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**Cover picture:** Tableland grower Rajinder Singh is demanding an end to the upward spiral of electricity charges. Photo by Bronwyn Dwyer

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# Familiar issues facing growers worldwide

By Paul Schembri, Chairman CANEGROWERS

Recently, as Chairman of the Australian Canegrowers Council, I had the opportunity to represent Australian growers at the 12th World Association of Beet and Cane Growers (WABCG) conference in Versailles, France. CANEGROWERS CEO **Dan Galligan** joined me for the event.

WABCG represents the interests of around five million cane and beet producers around the globe.

The forum attracted representatives from WABCG's 34 member countries to discuss issues common to beet and cane growers.

Whilst there is a huge diversity of sugar industry structures and issues affecting sugar producers, it is remarkable how similar the issues are facing growers worldwide.

Growers are demanding greater transparency of their pricing and marketing arrangements, and also want a rightful share of income from all cane and beet products.

Worldwide sugar industries are also grappling with the anti-sugar campaign.

**Jose Orive**, Secretary General of the International Sugar Organisation, complimented Australia for its passion and outspoken opposition to proposed sugar taxes.

Other countries, he suggested, could take a lead from Australia.

I was honoured at the conference to be elected as one of the Vice Presidents of WABCG for the next three years.

This role presents not only an opportunity to represent Australian producers, but also help provide leadership to the global sugar industry.

## FEDERAL ELECTION

A federal election has been set down for 2 July. Some might view elections as a period where governments suspend decision-making and the political process transitions to promises and counter promises.

To the contrary, I feel that elections are the most important time for organisations such as CANEGROWERS.

I strongly believe that during election campaigns we should not simply respond to political policy offerings, but also make the political parties respond to our needs.

We will want clear policy statements from the political parties in relation to commitments to free trade, competitive market access arrangements, sustainable funding for research and development, opposition to sugar taxes and opposition to carbon taxes.

Elections occur every three years and if we lose the opportunity now, we have a long time to suffer bad sugar policy settings.

## 2016 HARVEST

The first sugar mills are set to roar into life very soon.

Our crop is reasonable but could have been a lot better were it not for a failed wet season.

More than anything else, let us hope for good weather and a safe harvest for all. ■

*"I strongly believe that during election campaigns we should not simply respond to political policy offerings, but also make the political parties respond to our needs."*





# MSF Sugar and grower choice marketing

The Sugar industry (Real Choice in Marketing) Amendment Act 2015 is being implemented in the MSF Sugar milling regions.

The process is straightforward and ensures each grower has choice in marketing the sugar cane grown. The steps to be taken by each grower are:

- Have a Cane Supply Agreement
- Sign a Grower Pricing Agreement
- Select your marketer
- Select the ICE11 pools offered by your marketer.

Every grower will have this choice every year from the 2017 season.

We are finalising the On-Supply contract with QSL to give you a choice of marketer between MSF Marketing and QSL.

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For 2017 season and beyond, MSF Sugar has:

- Negotiated the Collective CSA in Maryborough. Growers have started to price in the 2017 season collective pool and have achieved above \$490 per tonne to date.

We are working with growers in our other regions to finalise their 2017 season onwards Collective Cane Supply Agreements. Individual Cane Supply Agreements are available in all regions and individual pricing for 2017 is underway.

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# NEWS IN BRIEF

## NATIONAL FARM ELECTION CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED

Within 24 hours of the Federal Election being confirmed for 2 July, the peak group for Australia's farmers was putting agriculture and regional issues on the agenda.

The National Farmers' Federation campaign, Accelerate Agriculture, aims to put a spotlight on key and common issues of concern to farmers across the country.

The campaign includes a dedicated website, [www.accelerateag.com](http://www.accelerateag.com) where farmers and community members can sign on to support the campaign and view the latest in election announcements and events of significance to the rural sector.

NFF President, **Brent Finlay**, said the foundation of the campaign is five policy pillars:

1. *Building a Stronger Workforce*
2. *Supercharging Farm Business*
3. *Investing in Innovation and Technology*
4. *Leading the Global Marketplace*
5. *Balancing Farming and the Environment*

"These policy priorities have been endorsed by our NFF members across the nation and throughout the campaign we will be rolling out further details of each and highlighting what any incoming government can do to make sure all Australians can benefit from the extraordinary opportunities in the agriculture sector," Mr Finlay said.

"Regional Australia can't afford to sit still this election. The keys to government can only be won with the help of regional seats and they need to be earned.

"Agriculture is our second-largest export industry and an industry with exponential growth potential as demand for our premium quality and safe product soars.

"It is now time for our political leaders to commit to accelerating our industry into the economic powerhouse it can be."

CANEGROWERS will be contributing to the Accelerate Agriculture campaign as well as ensuring specific issues for the sugarcane industry are put before key candidates and political parties. ■

*Pictured: NFF President Brent Finlay (centre in blue tie) with representatives of commodity and member organisations at Parliament House in Canberra, highlighting key agricultural issues for the federal election campaign.*





## SECOND CANE AREA IS DROUGHT DECLARED

The Tableland cane growing district has joined the Burdekin on Queensland's drought declaration list after summer rains failed to reach average totals.

