreciation and family labour.

Thus the operating profit per ha is a measure of the farming efficiency (not the overall business efficiency) and allows for a meaningful comparison between businesses.

Table 2 shows the area harvested for each of the survey breakdown groups.

It can be seen in table 1 that the farm cash costs per ha are broadly speaking all in a relatively narrow range (irrigation being the biggest variable) compared to the operating profit.

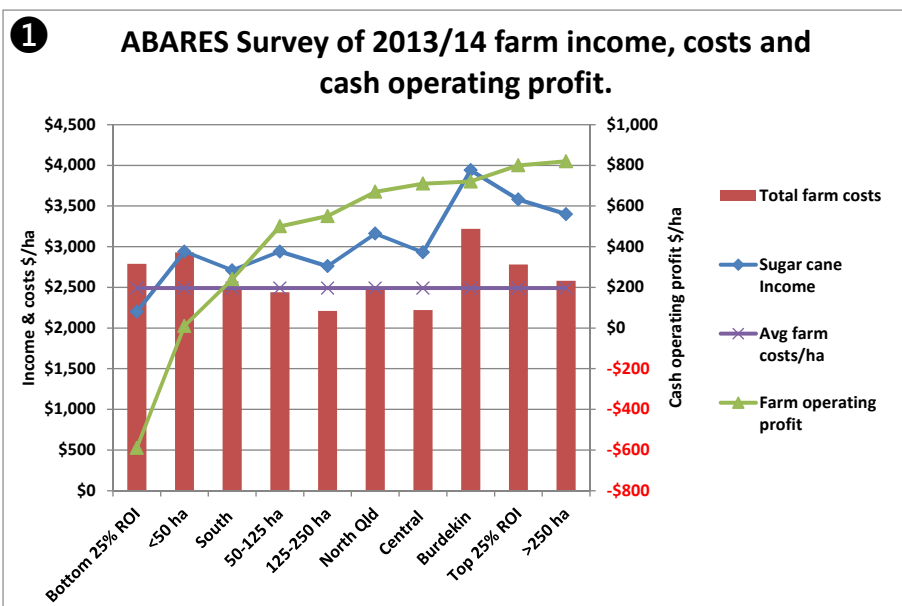
For example the bottom and top performing farms based on ROI have almost identical farm cash costs/ha (\$2790/ha and \$2780/ha respectively) but an operating profit (loss) of (\$590)/ha and \$800/ha respectively with table 2 showing that the areas harvested were 36ha and 216ha respectively.

The farm businesses with less than 50ha have an operating profit of \$10/ha which increases to \$500/ha for the 50ha – 125ha group.

Table 2 (page 7) shows that there is a clear trend for operating profit per ha to increase with farm size.

So we seem to be back to the old “get big or get out” conclusion. However, small scale growers are resilient survivors.

If they are not making money from sugarcane farming and are surviving on off farm income (as per ABARES report) then the chances are their goal is not profit, and this probably increases their resilience and they are an effective stable part of the industry. ►

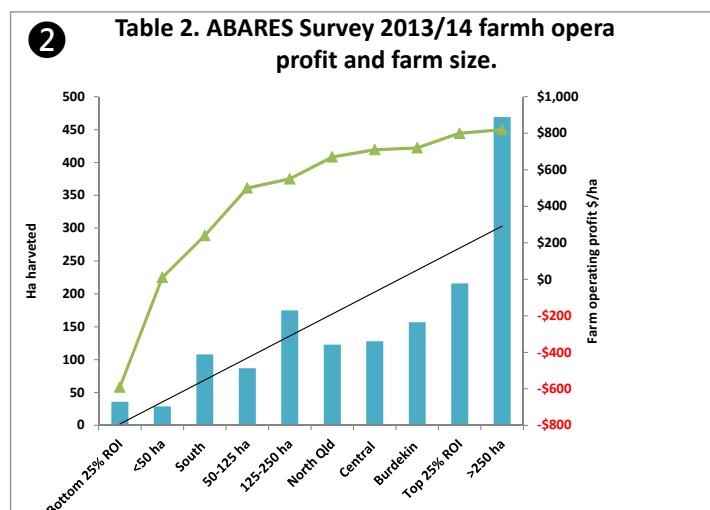


However this may also make it difficult for them to adopt or seek new technology or practices that involve risk and/or an investment.

The challenge is to find a way to effectively allow smaller scale growers to participate in some sort of syndicate or consolidated access to labour, technology and equipment at an affordable price.

This is not new but needs to be revisited.

Getting big is happening but perhaps getting out is optional. ■



MOVING WIDE FARM EQUIPMENT BY ROAD.....

CANEGROWERS Burn Ashburner explains the rules as they stand and why you should comply.

Vehicles and combinations wider than 4m

As the regulations stand, any Class 1 agricultural vehicle or a combination over 4.0m in width travelling or crossing any public road should have a permit (except for minor roads in the Bundaberg Regional Council area).

If you do not have a permit and have an accident the chances are your insurance will not cover you and that includes public liability.

It may seem like a nuisance to apply for a permit for a journey of a few kilometres on roads you know well and perceive to have little risk, but is it really worth a few hours of time and the \$70 you will save by not applying?

CANEGROWERS is working on regulations which will allow for travel and crossing of major and minor roads with agricultural vehicles up to 5.0m in width north of Rockhampton with a gazetted notice. Until this comes through, a permit is required.

If you are travelling on or even crossing a critical road including the Bruce Highway (or a major road south of Rockhampton) with an agricultural vehicle over 4.0m in width, you will definitely need a permit to be legal.

To apply for a permit, complete the application form on the Transport and Main Roads website at:
www.tmr.qld.gov.au/business-industry/Heavy-vehicles/National-heavy-vehicle-regulator/Application-forms.aspx

It is in your interests to complete the form in detail and in full as soon as possible. Don't give any reason for delays beyond the 30 day processing time.

Make sure you request multiple travel for a period of 12 months (cross out anything which says three months) if you will be using the vehicle more than once a year.

The vehicles need to have conditional registration and all other dimensions (mass, height etc.) must also be within regulations.

Vehicles and combinations 3.5m-4.0m wide

The gazetted Notice "Queensland Heavy Vehicle Class 1 Agricultural Vehicle (Zone 1) Dimension Exemption Notice 2016 (No. 1)" provides for legal travel of agricultural vehicles between 3.5m and 4.0m.

This Notice can be found on the CANEGROWERS website under the Grower Centre tab.

One of the requirements of this Notice is roadside signage at the beginning and end of the journey and at intersections with critical and major roads and one agricultural pilot on critical roads.

CANEGROWERS is again working on regulations to change the conditions of travel on major and minor roads (not critical roads). However until this is gazetted, the conditions of the Notice apply.

This includes roadside signage OR two agricultural pilots on major and minor roads.

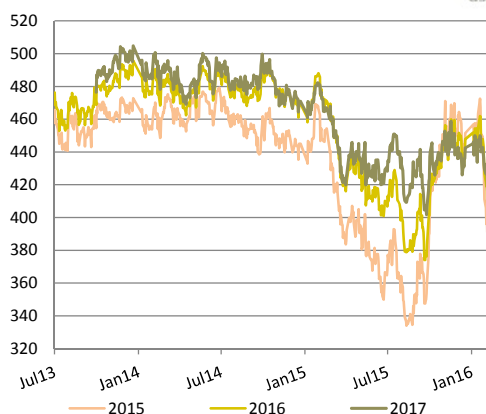
ICE No.11 Prompt Futures Contract



Australian Dollar (AUD v USD)



QSL Forward Fixed Price Contract (A\$/mt)



Data source: QSL Daily Market Report (Futures and Currency) & QSL Daily Indicative Prices

Market Update

By Matthew Page, QSL Treasury Analyst

Current as of 8 February 2016

Sugar

It was a rather turbulent fortnight for raw sugar futures, with prices dropping to four-month lows before a late recovery at the end of last week. Prompt contract March16 posted consecutive losses for six straight sessions at the beginning of the period, resulting in a 209-point loss since its mid-January high of 14.92c/lb. The last few sessions has seen some stability return, with Friday closing at 13.27c/lb.