The Minister for Agriculture Leanne Donaldson made the announcement on 11 May after strong representations by CANEGROWERS Tableland to the local drought committee.

"Overall it has been a disappointing wet season, with not enough rain falling where it was most needed," the Minister said.

"As a result, and again on the advice of Local Drought Committees, I am drought declaring the entirety of the local government areas of Mareeba and Tablelands."

The area already had a number of Individually Droughted Property Declarations in place.

Queensland's total drought-declared area is now 83.9%, down slightly from the record high of 86.11%.

The Minister said that while there had been some rainfall in western districts which brought temporary relief, it had been patchy and not enough to make a telling difference.

She did however revoke the drought status of Cloncurry Shire, South Burnett Regional Council and the Cherbourg Aboriginal Council, based on the advice of local drought committees.

She said the Queensland Government would continue existing drought relief arrangements until 2018.

Growers should check the Dept of Agriculture and Ergon websites for info on the the assistance available.

This includes relief from electricity charges and water licence waivers as well as access to a number of community and mental health programs. ■

## NEW LNP AGRICULTURE VOICE

A reshuffle of responsibilities within the opposition ranks in the Queensland Parliament means the state has a new Shadow Agriculture Minister.

Dale Last, who is the Member for Burdekin, has taken the portfolio in a new line-up announced by Opposition Leader Tim Nicholls.

Mr Nicholls won a vote in the party room over Lawrence Springborg to take the leadership and soon afterwards announced his new LNP Shadow Cabinet.

Former Shadow Agriculture Minister Deb Frecklington has been promoted to the position of Deputy Leader.

Also in the LNP front bench are Andrew Cripps (natural resources and mines, northern development), Michael Hart (energy, biofuels and water supply) and Jason Costigan (assistant for north Qld).

## REPORT REVEALS INVESTMENT PLANS

A Commonwealth Bank report has found sugarcane growers are upbeat about their medium-term prospects.

The Bank's Agri Insights report looks at farmers' investment intentions. It says rallying prices and the sugar market moving into a situation of tight supply have meant 11% of growers are planning to increase production in the next 12 months.

Optimism is stronger in the cotton and beef sectors with 17% and 12% of producers respectively planning to expand production.

The report says those planning to invest are mostly focussed on fixed infrastructure (such as sheds, fences, dams etc.) with 32% nominating that category.

A further 23% plan to put money into plant and equipment while 4% plan to invest in land.

Across the board 15% of farmers intended to undertake education or training, while 8% planned to increase their use of contractors.

See the full report here <http://bit.ly/1WrkOjd>



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## WORLD MEETING SPOTLIGHTS SUGAR FARM ISSUES

Farmers in the sugar industry from 34 countries meeting in France this month found a lot of common ground despite their diverse and varied cultures, climates and languages.

The World Association of Beet and Cane Growers brings together representative groups with a joint membership of five million farmers globally. It is a forum in which representative groups share information and learn from each other's experiences.

Discussions at this year's conference brought to light key and common issues:

- *the challenge of farmers in all countries to manage declining profitability of cane growing businesses (vs beet),*
- *growers struggling to negotiate effective supply agreements with their processing partners,*
- *growers not gaining enough financial benefits from ancillary industries (non-sugar production such as biofuels, ethanol, electricity), and*
- *growers in Europe assessing what trade will look like when the European Union drops tariffs and production quotas in 2017 and is opened up for trade.*

CANEGROWERS was represented at the meeting by Chairman Paul Schembri and CEO Dan Galligan.

"It is an important forum in which to represent Australian growers to make sure we are clearly understanding the global context in which we trade as well as to collaborate with other farmer representatives on common issues," Mr Galligan said.

"We have heard firsthand the drivers impacting on other growers which, in turn, impact on price movements."

Paul Schembri was invited to give a presentation explaining Australia's system of forward pricing – how it works and how farmers participate.

As Australia is the only country in which growers are currently involved in forward pricing decisions and in the individual management of pricing volatility, our experience was seen as very valuable to our colleagues.

There was a lot of interest particularly from the EU countries in this given the changes they are facing.



EU producers are uncertain and cautious and raised many questions with Paul after his presentation.

The WABCG Council meeting ended with the election of a new Executive Board, under the Presidency of Jean-Pierre Dubray who is a French beet grower. Paul Schembri has been elected to one of three Vice President positions to represent the cane sector. ■

## Power pricing decision due soon

The Queensland Competition Authority (QCA) is due to rule at the end of May on the prices irrigators, businesses and households will pay in 2016-17.

A draft determination that indicated a 10.3-11.5% cost rise for irrigated agriculture triggered a strong response from CANEGROWERS with submissions, backed by a growing body of research and evidence, showing that the whole pricing system is flawed, unfair and needs a complete overhaul.

The most recent study, by industry analyst Hugh Grant and given to the Queensland Government this month, reinforces the finding that the current pricing system is neither cost-reflective nor efficient.

He writes that the current values of most networks are over twice the efficient level, reflecting a statement made by Professor Ross Garnaut earlier this year that the first step towards rational pricing would be to write down the value of redundant network capacity.