Spreads have been volatile, with the front spread in particular trading a rather broad range (+23 to -10) as funds and physicals jostle for homes and paper. It has been particularly hard to anticipate which direction it will go next, but if it does continue on its current path producers who have priced but not sold will feel some pain.

Friday's Commitment of Traders report offered the market some positivity, with spec activity showing a 75,000 reduction in their net long position to 74,000 on the Tuesday-to-Tuesday basis. Combine this with a firming of cash values that suggests some fresh physical business and it seems the market may have found a solid base around 12.80c/lb to build from.

The Dubai sugar conference appeared to be a bit of a mixed bag last week, with funds and producers seemingly positive on fundamentals while the trade continued to try and talk the market down. Activity post-event suggests that the former may have just shaded the sentiment stakes overall and we should hopefully see some follow-through strength as we approach the March contract expiry.

Looking ahead, much market chatter has surfaced around the Brazilian crop forecasts for 2016, with some analysts as high as 34 million tonnes of sugar. QSL believes some assumptions around the sugar/ethanol mix might be unrealistic and sees more downside than upside risk to this estimate. With India and Thailand still very dry the exact implications for the global sugar balance remain up for debate.

Currency

Aside from Friday, the past fortnight has been a particularly frustrating one from the Australian exporter's perspective. Despite a poor macro picture with underperforming oil and equities, the Aussie dollar has remained rather resilient, trading from 0.6950 right up to just below 0.7250.

Both the Federal Open Market Committee and the RBA held rates, as expected, and the commentary did little to stir market interest. However, a strong unemployment print in the US on Friday night was enough to break the resistance, with the Aussie giving up over 150 points to close the period around 0.7070.

Medium-term AUD risk remains on the downside, however the market will require more than a gentle push to break back below the 70-cent level, which seems to provide both a technical and psychological barrier. Without much significant data in the pipeline for this week the market may look to other sectors to provide direction, with oil being a key barometer at present.

Given the activity we have seen over the last week or so, Friday's move in both sugar and currency comes as a welcome relief. We have seen A\$/mt values moderately recover after a worrying spell back below \$400.

While all care is taken in the preparation of this report the reliability or accuracy of the information provided in the document is not guaranteed. 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.



Decision time for 2016 pricing options

By Bryce Wenham, QSL Finance Manager – Supplier Relations

As the 2016 Pricing Declaration Date draws near, time is running out for growers to decide upon their QSL Pool options for the coming season. While the QSL Pool range is unchanged from the 2015 Season, it's important that growers contact their miller to clarify which QSL Pools are available in their area as well as local nomination cut-off dates.

QSL's 2016 POOLS

As in previous years, the 2016 QSL-managed pools feature differing levels of risk and types of price management.

The QSL Pricing Pools available for the coming season are:

- The QSL Guaranteed Floor Pool
- The QSL Actively Managed Pool
- The QSL Harvest Pool
- The US Quota Pool

The table below provides an overview of each pool and its volume obligations.

While the pool arrangements detailed in the table are largely unchanged from the previous season, it should be noted that, as detailed previously in this magazine, the payment schedule for the 2016 Guaranteed Floor Pool has been altered so that this pool's Advances rate is at 90% by the end of December.

This change was made in response to growers seeking an avenue to obtain an increased level of payment before the end of the year.

For further details regarding this and to check the 2016 Guaranteed Floor Pool's current Indicative Floor price, please visit our website.

COMMITTED VS UNCOMMITTED POOLS

Growers weighing up their QSL Pool options should remember that 'Committed' Sugar Pools require that any amount of raw sugar allocated to these pools must be supplied to QSL, regardless of any production variations.

The QSL Harvest Pool remains the only 'Uncommitted' Sugar Pool and exists to manage possible fluctuations in production across the season.

In some instances, by not actively allocating tonnes to a specific pricing pool, growers are making a choice to 'default' into the QSL Harvest Pool (or a Miller-nominated 'default' pool).

While this is a valid decision for many, it is a decision which ought to be made with appropriate consideration of the Harvest Pool's risk management strategies.

INDIVIDUAL GROWER PRICING

In addition to the pool offerings below, some growers may also have individual pricing options.

This pricing, administered by your miller but undertaken on the ICE 11 by QSL, is managed within the current

Raw Sugar Supply Agreement (RSSA). While those growers supplying Wilmar, MSF and Tully Sugar cannot currently price through the existing system beyond the 2016 Season (as these millers do not have RSSAs with QSL beyond this date), individual grower pricing for the 2017 Season is still available to those growers supplying our continuing millers – Isis Central Mill, Bundaberg Sugar and Mackay Sugar.

Please contact your local mill representative for full details regarding the individual pricing options available in your district.

MORE INFORMATION

More information about the QSL Pools outlined here is available on the QSL website (www.qsl.com.au/what-we-do/pricing/pricing-products/2016-season) or by contacting your local QSL Industry Relationship Manager:

- North Queensland districts – Carla Keith: Ph. 0409 372 305/ Email carla.keith@qsl.com.au
- Central and Southern districts – Cathy Kelly: Ph. 0409 285 074/ Email cathy.kelly@qsl.com.au. ■

	QSL US Quote Pool	QSL Guaranteed Floor Pool	QSL Actively Managed Pool	QSL 2-Season Forward Pool ¹	QSL Harvest Pool
Pool Type	Committed	Committed	Committed	Committed	Uncommitted
Pool Objective	Encompasses the returns for sales made by QSL into the USA under the Tariff Rate Quota issued for the importation of raw sugar.	Provides a guaranteed minimum return with the potential for higher returns. Altered Advances rate (at 90% by 31/12/16).	Targets the best return over the season by pricing more frequently as short-term market opportunities arise.	Priced over 2-seasons and targets the best return for raw sugar to be produced in the 2017 Season.	Designed to manage possible production fluctuations across the 2016 Season.
Pricing Season	2016 Season	2016 Season	2016 Season	2016 and 2017 Seasons	2016 Season

Caring for your soil

Supplied by QFF

IN 2015 your soil looked after you, the least you can do in 2016 is return the favour. Queensland Farmers' Federation natural disasters project manager and soil scientist Ross Henry gives his tips on how to start the year right by your soils. Follow these simple points and principles to get the most out of your soil.

1 SOIL TESTING

Like with anything you want to keep healthy it's good to get a check-up every now and then.

This works the same for soils. Soil testing continues to become more and more popular as its accessibility increases.

Even though soil test prices have decreased, some people are still missing out on this handy soil health and nutrient check tool.

Using an accredited lab, coupled with accredited agronomic advice, can help you get the most out of your soils for the year to come.

2 SOIL CARBON AMENDMENTS

Soil carbon levels, or more commonly soil organic matter, is linked to soil health, soil biology populations, water holding capacity, soil structure, nutrient mineralisation and many more important soil functions.

Adding manures, compost, green manure crops or stubble retention methods are all good ways to maintain or increase this essential soil nutrient.

Soil carbon levels drastically drop after flooding and it is advised to consider addressing this in post flood recovery.

4 DON'T OVER FERTILISE

Conversely it is also important not to over fertilise. Plants only require a certain amount of nutrients, over and above these levels costs money with little return.

This is particularly evident, as we all know, with nitrogen. This volatile nutrient leaches, runs off with rain, volatilises and denitrifies.

The money spent on the fertiliser is lost to the plant and the risk to the environment increases.

Nitrogen run-off is also one of farming's key impacts on the health and wellbeing of the reef and water catchments.

Controlling nitrogen run-off on farm makes good economic and environmental sense.

3 DON'T UNDER FERTILISE

Maintaining optimum soil nutrient levels for pasture or crop production is key to all farms.

Under fertilising soils can lead to depleting soil nutrient levels that can effect yields.

It is important to maintain good soil nutrient levels for production, soil health and the farm's bottom line.