"What makes farmers most angry is that the basis for the unsustainable

and huge price rises is false," CANEGROWERS Head – Economics Warren Males said.

"The QCA has substantially overestimated the actual cost of supplying energy to Ergon and that has unnecessarily inflated the retail cost component of prices.

"Why should farmers be paying for something they're not using and, in the process, contributing to massive profits for Ergon and Powerlink?"

Mr Males says the growing body of evidence should serve as a major wake up call to Australia's energy policy makers.

*Continues page 8...*





*Pictured: The World Association of Beet and Cane Growers conference involved 34 countries. CANEGROWERS Chairman Paul Schembri explained how Australian growers are involved in forward pricing.*



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"Farmers need electricity prices to be substantially reduced, not lifted," he said.

"These further proposed rises will again hit the production capability and profitability of Queensland farmers hard with a flow on effect to the whole state economy and regional areas in particular," Mr Males said.

The community ARC UP campaign has been gathering strength, recently gaining the support of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland (CCIQ), the peak advocacy body for business in the state.

In a letter to ARC UP it echoed CANEGROWERS concerns saying, "Continued increases will result in reducing business costs in areas including capital expenditure and employment levels that will further damage the economy.

"In some instances there is little doubt that rising electricity prices will push some businesses permanently into the red with forced closures," the CCIQ said.

"Queensland actually has abundant supply of low cost energy but to look at power prices, you wouldn't know it," Mr Males said.

"This supply should be an asset to our economy and agricultural production but instead we have a flawed pricing system holding us back.

"It is important that the regulated cost of electricity delivery stops undermining the growth and development of Queensland's regional economies and reducing the living standards of the communities they support."

Hugh Grant's report, *Assets or Liabilities? The Need to Apply Fair Regulatory Values to Australia's Electricity Networks* is available on the CANEGROWERS Bundaberg website [www.bdbcanegrowers.com.au](http://www.bdbcanegrowers.com.au) ■

## 2016 CANEGROWERS Levy Schedule

CANEGROWERS is regarded as one of the strongest agricultural lobby groups in Australia. This success is built on maintaining a strong level of grower membership and working on issues that are directly effecting the profitability of our members.

Over the past 12 months the focus on these efforts has been around key grower cost areas of water and electricity pricing, restrictions on the movement of farm machinery along with the delivery of fair and transparent sugar marketing and trade regimes.

We continue to stand up for the interests of growers against the long terms risks formed from the debates on the health of the great barrier reef, and the nutritional impact of sugar consumption.

We work to provide members with strong platforms for communicating industry issues, provide legal services to growers and districts and regular opportunities for growers to engage and influence our political leaders.

All these services cost money and to that extent the finalised membership schedule for 2016/17 now confirms the State levy at 17.65 cents per tonne. This levy represents a one cent increase on last year.

The State levy was determined by the QCGO Board at their April Board meeting.

In setting the levy the Board remains absolutely focused on ensuring members get value for money and that our membership policies keep up with the expectations of our members.

The Board and Policy Council are currently reviewing needs around future resourcing priorities and levy policies. ■

### Membership Fees (cents per tonne of cane)

District Company	Crop Insurance	Total membership fees (Inc. GST)
Mossman	Note 1	29.32
Tableland–Mossman Mill	TBA	TBA
Tableland–Tableland Mill	TBA	TBA
Cairns–Mulgrave	1.84	43.99
Cairns–Babinda	Note 1	41.97
Innisfail	Note 2	49.12
Tully	2.50	32.73
Herbert River	3.01	45.06
Burdekin	1.86	48.96
Proserpine	Note 1	33.72
Mackay	TBA	TBA
Plane Creek	TBA	TBA
Bundaberg	TBA	TBA
Isis	1.75	46.64
Maryborough	Note 1	32.62
Rocky Point	4.50	71.67

Note 1: Paying crop insurance premiums from existing funds

Note 2: Crop insurance included in admin fee

TBA - To Be Advised

This fee schedule will apply to cane supplied to Queensland mills during the 2015 crushing season. Fees vary from district to district due to the size and extent of operations and services offered.



# BACKPACKER TAX delay

A six-month delay on the implementation of a controversial 'backpacker tax' has not allayed farmer concerns.

The issue has been hard-fought by the National Farmers' Federation (NFF) and its member organisations with an online petition opposing the imposition of a 32.5% on working holiday makers attracting almost 48,000 signatures.

Assistant Treasurer, **Kelly O'Dwyer**, said government will push back the tax until 1 January 2017 pending the outcome of a further government review, but will not provide certainty for farmers on their immediate workforce needs.

NFF President, **Brent Finlay**, said he welcomed the Government's acknowledgement that a better long-term agricultural workforce solution is needed, but this would not address the short-term workforce crisis facing the farm sector now because of the backpacker tax.

"Backpackers are heavily relied upon by agriculture to meet seasonal work requirements at peak times, particularly during harvest," Mr Finlay said.

"We have heard stories from farmers across the nation who have found themselves unable to move forward with basic farm management, facing much lower

production levels than usual, because of the impact this tax will have.

"Farmers across the country will be wondering how much area to put under crop, if already dwindling backpacker numbers drop off even further."

Mr Finlay said an immediate, permanent solution which encourages working holiday makers to travel to Australia and find employment in rural areas must be delivered as a matter of priority.

"The last thing we want is to be in the same situation in six months' time, with no workable solution," he said.

"Backpackers are an integral part of the Australian agricultural workforce. We must make sure they have every reason to come here to work and to spend valuable tourism dollars in our regional communities." ■



## MACKAY SUGAR JOB CUTS

Mackay Sugar has cut 34 positions from its workforce, saying the decision was fuelled by small crops and low sugar prices.

CEO **Jason Lowry** told local media that four people have been made redundant in a merging of office roles and a number of positions on locomotives and in the Mackay and Mossman mills would not be filled for the 2016 season.

Mr Lowry said when crushing starts there will be three fewer locomotives in operation meaning harvesters would be asked to change their schedules so the same amount of cane could be shifted with less equipment.

The 2017 apprenticeship program is also being deferred.

## FIJI LAW CHANGE UNDER FIRE

The General Secretary of the Fiji Cane Growers Association has described moves to amend two key pieces of legislation governing the country's industry as worse than draconian.

**Bala Dass** says the proposals demolish all freedoms, independence, fair play and justice for cane growers.

In an article in the Fiji Times he says that 200,000 people will be affected in an industry that produces Fiji's biggest export valued at \$52 million in 2015.

Two bills aim to rejuvenate the Fijian sugar industry which was hit drought and by Cyclone Winston this year.

But opponents say the legal changes will prop up the government-owned Fiji Sugar Corporation, which they claim is technically insolvent, at the expense of growers.

One of the issues is a move by government to appoint people to a statutory Sugar Cane Growers Council from cane producer associations while grower advocates want elections for representatives.

"The Sugar Cane Growers Council is now a toothless tiger," Bala Dass writes. "If this Bill is passed in its current form, the Council changes from a toothless tiger to a puppet of Government because it will be fully controlled by Government."

He is also concerned that the country's Register of Cane Growers will be held by the Fiji Sugar Corporation which could cancel registration upon the order of the Minister of Sugar.

"This is the height of politicisation," he writes.



# Broken powerlines kill **BROKEN POWER PRICES KILL BUSINESS**

By CANEGROWERS Tableland Director Rajinder Singh

Right now it is time for the Queensland Government to stand up and take the leadership in fixing Queensland's broken electricity pricing system - with urgency - before anyone else gets hurt.

Price hikes ranging from 9.3% to 13.6% in 2016/17 as proposed by the Queensland Competition Authority (QCA) are further, clear evidence of a continuing systemic failure. Despite a year's respite in 2015/16, the economy crippling steep upward trajectory of the past decade look set to continue.

For agriculture and irrigators, this would be a particularly devastating outcome. Irrigators are struggling with an astronomical increase in electricity and water costs caused by one of the severest El Nino weather events in recorded history.

Growers have the difficult decision of choosing between a 23% loss in production or a 40% increase in electricity costs to apply the extra water needed to maintain production. It is a loss-loss situation for growers.





Dealing with extreme weather events is one thing but unnecessarily adding to the stress through corrupt electricity prices has pushed agricultural enterprises past breaking point.

In stark contrast electricity supply companies continue to enjoy super profits. It is little wonder that irrigators are irate and actively looking for alternatives.

Electricity is not only a vital input in maintaining high living standards; access to cheap energy is essential for strong economic and jobs growth.

QCA's process for determining prices may appear to be logical but unfortunately it is badly flawed. ►



There is no regard for what is actually driving price increases. It is not a truly cost reflective process.

Nor is there any consideration of the impacts on consumers and the economy.

QCA is using an 18% increase in energy prices as part of its justification for an increase in price.

With almost half of Queensland's generation capacity lying idle, there is certainly no scarcity of supply.

Furthermore, despite being a part of the National Electricity Market, average wholesale energy prices in Queensland have been 30% to 50% higher than New South Wales for the past two years.

In its state of the market report for 2015, the Australian Energy Regulator, identified the "opportunistic" behaviour of Queensland's state owned generators as making a significant contribution to this perverse outcome.

This is certainly not a cost reflective outcome, given that Queensland generators on average have a lower cost structure than those in NSW.

*Dealing with extreme weather events is one thing but unnecessarily adding to the stress through corrupt electricity prices has pushed agricultural enterprises past breaking point.*

Over the past couple of years, and as recently as last week, expert electricity industry analysts have shown that Queensland electricity prices are 35% higher than what they should be.

The State Government must act immediately to remedy this situation by implementing this price cut.

The increases recommended by QCA are simply not an option.

Every day energy intensive businesses are closing their doors or scaling down. This is causing untold damage to Queensland jobs and to the economy.

Electricity generation and transmission is in a state of transition.

New technology is creating much needed competition.

A large part of the current network and generation assets will become stranded unless action is taken now to implement the regulatory reform that is required to ensure that electricity costs are no higher than truly cost reflective levels.

From 1986 through to 2006, electricity prices increased at or below CPI. Since the introduction of the current network revenue setting process, prices have soared.