5 SURFACE COVER

Maintaining surface cover over the dry months would have been hard for many graziers but the benefits would be seen now.

Increasingly, the differing cropping industries are maintaining surface cover as well.

The benefits are great in the short and long-term.

Erosion risk can be reduced with ground cover.

With a vast area of Queensland in the Great Barrier Reef catchment, reducing the risk of erosion is a good thing, not only for the farm and the soil but the wider environment.

QFF continues to work with its industry member organisations to ensure best practice and knowledge is shared.

To get more tips on improving your relationship with your soil visit www.smartcane.com.au ■

SWEETER SOILS MAKE SWEETER CANE

Supplied by Stoller Australia

For the past seven years, Stoller Australia has been successfully working with cane growers in Mackay and other areas of eastern Queensland, using Stoller advanced liquid nutrient technology to improve yields of both cane and sugar.

So successful has this trial been, it has led to the creation of SSR - Stoller Sugar Research (Practical Research for Sustainable Sugar Production).

SSR has funds available to further research into practical ways for growers to improve and sustain their production.

To this end, SSR now has trials in the Burdekin, Herbert, Tully, South Johnstone, Tablelands and Maryborough areas of Queensland.

Not only has Stoller increased cane tonnage, sugar yields and grower

profitability, recent soil testing has shown a significant improvement in soil health where the Stoller liquid fertiliser program is being used in conjunction with granular fertilisers.

Importantly, soil structure and nutrient availability have both improved compared to where traditional granular fertiliser only programs have been used.

The improvement in soil health has been brought about by the ability of the Stoller nutrient fertiliser program to assist root systems to expand much wider and deeper than normal.

This enables the cane to access a much larger area of the soil profile and make the most of available nutrients, leaving less nutrients that may be susceptible to runoff.

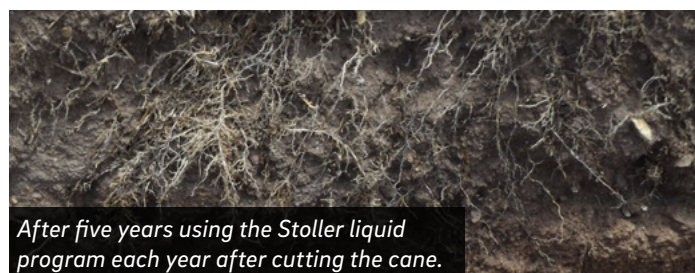
This healthy root system also creates an environment where pathogenic nematodes are reduced to a lower hazard level, while beneficial free living nematodes increase markedly. This is a sign of really healthy soil.

Testing has also shown that organic matter PH and CEC levels have significantly improved along with most other soil nutrients.

This improvement in the overall soil health only comes about from annual applications of the Stoller liquid nutrient program, leading to higher yields, while extending the periods before expensive replanting becomes necessary. ■



After five years of granular fertiliser only.



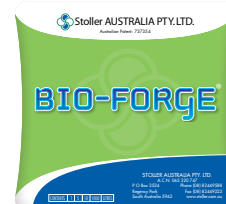
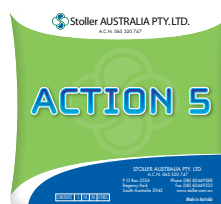
After five years using the Stoller liquid program each year after cutting the cane.



> **MORE CANE
MORE SUGAR
MORE PROFIT**



Stoller
Unleashing The Power Of Plants



1800 FERTILISER STOLLER.COM.AU

SIGN UP FOR BMP TRAINING

to improve your soil health

By Belinda Billing, Adoption Officer, Burdekin

Research has shown that the health of agricultural soil is closely connected to the management practices used on farm.

Healthy soils maximise water availability, support healthy root systems, allow plants to take up nutrients and provide the foundation for a strong, resilient crop.

Growers are invited to attend best management practices training courses that draw on research and real life examples to take growers through a practical approach to improving and maintaining soil health for growing sugarcane.

Growers attending will gain an understanding of the characteristics of healthy soils, the benefits they provide and management strategies that can be used to support healthy functioning soils on farm.

Training will be provided by **Peter McGuire**, who has 38 years experience in extension and research within the sugarcane industry.

Peter will help growers identify changes that can be made on their own farms to gain improvements in soil structure, soil biology and soil chemistry, and demonstrate some simple tools for measuring improvements.

Training will begin with a field trip to a local farm where the grower has successfully made changes to address declining soil health, followed by a workshop-style training session.

The field trip will highlight some easy assessment tools and provide an opportunity to discuss the practicalities of adopting new management practices with Peter, the grower and with local extension staff.

This training has been funded through Smartcane BMP; and has been developed and coordinated as a partnership between Peter and SRA, with input from industry partners.

Courses will be run across the Queensland sugar industry.

Check the calendar (left) and contact **Belinda Billing** to register your interest: BBilling@sugarresearch.com.au or 0475 954 437.

Training is free and open to all growers. Lunch and refreshments will be provided. ■

WHERE:	WHEN:
Bundaberg	February 17
Childers	February 18
Maryborough	February 19
Ingham	February 24 & 25
Burdekin	March 14 & 15
Mackay	April 6
Plane Creek	April 7
Tully	April 12
Innisfail	April 13
Mackay	May 4
Proserpine	May 5
Babinda	May 16
Mulgrave	May 17
Mossman	May 18
Tablelands	May 19



Growers across the Queensland sugar industry are being encouraged to attend soil health training in coming months through the Smartcane BMP program.

New supplier for cane fertiliser blends

Supplied by Koch Fertiliser Australia

Cane fertiliser blends from Koch Fertiliser Australia are close at hand this year, thanks to the company's new upgraded storage, blending and bagging facility in Brisbane.

Last year, the company invested in two 9,000 square metre purpose built fertiliser storage centres, fitted out with a new four hopper Ranco blender and automatic bagging system.

This means that fertiliser dealers serviced by the Brisbane terminal can easily access a range of fertilisers in one tonne bags for their cane grower customers.

Ross Warren, General Manager for Koch Fertiliser Australia, said the upgraded equipment was the best in its class and would help them meet the needs of growers in the north, including cane growers.

"With our range, cane growers can provide tailored nutrition to their crops using urea, MAP, DAP, muriate of potash, sulphate of potash, sulphate of ammonia, MicroEssentials® SZTM and NEXEN®," he said.

Geoff Robertson, Technical Sales Manager for Koch Fertiliser Australia, said that NEXEN was made using AGROTAIN® stabiliser, a urease inhibitor used worldwide in crops and pastures to protect against volatilisation losses.

Volatilisation losses can occur if urea is not incorporated into the soil soon after application by rain, irrigation or soil cover.

"NEXEN® gives cane growers the opportunity to sidedress nitrogen on the soil surface rather than having to band it below the soil," he said.

Mr Robertson recommended cane growers consider using NEXEN® rather than urea unless they were expecting

10-15 mm of rainfall within two days of a nitrogen application to the soil surface.

He said NEXEN® could even be used when banding fertilisers, if excess trash was making it difficult to apply the fertiliser to a depth of at least 5 cm with full soil cover over the fertiliser band.

For nutrition at plant cane establishment, Mr Robertson suggested cane growers consider MicroEssentials® SZ starter fertiliser.

"MicroEssentials® fertilisers are high quality, nutritionally balanced fertilisers that promote uniform nutrient distribution and improved nutrient uptake," he said.

MESZ™ fertiliser contains 12% nitrogen, 17.5% phosphorus, 10% sulphur and 1% zinc in every granule.

Mr Robertson encouraged growers to see their local fertiliser distributor for more information. ■

Feed it precisely what it needs.

Whatever nutrients your soil needs, KOCH Fertiliser Australia can provide them. Our new blending facility at our Brisbane Terminal is set up to supply the combination of nutrients you need to maximise this season's crop. Whether you need a delivery of urea, a custom blend, MicroEssentials® to fine-tune

productivity or high-performance NEXEN® stabilised nitrogen, we can provide it by the truckload or in one-tonne bags.

Contact your fertiliser dealer for more information or to book your next delivery.