Getting the electricity policy framework right is currently the greatest challenge for all Australian governments.

Queensland, with its state-owned assets, has the flexibility to deliver a clear advantage so that not only do current businesses grow and prosper; new business is attracted to set up in a lower electricity price environment. ■

*Pictured: Rajinder Singh is calling for an end to crippling electricity price rises.*



**Matt Kealley**

CANEGROWERS Manager -  
Environment

*“Nitrogen is important for productivity, however improved soil biology will achieve healthier soils which will result in better yields, benefiting both the farm business and the environment.”*

## HOW MUCH VALUE DO WE PLACE ON SOIL HEALTH IN THE CANE INDUSTRY?

### And how much should we place on it?

As far back as I can remember, I have avidly watched agriculture and gardening TV shows. Landline, Burkes Backyard and Gardening Australia were all compulsory viewing.

Soil health and improving the soil was a common theme on these shows. Their messages resonated with me in my garden. You can tell when it's working, you see worms, the soil has better structure and the plants respond.

Translate the information up a few dozen times and it resonates for farming too.

Recently I visited **Matti Kangas** on his Abergowrie cane farm as he wanted to show me what he is doing to improve his soil using microbes. Before we dug into the technical nature of his process, he showed me a woodchip heap, disturbed the top 15 centimetres and pointed out a white, stringy root-like substance.

“Do you know what that is?” he asked. I thought back to the gardening shows and the articles I'd read about soils.

I said, “It's the fungus in the soil”. “Hyphae,” Matti interjected. He believes hyphae doesn't occur in cane roots much anymore and is partly the issue behind productivity decline.

He then showed me how he makes his liquid fertiliser based on the Bokashi method which is an anaerobic fermentation process using microbes.

First, he shreds his organic starting material and adds it to a 1,000L shuttle in a batch process with starting microbes. He lets that ferment and transfers it to a larger tank. He adds BB1 fertiliser and applies his product at 15-20 litres per hectare, three to four times per year.

Does it work? Matti is convinced there is something in it and believes his soil health is improving.

Travelling around his farm, I could see the soil structure was good and couldn't help be enthused by his passion for what he is doing.

The passion for soil health is also evident on **Simon Mattsson's** farm in Mackay.

A few weeks ago I attended the third annual Soil Health Field Day (see the last edition of *Australian Canegrower*).

As Simon notes, the major issues for Mackay soils are a lack of carbon and plant available calcium as well as compaction resulting in poor soil microbial activity.

To improve these limitations, he is trialling a multi-species planting of alternate crops such as sunflowers, annual applications of calcium and other soil ameliorants, the inclusion of micro-nutrients in his fertilising program, composting and other forms of organic farming.

Both of these growers agree that nitrogen is important for productivity, however improved soil biology will also achieve healthier soils which will result in better yields and a benefit to both the farm business and the environment.

So how much value do we place on soil health in the cane industry?

The focus seems to be around nitrogen - the amounts applied and the efficiency with which it is used by the cane.

Recently a cane nitrogen management workshop was held in Townsville, with over 60 people attending from the cane industry, research, extension and government.

The workshop discussed and mapped out the research and adoption needs for improving nitrogen use efficiency. Most discussion centred on the need for greater adoption of Six Easy Steps, the process for improving Six Easy Steps as new R&D results become available and the effect of yield constraints.

The need to focus on soil health and not just nitrogen and the importance of good agronomic practices also came through strongly.

So I'm picking up the theme of focusing on improving soil health as important as this underpins the productivity, viability and future value of the cane industry.

There are many different approaches, however the underlying principles remain the same whether it be the veggie patch or the cane block. ■



# BMP DRAINAGE WORKSHOPS

## begin in the Wet Tropics

By Belinda Billing, SRA Adoption Officer, Brandon

As we leave the relative dry of El Nino and move into a neutral or potential La Nina climate pattern, the importance of sound farm drainage becomes an imperative for wet tropics sugarcane farms.

In northern Queensland, this pattern typically means increasing rainfall and storm events and for sugarcane farmers preventing water logging and crop inundation becomes a high priority.

Research has shown that for every 24 hours sugarcane spends underwater, yields of cane are reduced by half a tonne of cane per hectare.

Add to this the losses of inputs such as fertiliser, and the importance of getting drainage right becomes clear.

Ensuring water can move quickly and freely away from your blocks means the crop is not inundated with water so that you are able to maximise costly farm inputs and set the farm up for the best possible yield.

This is not always simple and water in the wet tropics can come from all directions: rainfall, runoff from hillsides and even from below the ground.

To help with this, growers in the Babinda, Innisfail and Mulgrave areas have attended free BMP Training for Practical Drainage Management with Allan Rudd from Mossman Agriculture Services. Allan has been involved in research and extension activities on sugarcane drainage issues within the wet tropics since the 1970s and remains at the forefront of new developments, such as GPS levelling for the sugarcane industry.

The half-day sessions discussed the landscape on farms, from hill slopes to coastal flats, and addressed common drainage issues and best practices for management within each zone. There was also an opportunity to work on your own farm drainage map during the workshop.



Growers attending have commented that the training is very practical, and not prescriptive, highlighting activities that they can do to improve drainage on their own farms after attending.

They have appreciated the relaxed and conversational style which allows for plenty of discussion around issues specific to the growers attending.

The session on GPS smoothing has proved to be very popular with a number of growers planning on undertaking the operation which offers

economic savings over laser levelling due to a reduction in the amount soil being shifted to obtain the same benefits.

This training is supported by Smartcane BMP and SRA has delivery. It has been supported by CANEGROWERS Cairns Region, Tully Cane Productivity Services, CANEGROWERS Innisfail, Mossman Agricultural Services and MSF.

*Pictured: Growers discuss the options for good farm drainage at the Tully workshop.*

## SRA committed to nitrogen research

Sugar Research Australia has affirmed its commitment to a proactive and science-based approach to researching nitrogen use in the Australian sugarcane industry.

Speaking at the Sugarcane Nitrogen Management Workshop in Townsville this month, CEO Neil Fisher said that the SIX EASY STEPS nutrient management guideline was a cornerstone of SRA's research investment.

"Our aim is to assist our industry investors to optimise productivity and profitability, while also moving towards meeting water quality targets," Mr Fisher said.

"It is recognised as industry best-practice for nutrient management to

optimise productivity and profitability by maintaining soil fertility and minimising off-farm effects on water quality.

"A review of nitrogen use efficiency in sugarcane last year found that there is significant potential for the industry to refine nitrogen application rates through continued use and evolution of SIX EASY STEPS, to better match nitrogen application to crop requirements via precision agriculture farming techniques.

"There is also scope to evaluate the potential of enhanced efficiency fertilisers to better match N supply with crop demand, and minimise N losses to the environment." ■



**By Greg Beashel**  
QSL CEO and Managing Director

*“We remain committed to working with industry to have the necessary supply contracts required for Marketing Choice in place well before the start of the 2017 Season.”*

## QSL Marketing Choice Update

Current as of 17 May 2016

Those of you who monitor the markets would have noticed a significant improvement to the ICE 11 raw futures values in recent weeks.

While this rise is a positive development for our industry, it has understandably led to concern amongst those growers who cannot yet access pricing arrangements for the 2017 and 2018 Seasons.

The team at QSL appreciates the frustration of those growers who will be outside QSL's Raw Sugar Supply Agreements (RSSA) from next year and as a consequence are now missing attractive pricing opportunities.

QSL requires title to sugar on terms that allow our suite of products to operate before we can allow Grower Economic Interest (GEI) sugar to be priced with us.

The key document that gives us this title for those mill areas without an RSSA for the 2017 Season is the On-Supply Agreement (OSA).

We also expect that those mills without an RSSA for the 2017 Season will require a Cane Supply Agreement or Grower Pricing Agreement before allowing GEI sugar to be directed to QSL via the OSA.

I can report that we are making progress in OSA discussions and recently released our 2017-Season product overview for MSF growers.

We're currently working with MSF to create the necessary agreements and frameworks required to access these products and will share details regarding the associated nomination processes once agreed with MSF.

We expect similar arrangements to be implemented in other regions once CSAs are in place.

Rest assured that we remain committed to working with industry to have the necessary supply contracts required for Marketing Choice in place well before the start of the 2017 Season.

In the interim, I urge you to register your interest for QSL's 2017-Season products by visiting the 2017 Marketing Choice section of our website: [www.qsl.com.au](http://www.qsl.com.au).

I've also included below the first of a regular series of Frequently Asked Questions for your information.

These updates will be supplemented by an increased QSL presence on the ground as the shift to Marketing Choice gains momentum and we work to ensure QSL remains your trusted partner into 2017 and beyond. ►







## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What has QSL done regarding implementing Marketing Choice?

QSL has spent considerable time working through the implications of the legislation to identify the agreements and structures required to enable Marketing Choice for the 2017 Season. We've also been progressing discussions with millers and last month released our 2017-Season product offering for MSF growers. We hope to share further information about the associated marketing and pricing nomination processes shortly.

### Why are the new Marketing Choice arrangements taking so long to sort out?

There's considerable work to be done but we are making progress. The new Marketing Choice arrangements not only require the creation of new operating structures and contractual agreements that meet the requirements of the new legislation, but also the negotiation of new On-Supply Agreements with each of those millers who do not have a RSSA for the 2017 Season. Cane Supply Agreements or grower pricing agreements will likely also need to be in place to enable each OSA's implementation.

### Is the legislation just too impractical to be implemented?

QSL believes the legislation is workable and is on track to be ready to implement the necessary arrangements to enable Marketing Choice for the 2017 Season.

### How will you be able to negotiate contracts with millers after the acrimonious Grower Choice debate?

As a service organisation representing both miller and grower members, QSL is constitutionally bound to act in the best interests of the entire Queensland sugar industry and as such, is uniquely positioned to help chart a way forward for the implementation of Marketing Choice in Queensland.

### How will the new system work?

Arrangements for those millers who hold RSSAs with QSL remain largely unchanged. For those millers outside this system, we're proposing an On-Supply Agreement, which is basically a sales agreement enabling mills to on-sell an amount of sugar to QSL equivalent to the GEI sugar that growers elect to be marketed by QSL. It is intended that each OSA would enable the relevant miller's growers to participate in the QSL Pooling system alongside RSSA pooling participants.