MicroEssentials®

NEXEN®
Powered by AGROTAIN®

KOCH™

KOCH FERTILISER AUSTRALIA PTY LTD

www.kochfertaustalia.com

AGROTAIN®, NEXEN® and the NEXEN logo are trademarks of Koch Agronomic Services, LLC in the United States and may be registered in certain jurisdictions. The Koch logo is a trademark of Koch Industries, Inc. in the United States and may be registered in certain jurisdictions. MicroEssentials® is a trademark of The Mosaic Company. AGROTAIN® brand stabilizers and other Koch Agronomic Services products are marketed by Koch Fertilizer Trading Sól Sucursal Uruguay and its distributors pursuant to authorized licenses. ©2015 Koch Agronomic Services, LLC

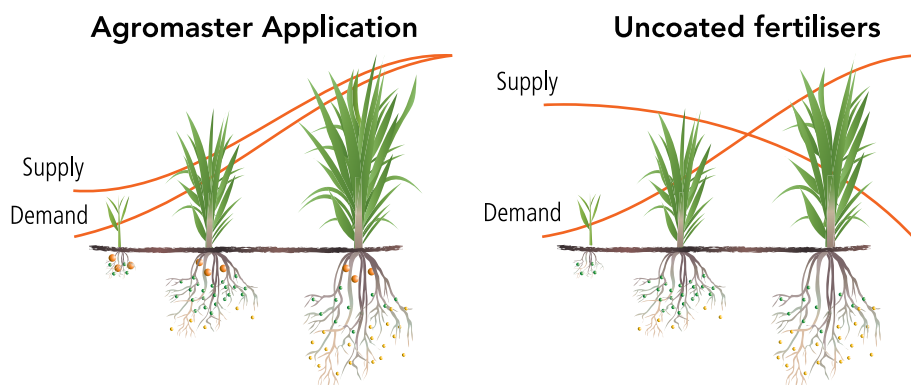
Agromaster®

Controlled Release Fertiliser

Agromaster is the new generation controlled release fertiliser from Impact Fertilisers, offering improved efficiencies.

With Agromaster, nitrogen is released gradually, following the growth stages of your cane crop and contributing to higher yields. This superior release technology is enabled by the polymer coating on each Agromaster granule.

It makes sense to match the supply of nitrogen with the demands of your crop.



High Analysis
Reduced Leaching

Increased Blending
Efficiency

Lower Costs
Environmentally Friendly

Agromaster can be blended to suit your crop requirements. It is available as one of our standard blends or as a prescription blend. In fact this product is ideal for blending due to its hard coating and granule size.

Please contact your local distributor for more information about how Agromaster can enhance your crop production.

Fertiliser made easy

www.impactfert.com.au | Customer Service 1800 88 44 88

Agromaster® is a trademark of ICL Specialty Fertilizers

impact
fertilisers

Agromaster® fertiliser optimises nitrogen delivery

Supplied by Impact Fertiliser

Optimum sugar production requires nitrogen to be available during peak growth periods. A new generation of controlled release fertiliser is making this a reality.

Until recently, growers have had few tools to manage the timing of nitrogen (N) supply to sugarcane.

Unlike other crops, the upright growth of cane, close row spacing and seasonal conditions make it virtually impossible to side-dress N throughout summer, when N uptake and cane growth is at its peak.

Consequently both plant and ratoon cane is normally fertilised soon after ratooning or in the first few months post planting.

However, studies have shown that sugarcane takes up less than 10% of its N requirements in the first five weeks after ratooning (Figure 1) or the first 10 weeks after planting.

This means that fertiliser applications normally do not coincide with peak nitrogen uptake in sugarcane crops.

The conventional approach

Conventional fertilisers such as urea or ammonium sulphate are highly soluble and mobile in soils.

Their entire nutrient value is immediately available after application and they do not give growers much control over N availability through the season except by side-dressing.

There is a high risk of N loss when using conventional fertilisers because

N supply is highest when uptake by the crop is at its lowest (Figure 1).

Consequently, studies have shown that significant N can be lost via leaching, runoff and denitrification.

When do sugarcane crops need nitrogen?

Trials have shown that 80% of nitrogen is taken up over a 3.5 month period in ratoon crops, between 40 days and 145 days after ratooning.*

In plant cane 80% of N uptake was between 72 days and 193 days after planting.*

Conventional N fertilisers can be difficult to apply leading up to and beyond the start of these periods, which leads to the mismatch between N supply and cane nitrogen demand through the growing season.

How Agromaster works

In response, Impact Fertilisers has introduced Agromaster controlled release nitrogen to give growers a new level of control over crop nutrient delivery.

In tropical conditions, Agromaster will supply nitrogen over a three to four month period, which coincides with peak crop need (Figure 1).

For example, one application of Agromaster to ratoon crops in mid-September will supply nitrogen through to mid-January, with at least 50% of the controlled release N being released after mid-November (to coincide with peak nitrogen demand).

No other fertiliser gives growers the ability to match N delivery to crop uptake with one application.

By matching the timing of nitrogen delivery to crop demand, nutrient losses can be minimised and growth optimised.

Trials in both the Burdekin and Herbert regions have confirmed significant ($P \leq 0.05$) increases in crop yields with the use of Agromaster.

Trials across numerous crops and soil types have also shown reduced N leaching from Agromaster blends compared to conventional fertilisers such as urea.

Agromaster is adaptable and can be blended with conventional N fertilisers so that growers can decide how much N to supply up-front.

Agromaster can also be blended with phosphates, potassium and trace-element fertilisers.

This gives growers the ability to control N supply and meet the crops entire nutrient needs with one fertiliser application. ■

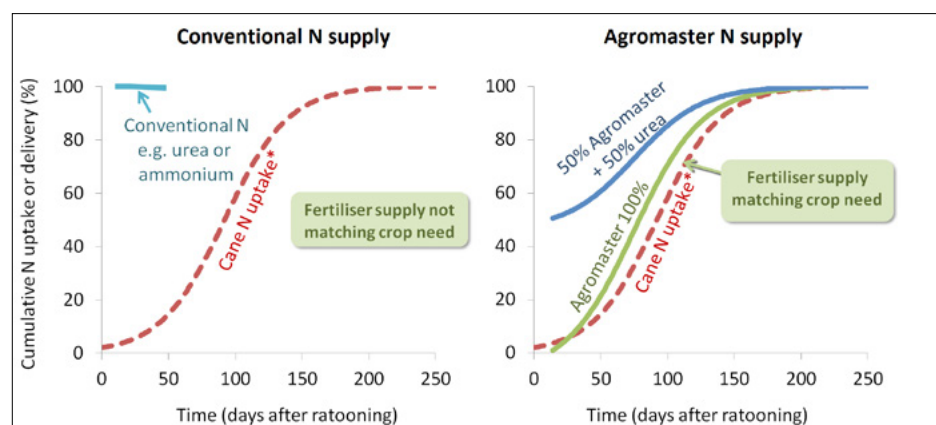


Figure 1. Nitrogen supply from Agromaster closely matches sugarcane N demand. Cane N demand is from Wood et al., 1996.

* Technical reference:

Wood AW, Muchow RC and Robertson MJ (1996) Growth of sugarcane under high input conditions in tropical Australia. III. Accumulation, partitioning and use of nitrogen. 48, 223-233. Field Crops Research

Agromaster® is a trademark of ICL Specialty Fertilizers

Improving efficiency of applied fertilisers

Supplied by *Nutrifert Australia*

Sugarcane along the coastal belt tends to have poor efficiency in converting applied fertilisers to yield. This poor use of fertilisers is often due to highly weathered soils which show common characteristics of low cation exchange capacities and organic carbon.

Rainfall and irrigation, while being required for crop growth, also generally leach fertilisers below the crop root zone.

This means that the amount of fertilisers applied is often far higher than the crop actually utilises for yield.

Technologies are now available in sugarcane to reduce losses through slow, controlled and inhibitor coated fertilisers.