### When will Marketing Choice be available in my area?

Growers supplying Bundaberg, Isis and Mackay mills are already covered by their existing Raw Sugar Supply Agreements, and so marketing and pricing arrangements in these areas remain largely unchanged.

Following discussions with MSF, their growers can now access an overview of the QSL 2017-Season products available in MSF areas by visiting the 2017 Marketing Choice section of the QSL website, and we hope to share details of the associated nomination processes soon.

Discussions with Wilmar and Tully are still in their early stages as these milling districts also work to negotiate Cane Supply Agreements for 2017. For updates on the progress of Marketing Choice in these regions or to register your interest in QSL's 2017-Season products, please complete the registration form available on the 2017 Marketing Choice section of the QSL website.

### Will QSL offer the same pools in every milling area?

While QSL will continue to have a core suite of pools and forward-pricing products, we also have the flexibility to offer region or miller-specific pricing products, if required.

We're currently seeking feedback from industry regarding this.

### Will QSL's pool products be the same as in past years?

The pooling and forward pricing products available to growers in the 2017 Season may be significantly different to past products and may vary between milling districts, based on local considerations and pricing preferences. The QSL pricing products available in your area will be detailed on our website ([www.qsl.com.au](http://www.qsl.com.au)) as they become available.

### I'm a Bundaberg/Isis/Mackay grower. Will I be able to access all of QSL's 2017-Season products under the new Marketing Choice arrangements?

As in past years, the QSL products available in these milling districts will be decided by the local miller, as per the terms of the existing RSSA. Full details of your 2017-Season QSL pricing options and associated nomination processes will be released late this year.

### Where can I find more information?

You can find more information regarding QSL's preparations for Marketing Choice and register your interest for our 2017-Season products by visiting the 2017 Marketing Choice section of the QSL website.

You can find more information regarding QSL's preparations for Marketing Choice and register your interest for our 2017-Season products by visiting the 2017 Marketing Choice section of the QSL website. Visit [www.qsl.com.au](http://www.qsl.com.au) and click on the blue 2017 Marketing Choice icon, as displayed below. ■

**2017  
MARKETING  
CHOICE**

*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.*

# CO-OPERATIVE FARMING

## Building a better business case

By John Flynn

In an industry where keeping up with costly new technology helps to achieve best management practice on-farm, a group of Innisfail growers has joined forces to meet the challenge head-on.



With tight margins and the cost of replacing capital equipment climbing, the example being set by Sundown Harvesting shows that small cane growing enterprises can survive and thrive if farmers take a co-operative approach to business.

Established in 1970 as a partnership between four farming families with a specific interest in harvesting, the business has grown to include planting and fertilising equipment as the growers work to boost productivity and improve their environmental stewardship.

The group cuts across 750 hectares annually, equating to around 70,000 tonnes of cane.

Half of this belongs to the partners and the other half belongs to nine other growers in the immediate area.

Sundown Harvesting partner **Sam Spina**, who brings to the group a wealth of experience in rural banking, is a big believer in the co-operative business model.

"We've tried to establish ourselves as a group that's a little bit progressive," Sam said. "We try and have new machinery, we finance new machinery and make repayments rather than trying to have a lot of repairs and maintenance every year."

And he says none of the farmers would've been able to achieve what they are doing now on their own.

"We have found as a partnership we've been able to finance machinery at a higher level - more sophisticated machinery, good haul-out equipment, good planting equipment as well as good fertilising equipment," he says.



*Pictured: Above: John Guglielmi at the controls of Sundown Harvesting's new GPS-equipped Case IH 8800 machine. Top: Sundown Harvesting is a partnership between four farming families who have pooled resources to invest in harvesting, planting, fertilising and GPS equipment.*





In straight-forward economic terms, it is about achieving economies of scale, getting maximum value per unit cost from capital equipment that needs to be operational for much of the season to justify the capital outlays.

It's a business model Sam believes is suited to the smaller growers in the Innisfail area.

"Probably 75% of growers that supply South Johnstone mill are under that 5,000 tonne or the hundred-acre mark," Sam says.

*"As a partnership we've been able to finance machinery at a higher level - more sophisticated machinery, good haul-out equipment, good planting equipment as well as good fertilising equipment,"*

"As individuals, those growers would not be able to invest in the machinery that we invest in.

"A new full track harvester costs close to \$600,000, GPS mapping and auto-steer on that harvester, almost \$35,000.

"It's the same sort of money involved in installing the GPS mapping and auto-steer technology in the planting tractor and that's a lot of money for a grower that produces 5,000 tonne of cane."

The co-operative approach also assisted with the business case in seeking funding assistance for equipment through the Australian Government Reef Programme, formerly known as Reef Rescue.

Assistance from the program has been put towards a GPS and auto-steer system on the planter, the GPS and auto-steer systems on a new harvester and a variable rate control system to be attached to the four tonne, triple row, stool splitting fertiliser box.