These cane blends however, only protect the nitrogen from some loss while the other key nutrients have no method of retention in soils commonly farmed for sugar.

Amorsil™ Agri from Nutrifert provides a solution to improve applied fertilisers' retention by acting as an absorbent and a cation exchange capacity (CEC) booster in the row.

This means that positively charged nutrients such as potassium, calcium and magnesium are retained on the higher CEC, while negative charged nutrients like nitrogen, phosphates and sulphur are absorbed into the Amorsil Agri's internal structure, reducing losses from the root zone.

The base product of Amorsil Agri is used in other industries such as oil and pet litter absorbents due to its unique characteristics of holding materials applied to it.

Amorsil Agri's higher retention rate of all plant nutrients has the potential to increase sugar yields as greater nutrient is available for uptake by the cane plant.

As an important side benefit, Amorsil Agri also contains a high content of plant available silicon, which has been shown to improve yields in cane significantly through more upright stalks, reduced transpiration, greater sunlight interception and decreasing aluminium and manganese uptake in acid soils.

Amorsil Agri is a natural, crushed product and can be applied through common spreading and dropper style fertiliser applicators, ideally just prior to row forming.

Common rates of application are 1000kg per hectare on soils with a CEC less than 5.0 and at 500kg per hectare on soils above that CEC.

Responses on red and black clays with high CECs have also been seen, as issues such as phosphate lockup are reduced.

In ratoon crop cycles Amorsil Max, which is a granulated product with the same benefits as Agri, can be applied with fertiliser blends or through split box applicators.

Amorsil Max applications are commonly 100-200kg per hectare.

Nutrifert specialises in a range of granular products that when combined in NPK programs boost crop yield potential in sugarcane. ■

*Andrew Olley
Group Technical Manager
Nutrifert Australia*



Sugarcane Special

Supplied by Vin Rowe

Italian farm machinery manufacturer Valentini has come up with a number of innovations to develop their "Sugarcane Special" rotary cultivators.

Following several fact-finding visits to northern Queensland farmers over the past five years, Antonio Valentini has developed a number of features important to Australia's cane growers.

One of the main features of Valentini machines is the removable flanges, which allow for zonal tillage – a method that farmers in Queensland are adopting as a reef-friendly practice.

Valentini rotary hoes also have the option of vibrating rubber hoods. These minimise the build-up of mud on the machine interior, which can be of particular importance in some cane growing areas.

Other options many growers are taking up include cage rollers and hydraulic rear door adjustment.

The Valentini range of rotary cultivators are robust, with a gearbox rating of up to 400hp.

Aside from their sturdy construction, the beauty of these rotary cultivators is that they are foldable, by way of hydraulic rams, creating a transport width of under three metres.

The Sugarcane Special range of rotary hoes is focused primarily on 4.2 – 6.2 metre working width.

All Valentini rotary cultivators are available with the trademark "Easy Drive Low Friction, 4 Gear" system, which maintains low temperatures in the toughest conditions.

Valentini also offers its own ripper system, if required.

For information on your local dealer please call Vin Rowe Farm Machinery on (03) 5623 1362. ■

Soil field day invitation

Central Queensland Soil Health Systems (CQSHS) is holding a field day on 26 April 2016 in the Mackay district.

The third Annual Marian Soil Health Field Day will build on the success of events staged by Nuffield Scholar and cane grower Simon Mattsson with presentations, trial inspections and a workshop.

The CQSHS group was formed by a group of farmers. Its mission is to restore and build soil health through combining practical knowledge and science with the objective of investing in soil biology to improve yield and environmental performance. For further information visit www.cqshs.farm. ■

SUGAR CANE SPECIAL

VALENTINI



HEAVY DUTY FOLDING ROTARY HOES

- Cage Roller • Amphibious Version with Rubber Frame and Hoods • Removable Flanges • Hydraulic Rear Door Adjust
- Low friction 4 gear side drive eliminates need for oil cooler

MAXI SQUALO

3m (fixed)	\$43,890
4.2m (folding)	\$81,400
4.7m (folding)	\$84,700
5.2m (folding)	\$92,400

ERCULES

3m (fixed)	\$53,790
4.7m (folding)	\$95,700
5.2m (folding)	\$99,000
5.7m (folding)	\$102,300
6.2m (folding)	\$106,700
6.7m (folding)	\$109,890

ALL PRICES INCLUDE GST

VR

VIN ROWE

FARM MACHINERY

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR YOUR NEAREST DEALER CONTACT TERRY EVANS **0438 231362**

FertAg saves money and prevents leaching

Supplied by FertAg

FertAg 0-8-0 is a calcium, magnesium and silicate phosphate fertiliser that does not leach away with rain like conventional fertilisers.

In acidic soils it provides plant available nutrient while re-mineralising the soil with much required plant available silicon.

It also provides a liming action because of its high calcium and magnesium content.

Importantly, it addresses the issue of runoff into creeks and waterways and leaching into water tables - being acid soluble, the product stays where it's spread!

Cane growers will benefit from reduced fertiliser costs of approximately \$30 per hectare when using FertAg 0-8-0.

It is available from local agents with depots around the country in one tonne non-returnable bags on pallets.

Tropical agriculture

FertAg 0-8-0 has application in tropical agriculture, such as sugarcane regions of Queensland and northern New South Wales, where there are acid soils, high rainfall, issues with high soil aluminium and iron, and where leaching potential is significant.

Plant roots that come in contact with the product will easily 'digest' (solubilise) the nutrients from the FertAg 0-8-0 using the root exudates.

In an acid environment of pH 5.5 the product will release 25% of its nutrients in 24 hours.

It is compatible with nitrogen, potassium and sulphur fertilisers for blending other macro elements.

Cane has a significant silicon requirement which impacts on yield and quality (CCS).

FertAg 0-8-0 has a high silicon content of 11% of which 96% is plant available with phosphorus at 8% with 96% also plant available.

This means it is highly acid soluble with the silicate slowly released over a period of 1-9 months depending on rainfall, soil acidity and plant access - it is not water soluble so there is no leaching into waterways.

Catchment trials

Recent information from the WA Department of Agriculture (Swan River Catchment) indicates that phosphate leaching from an application of FertAg 0-8-0 is on average 13 times less than

soluble P fertiliser in heavy rainfall - FertAg 0-8-0 will remain where it is placed.

And the P remains 96% plant available as the silica prevents the aluminium locking up the phosphorus.

FertAg suggest an initial application to plant or ratoon cane of 250 to 350 kg per hectare followed up with application to each ratoon of 150-260 kg per hectare.

Over five years of the crop cycle, this application strategy meets liming requirements for the term of the crop, releasing soil nutrients as pH changes with no leaching.

Application is simple. The product is spread over or into plant rows.

Rainfall, irrigation or mechanical action will incorporate the product into the root zone.

FertAg 0-8-0 is currently supplied in one tonne bags or bulk ex Brisbane and it will be soon be shipped to Townsville for the northern region.

The company is committed to making the product available at a cost effective price to all cane farmers.

Contact FertAg on 1300 978 789 or www.fertag.com. ■

FertAg®

Boost Cane yield & CCS!

REMINERALISE ACID SOILS • RELEASE NUTRIENTS TO CANE • PROVIDE SILICON

No leaching or runoff • Si, P, Ca & Mg in plant available form

FertAg 0-8-0 - Phosphate, Calcium, Magnesium, Silicon that remineralises your acid soil

- Plant available nutrients - 95% available, acid soluble, slow release, not water soluble
- Self liming action as remineralises the soil, highly cost effective form of Phosphorus
- Provides much required Silicon for healthier more productive crop with less lodging
- Reduced fertiliser cost and improve yields with FertAg 0-8-0, available local stores now

www.fertag.com

Phone 1300 978 789



Smartcane BMP: WHY SEEK ACCREDITATION?

By Neroli Roocke

Half of Queensland's sugarcane production area is now benchmarked in the Smartcane BMP program with hundreds of farms moving towards accreditation to join the 45 which already have certificates.



CANEGROWERS Innisfail Chairman Joe Marano says embracing BMP has helped him become a better grower.

CANEGROWERS Innisfail Chairman **Joe Marano** says a number of reasons drove his push to accreditation.

"Firstly, if you're going to stand up in front of growers and tell them they should do it, you should do it yourself," he says.

The other reasons are more personal with his son **Daniel** now working with him across 417 hectares of owned and leased land.

Joe says Smartcane BMP will be a licence to farm in the future.

"I have family that wants to continue farming so it's not about me anymore," he says.

"It's about letting them have the right to farm by proving we meet all the environmental and sustainability requirements.

"I know at this stage BMP is not going to help me make more money but it helps me to understand my business a lot more."

With two of them doing the work, Joe says BMP is helping keep track of what's going on, to make sure nothing is being forgotten in a busy work schedule.

"You also don't want to be doubling up so the record keeping means you can make effective use of everyone's time," he says.

Continues page 20...



Main image: The Marano Family farm in Innisfail. **Inset:** Joe Marano (centre) with daughter Hayley and son Daniel.

“I have family that wants to continue farming ... We need to set this up for future generations.”

“Having my son on the farm has certainly helped us expand and try to become better growers.

“Improving our timeliness, our time management and scheduling, allows me to do things like travel to Brisbane to represent Innisfail growers on the CANEGROWERS Policy Council.”

CHALLENGES

Joe lists among his future challenges the need to make better use of the information in the farming records that he now keeps and improving his crop production and profitability.

“Whilst I have records, I have to make them useful records, not just for BMP or environmental management’s sake but to make use of them to try to do better,” he says.

“Previously I would just keep them in my head.”

Joe and Daniel use farm maps along with the Smartcane BMP smartphone app and an Excel spreadsheet to track and record activities such as planting, weed control, fertilising and harvesting.

“I’m lucky that my late Dad used to deliver fertiliser so we’ve been soil testing our farm for 40 years,” Joe says.

“Unfortunately what they show is always the same – we have pretty poor, sandy soils.

“We can grow a big plant crop but because of the sandy soils it doesn’t hold the nutrients and the ratoons drop away quickly.”

Trying to maintain a big crop throughout the crop cycle means Joe is always happy to try new ideas.

As an early adopter of GPS technology in the Innisfail district, he has controlled traffic through 25% of his farms.

The district has a network of GPS base stations installed with part funding from Reef Rescue (now the Australian Government Reef Programme) saving growers in the vicinity of \$17,000 each by sparing them the cost of establishing individual stations.

GPS guidance in cane farming can boost productivity and improve environmental outcomes through fuel savings, less wheel damage to stools, less ►



unnecessary tillage and more accurate placement of planting material, fertiliser and herbicides.

Joe has also put a big focus on working with different fertilisers and ameliorants in a bid to improve soil health.

With a soil that needs a lot of assistance, Joe says the push to reduce nitrogen use in the cane industry means he's got to think laterally.

"We've been putting more compost and mill ash out," he says.

"But my main aim is to try to grow a bigger crop to make better use of the nitrogen that I'm using.

"At the moment we're trialling enhanced efficiency fertilisers – trying to see if we can get the same results with slow release and controlled release products.

"If we can establish a bigger crop without cutting back on inputs then I'll be happy.

"I want to get a better result that way before we start reducing what we use as I am applying slightly less than the recommendations.

"Ideally I'd like to fertilise in two split applications over the lot but I run out of time because we have a harvesting business and planting business as well and if you use more people you don't make any more money."

Another challenge for Joe and Daniel is trying to get better CCS measurements in their cane.

"We're below mill average and traditionally, 30 years ago, the area that we farm used to have some of the highest in the mill area," he says.

"Now we're in the bottom 20% so at the moment so that's a big challenge."

MESSAGES TO GROWERS

Joe is encouraging other growers to seek Smartcane BMP accreditation.

He says his list of farming challenges shows that growers don't have to have everything worked out, implemented and finalised to be accredited in the three core modules.

"Take controlled traffic," he says. "It takes six years to implement fully but the important thing is that most of your machinery matches your row widths."

"There's a lot of misconceptions about BMP," he says.

"Like people in the Burdekin thinking they won't be accredited if they burn. It's set up to accommodate what's appropriate on every different farm."

The other thing he's worried about is growers shying away because they self-assess themselves out of it.

"My key message is don't audit yourself!" he says.

"You might find you are already doing something similar to Smartcane BMP so talk to your local facilitator."

Joe has nothing but praise for the way Smartcane BMP facilitator **Deb Telford** has been working with growers and the program in the Innisfail district.

"Deb's been in the area for over 20 years and has a good understanding of each growers practices," he says.

"It would have taken me a lot longer without her help - reminding me and asking me to supply her with notes, records or farm maps."

While Joe has completed and been audited and accredited in the three core modules of the Smartcane BMP program, he's not stopping there.

He has his sights set on completing all seven modules and is close to achieving that.

"We're just waiting for the accreditation process for them to be finalised. There's a group of growers in Innisfail who have nearly completed all seven."

Joe firmly believes sugarcane farming is going to be around for a long time.

"We need to be ahead of the game so that governments and environmentalists can't accuse us of doing harm to the reef - we need to prove we are not," he says.

"Smartcane BMP does take time and money and some of us are unaccustomed to this but it is a small price to pay for living in the best part of the world along the east coast of Queensland.

"We need to set this up for future generations and governments need to contribute to continue the process because we are doing this for everybody." ■

SHORT & SWEET OF IT

- Joe Marano and his family farm 417 hectares in the Innisfail region implementing controlled traffic and trialling slow and controlled release fertilisers.
- They say embracing Smartcane BMP has helped them understand their business better and coordinate activities more efficiently.
- Joe is urging growers to benchmark their practices in the program and work towards accreditation to set the industry up for future generations.

This on farm story has been brought to you by the Australian Government Reef Program



Australian Government

Better times forecast for Aussie agriculture

2016 is shaping up as a brighter year for Australian agriculture, with overall improved trading conditions predicted for the year ahead, according to an industry report.

In its *Agribusiness Outlook 2016*, global agricultural banker Rabobank says further depreciation of the Australian dollar will act as a 'tail wind' for Australian agriculture, while low oil prices will help ease input cost pressures but are also likely to weigh on agricultural commodity prices.

China will remain a potential downside risk to the outlook however, with any further weakness in the Chinese economy likely to have widespread consequences on the demand for Australian agricultural exports.

Other key factors expected to impact Australia's agricultural industries, both positively and negatively, in the year ahead include the dissipation of the El Nino weather pattern and global financial market volatility.

"We're in for a bumpy ride in terms of financial markets and, with it, the real risk of contagion to commodity markets and disruption to the real economy."

The report finds the outlook is positive for most agricultural sectors, with prospects remaining particularly bright for beef and sheep producers, while there is upside for cotton, sugar, dairy and wine.

Rabobank general manager Food & Agribusiness Research Tim Hunt said there had been significant devaluation in the currencies of Australia's key global competitors, which had muted market signals by encouraging production of

agricultural commodities in some regions despite high global stocks and falling USD prices.

"Weak oil prices will exert a negative influence on agricultural commodity prices in 2016, via reduced costs of production and freight to market, pressure on biofuel prices and cheap synthetic fibres," he said.

"While the current oil price environment does help stimulate consumer spending, the positive impact is likely to be partly offset by slow global wage growth."

"We are also in for a bumpy ride in terms of financial markets and, with it, the real

risk of contagion to commodity markets and disruption to the real economy."

In light of the broader macroeconomic outlook, Mr Hunt said market fundamentals were bullish for sugar and cotton, compared to the subdued market conditions last year, and to a lesser extent dairy.

"Sugar prices are expected to be supported by the first global production deficit in six seasons, while the cotton market is also set to tighten – with both sectors also key beneficiaries of the weaker Australian dollar," he said. ■

graysonline.com

Turn your surplus equipment into CASH!!!

Tractors, Farm Machinery, Trucks, etc.

- Agricultural plant & equipment auction specialists
- Traditional and online auctions
- Reach a true national audience of buyers

Contact: Matt Currie 0429 605 567

matt.currie@grays.com.au

FIRST 5 LINES FREE* FOR CANEGROWERS MEMBERS!

Book online anytime of the day or night at www.canegrowers.com.au or email us at ads@CANEGROWERS.com.au.

Next deadline is 22 February 2016.

*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, e.g. farm machinery etc. Advertisements from non-members are charged at \$11 per line incl GST. Only pre-paid ads will be accepted.

Beaulieu R.U.M.

Attention Canegrowers

The first step in achieving a high yielding cane crop is a good strike and vigorous growth in the early stage of your crop.

This can be achieved easily by simply adding 5 litres of R.U.M per acre to your dip water.

**For a cost of around \$25 per acre
Can you afford not to give it a go?**

For further information contact –

Burdekin & Northern Region call Wally Ford 0417 937 722

Mackay Region call Noel Jensen 0438 595 325

Childers Region call Peter Irwin 0428 427 212

Do you want a **FREE** electronic version of *Australian Canegrower* delivered to your email inbox every fortnight?

To receive your free electronic copy, email us on:

editor@CANEGROWERS.com.au.



iFIT
ENGINEERING
29 Richardson St TULLY

HARVESTER CHOPPER DRUMS

- Strong, open design
- Clean, efficient cutting
- 4, 6, 8, 10 & 12 blade (12" & 15")
- Very competitively priced

Chopper drum reconditioning and modifications

Char-Lynn motor shaft seal repairs with nitride hardened sleeves

NEW CHOPPER ADJUSTER

We now manufacture external chopper adjusters to suit John Deere and Case harvesters. For further information contact Ian Fagg

PH: (07) 4068 2811

Fax: (07) 4068 0459

Email: ifitengineering@bigpond.com

Neil's Parts Australia

HIGH QUALITY TRACTOR PARTS

1800 463 457

AH 0417 662 137, 0408 735 148

www.neils.com.au

Graham Twyford Machinery Sales Pty Ltd

Specialising in Used Cane Harvesting Equipment Sales

"NEW AUSTRALIAN MADE"
AX7500 CANE HARVESTER
Cummins QSL 8.9 Lt Engine
325 HP @ 1900 RPM
Immediate Delivery.
Enquire NOW

2014 JOHN DEERE 3520 Wheel Harvester
9 Lt Engine 375 HP . 2,800 Hrs Only.

10 Blade Twyford Chopper System 95 mm blade. Very Well Kept Machine.

2007 JOHN DEERE 3510 Wheel Harvester.
8.1 Lt. Eng 375 HP Recent engine rebuild.
Shredder Topper, Scraper Tyres.

Very well maintained machine.

IN STOCK NOW !!

2011 MASSEY FERGUSON 5465 4 WD
Tractor 120 HP. 1,967 Hrs. Fitted with 6
tonne Side Tipper BSM type.

2005 JD 6920 4WD Tractor 150 HP 5,264
Hrs. Coupled to a HBM Billet Planter 1,000
L. water tank on tractor. Complete Unit.

NEW! 4 SLAT OPEN BUTT ROLLERS Suit
JD 3510/20 and CASE. Helps Drop Dirt.
Enquire NOW!

NEW PLANTING TIPPERS Triple Side
Tippers on trailer remote hydraulics. Order
Now !

**IN STOCK NOW 12, 10, 8 & 6 BLADE
DIFFERENTIAL CHOPPER DRUMS** Suit
3510 / 3520 CAMECO/JD. Tungsten Hard
Faced on Wear Areas. New seal plates,
Clamping Bars & Dowels with kit.

Graham Twyford
48 Central Park Drive, Paget, Mackay
Mobile: 0418 742 696 Phone: 07
49526 668
graham@gtmachinerysales.com.au
www.gtmachinersales.com.au

WANT MORE NEWS, VIEWS
AND PHOTOS?

Find CANEGROWERS on Facebook!
www.facebook.com/CANEGROWERSAustralia

JOHNNY FARMING COMPANY
 Australian Distributor 
 Belshina Tyres & Chinese Imports
☒ Tractor Tyres
☒ Earthmoving Tyres
☒ Truck Tyres
☒ Cars & 4WD Tyres
DROVER EQUIPMENT AUSTRALIA
UTV's, ATV's & AG BIKES
 See website for more details
P: 07 4952 2577 M: 0412 535 887
www.johnnyfarmingcompany.com.au
 E: johnnyfarmingco@bigpond.com
 133 Schmidtke Road Mackay 4740

JOHNNY FARMING COMPANY
New Hydraulic Heavy Duty OFFSETS

 3 metre width, 28 discs,
 All bath bearings
 \$11,000 plus GST (\$12,100 incl GST)
 Other size offsets available are 1.8m, 2.2m,
 2.5m, 3m & 3.4metres.
 3 point linkage offsets available also
New Heavy Duty SLASHERS

 2.1 metres width \$3,300 incl GST
 Other sizes available are 1.2m, 1.5m & 1.8m
Johnny Farming Company
 Phone (07) 4952 2577 or 0412 535 887 (John)
 or 0407 638 674 (Andrew)
 133 Schmidtke Road Mackay Qld 4740

HB Machinery
22 Cardier Rd, Wangan QLD 4871
(07) 4064 2294 or email hbmach@bigpond.com
MACHINERY FOR SALE
 Double Row Planter with large fert boxes and moving floor, adjustable 1.5 to 1.8m
 Single row planter, adjustable 1.5 – 1.8m.
 One tonne three-point stool split fert box, stainless steel.
 High-rise spray rig, 7 foot clearance, independent folding boom, 6 to 8 rows.

 **BRANDON WRECKERS**
 72 Drysdale Street, BRANDON Q 4808
 Ph: (07) 4782 5131 Fax: (07) 4782 5185
www.brandonwreckers.com.au
Wanted to buy tractors in any condition
Tractor-Cane Harvester-Machinery Wreckers

Mossman –Tully

AUSTOFT 96 Full Track, VGC, \$80,000 + GST. Ph: 0408 272 967

TOFT 6000 with Rotary Chop & Cat 3306DI Motor, good Billet machine Ph.: 0428 100 564

JCB 2135 New 190HP Engine, coupled to 6T HBM Tipper. JCB 155-65 New 190HP Engine & Tyres, coupled to 6T HBM Tipper. \$55,000 for each inc GST. Ph: 0427337601

1996 AUSTOFT track harvester. Komatsu motor - \$60,000 inc gst .Ph: 0419 779 549
 Mitsubishi Lancer 2007 model. Registration 07.07.2016. very good condition. Ph: 0457 255 961

1994 FORD 8340 4wd SLE. \$9,500 + GST 1989 John Deere 4055. Very Good Condition. \$15,500 + GST. Marrell whole stick Plant cutter. Fully Hydraulic, topper,

Rainfall Report

brought to you by AustSafe Super

Location	Recorded rainfall (mm)		Year to date	Average rainfall (mm) Jan - Feb
	7 days to 9am 01.02.16	08.02.16		
Mossman	0	65	261	918
Mareeba AP	0	12	87	444
Cairns	0	9	155	835
Mt Sophia	0	5	150	1165
Babinda	0	0	8	1368
Innisfail	8	8	250	1100
Tully	46	36	224	1336
Cardwell	0	14	152	902
Lucinda	28	8	130	846
Ingham	65	91	199	827
Abergowrie	0	50	107	718
Townsville	49	17	167	566
Ayr DPI	0	16	140	445
Proserpine	25	173	415	645
Mirani	7	223	331	652
Mackay	8	200	446	598
Sarina (Plane Ck)	30	313	527	749
Bundaberg	169	91	402	330
Childers South	194	65	319	250
Maryborough	182	84	333	338
Tewantin	204	40	299	453
Eumundi	86	47	218	474
Nambour	47	38	147	489
Woongoolba	9	23	34	330
Murwillumbah	54	35	149	428
Ballina	48	40	194	377
Woodburn	5	1	45	306



The industry super fund for rural and regional Australia.

Zero indicates either no rain or no report was sent. These rainfall figures are subject to verification and may be updated later. Weather forecasts, radar and satellite images and other information for the farming community can be accessed on www.bom.gov.au. Weather report provided by the Bureau of Meteorology's Commercial Weather Services Unit.

Stripper fan incorporated. trailer drawbar ram. VGC. \$2000 + GST. Ph: 0418 185 064

Herbert River – Burdekin

Ford 7700 – needs work, suitable for wrecking. Make an offer. Ph: 0429 771 620

Mackay – Proserpine

12T SELF-PROPELLED 6x6 elev infielder VGC. 6t side/tipper on Leyland tandem GC. Don Mizzi 741 model on Fiat 750 special turbo plus MF102 half-tracks to suit. Mason 9550 4-row precision vacuum seed planter GC. 0438 606 578 (Mackay)

6500 TOFT cane harvester, Good Condition, \$60,000. Ph: 0458 525 310

MASSEY FERG 168 8-speed, tyres 50%, rops good order \$6500+GST ONO Ph 0417 615 250

AUSTOFT 7700, 1988, 4 blade choppers, good con, \$40000 + GST. Ph: 0407 595 745

BUCKET (NEW) suit 20T Excavator: 1050mm GP bucket. \$2,100+GST. Ph: 0419700761.

2014 JOHN DEERE 6170m 430hours520/42 rear tyres 2cm auto steer \$110,000 plus gst. Ph: 0407 595 094

2004 VALTRA 6400 4WD 100hp tractor, A/C cab, 3700hrs, GC. \$30,000 inc. GST. ONO. W/Hill L/plane. 12' angle & tilt blade. GC. \$5,000 + GST. Ph: 0418 710 958 / (07) 4950 3048

LATE SERIES 80" Howard r/hoe. No C/roller. Ex cond. \$4,000 + GST. 20 plate drag offset, \$1,000 + GST ONO. Ph: 0418 710 958

TOFT 6000 Cat engine. Suitable for plant cutter. \$11,000-00 inc. gst. 0749588932 / 0427376313

2030 JD Tractor. 18.4/38 rear tyres for high clearance; 3500 hrs; GC; \$7500 inc GST. PH: 0418 716 043

2012 JOHN DEERE 3520 track harvester – 9lt engine – 375 hp – 4000 hours – JD engine warranty current. Ph: 0428182464.

INFIELD transporter 10t sidetipper, needs little work \$35000 + GST. 160/90 Fiat with double 6t sidetipper \$50000 + GST Deutz 160hp fair condition, \$10000 + GST. Ph 0438598239

6500 TOFT cane harvester, good condition, \$60,000. (07) 4959 1071 / 0458 52 53 10

Bundaberg - Rocky Point

DROP-DECK, tautliner and flat top extendable for hire. 07 4159 8174 or 0417 004 717.

K LINE SPEEDTILLERS for hire, efficient tillage implement, phone AgQuip hire. 1300 859 869 www.agquiphire.com.au

JOHN DEERE 7710 tractor 4WD and 3-point linkage, 7300 hours, tyres 60% VGC \$35,000+GST ONO. Ph 0438 554 624

SHREDDER topper(Cantrell)to suit Austoft 7000,needs work \$1500 plus gst.

RIMS AND TYRES x 2 to suit Austoft 7000,size 14x17.5 - \$500 plus gst. Ph: 0408 062 830

2004 SAME RUBIN 180hp 4WD 2870hrs Good Condition \$45000+gst. 2000 Maschio G250 Rotary hoe 100inch, Good condition \$5000+gst 0429 876 958

2008 CASE Wheeled Cane Harvester, 8000 Case Wheel Cane Harvester, 2002-7700 Full Track Cane Harvester, Case Billet Planter with Plastic Fert Bins, Suscon Box. 15" 10 blade chopper drums to suit Case harvester Garry. Ph: 0427 589 219

Heavy duty 24 plate BONEL offsets, Disc 60%, 3m cut.GC \$10000inc GST. Ph: 0458 212 792

NSW

Thanks to all who contacted me regarding square plough, any brand wanted. Your advice and comments have been appreciated. All the very best for 2016. Kind regards, Scott

Wanted

FORD TW15 or 25 tractor engine block Ph 0418180650 anytime

UNDERSLUNG box for Austoft 7000 + motor any condition. Budnaberg-Rocky Point. Ph 0428 598 307.

MOUND FORMER (Bankers). Childers Ph: 0428 987 089

HOWARD 6' slasher, shell only required. Mackay area. Ph: 0417 628 044

TOP rotating hood for TOFT 6000. Mackay area. Ph: 0417 628 044

RIPPING TYNES to suit Massey Ferguson 275 75hp, Dimbulah area. Ph: 0438997111

BOAT WANTED. Haines Hunter 16ft. Hull only, any condition. Ph: 0400 678 763

Positions Vacant

Harvester operator for billet planting. Flexible hours available if needed. Herbert River Area. Ph: 0418 784 020 or AH 4777 4264

Harvester driver. Prefer experience. Bundaberg/Avondale Area. Ph: Charlie on 0413 698 922.

Work Wanted

HARVESTER CONTRACTOR available for 2016 cane season - Tully/ Innisfail/ surrounding district. Looking for farmers interested in smaller Group (80,000 tonne max). 0418 183 584

SEEKING haulout job for 2016. Anywhere NSW to Burdekin area. 1 year experience driving haulout. HC licence, can drive other plant and have transport, willing to travel. Looking to be on large group 50,000T +. Bayne110991@gmail.com or 0456637179

WANTED, haulout jobs for 2016 season. HR license, forklift license, first aid certificate and white card. Cairns region to Burdekin. Contact Troy, Ph: 0438 692 742 or email nadaboab@yahoo.com.au

SEEKING work as a harvester or haulout operator for early plant in the Proserpine area. Have many years experience, HR license, harvester haul out driving experience, Boilermaker by trade call Dan on 0424243461

CANE TO CUT for 2016 season in Farleigh, Pleystowe and Marian areas. Compatible prices. Use double 6t side tippers. Ph 0438598239

Property

MACKAY: 1750 Acres, seven lots, Coastal flat freehold property. South of Mackay supplying Mackay Sugar. High rainfall area and endless potential for diversification. House and garage, equipped irrigation system, shed, machinery and equipment. Ph: 0407 157 792

MACKAY: 422 hectares, cattle and cane. Huge supply of water, absolutely drought-proof property, 120 mega-litre water license, right on the coast. Ph: 0407 157 792

HERBERT RIVER: Cane farm 60.73ha with machinery and 4 bedroom dwelling at 194 Lannercost Ext Rd, Ingham Ph. 40454321

ABERGOWRIE cane farm for sale - Tarakan Rd, 270 acres all freehold, sell as one or in separate lots, 2016 crop not included. Interested persons please Ph 4777 4633

HAWKINS CREEK cane farm for sale. Total area 48.3ha. CPA 46.6ha. Shed, electricity & water. Genuine enquiries Ph.0407635175

MACKAY cane farm for sale, 100ha, 320mg Kinchant Dam allocation, 15 x 9 shed, All irrigation,tractors and farm machinery included. Ph 0419541372

Driven by growers. Used by growers. Owned by growers

In recent years how we farm has been dictated by others. As Australian farmers, we would much rather have a system which works for us. A system which is about improving our bottom line and one we can use to market our sugar to the world.

The Australian sugarcane industry has worked together and built just such a system. Smartcane BMP.

Smartcane BMP will help Australia maintain its competitive edge in the increasingly competitive world market. Being able to show we are productive and sustainable producers of quality sugar is becoming increasingly important to our customers, and the Smartcane BMP system is the way we are going to show just that.



Become part of the movement:

Sign up to Smartcane BMP

Contact your local Smartcane BMP facilitator. Get recognised for what you are already doing.

www.smartcane.com.au