Working in tandem with GPS, the variable speed control system will help the growers to get into the more technical elements of crop mapping and adjusting the rate of fertiliser being applied on-the-move.

Given that soil types can vary greatly, even within individual rows, the system will mean nutrients can be applied more strategically and more frugally.

That is a good outcome for the Great Barrier Reef and for the fertiliser bill.

Most importantly, it won't be just one farmer using the fertiliser box. The variable rate system is a shared resource among all of the partners in Sundown Harvesting.

"When we lodge our applications for Reef Programme funding it's always better that those applications benefit a large amount of hectares," Sam said.

"I guess I can understand that not only government, but all of us, want to be able to get the best bang for our buck and the best bang for our buck comes from being able to spend that sort of money and have a lot of hectares utilise that technology."

*Continues page 16...*







Watch our Virtual  
Bus Tour visit with  
Sundown Harvesting  
[www.youtube.com/  
canegrowers](http://www.youtube.com/canegrowers)

*Pictured: The Sundown Harvesting group has worked hard to recover from the damage caused by Cyclone Yasi in 2011 and in 2015 posted solid yields from renovated blocks.*

*“Our yields have been fantastic, I’ve been cutting about 120 tonnes to the hectare everywhere I’ve cut and I think as a group we’ve been averaging around 100 tonnes to the hectare so it’s been very good.”*

## Growing and harvesting with GPS

Nearly five years on from the double whammy of the disastrous wet La Nina season in 2010 and Cyclone Yasi in 2011, the Sundown district last year had the locos from South Johnstone Mill racing against the clock to keep up with demand as cane bins quickly filled to overflowing in 2015.

At the controls of Sundown Harvesting’s new GPS-equipped Case IH 8800 machine, harvester operator John Guglielmi was as well placed as anyone to comment on the industry’s comeback.

“Our yields have been fantastic, I’ve been cutting about 120 tonnes to the hectare everywhere I’ve cut and I think as a group we’ve been averaging around 100 tonnes to the hectare so it’s been very good, haven’t see a year like this for quite a long time,” he said.

“The farmers have invested a lot of time and money in replanting crops, getting rid of damaged stools and trying new varieties - they couldn’t all do in one hit, they took a few years to get them right.

“We’re probably at the stage now where all the paddocks that were damaged from Yasi have now been replaced and are producing good cane.”

Even in the better seasons when cyclones stay away, growing sugar cane in a district which can routinely receive four metres of rain during a wet season brings with it a unique set of challenges to farming productively and sustainably.

Those challenges are compounded given Innisfail’s geographical position in a valley at the junction of the North and South Johnstone Rivers, one of the larger and more spectacular tropical river systems emptying into the sensitive Great Barrier Reef lagoon. ►





For **Steve Austin** and the other partners in Sundown Harvesting, preventing the loss of farm inputs into the river system has meant adopting new farming methods and buying into technology that keeps pace with industry best practice.

Their co-operative approach and the benefits of economies of scale have paid dividends in every area from soil health and nutrient management to weed management, drainage management and harvest management.

Many of the processes are linked under the broader heading of precision farming, utilising GPS-driven machinery.

Blocks are mapped out during planting and machinery movements from then on are GPS-guided, right through to harvesting and binning out.

"We finally got into the GPS because we wanted to get into a bit of precision farming, keep farming universal," Steve explains.

"We've got a lot of farms around here plant different size rows and it's very hard to cut. We do a lot of damage to cane when some fellas are planting four-foot-ten, others are planting five-foot- four."

The shift to a precision farming system fits neatly with the industry best practice accreditation system, Smartcane BMP.

Having already fitted his billet planter with GPS and auto-steer, all going to plan, Steve is intending to phase in minimal till cultivation during the next planting cycle.

It means only the immediate plant zone will need to be tilled and the inter-row spacing will be left alone.

Less cultivation ultimately means less disruption of the soil and a significantly reduced risk of sediment and nutrient loss.

"We want to dig the ground up less because we're trying to save and trying to get into more precision farming," Steve said.

"With the precision farming you keep the bin tractors on the hard soil, you keep the harvester on the hard soil. We look after the stool, we grow better cane.

"If you look after the cane growing and grow a bigger crop that means we're going to have less grass and with less grass, there's less chemical and less chemical is better for the reef, everyone will tell you that."

Utilising funding assistance secured through the Australian Government Reef Programme, Sundown Harvesting recently installed a GPS mapping and auto-steer system in its new Case IH 8800 full track harvester.



It means that with an occasional tweak of a joystick, the harvester driver will be able to cut along the rows with a level of accuracy never before achieved.

"Because most of the planting operations are done with a GPS installed planter, when I come to a block I can just program that paddock in and I can start," harvester driver John Guglielmi explains.

"If you've got a block that's badly sprawled cane and flat and you can't see where you're going, the theory is that you can go start a block at any point and keep going in a straight row and come out the other end in a straight row instead of jumping over 20 or 30 drills.

"GPS gives the stools a much better chance to come back," John says.

As growers in the Sundown district know only too well, productivity losses associated with damage to stools after very wet weather and difficult harvest conditions can impact seriously on a farmer's bottom line - and not just for one year but an entire growing cycle. ■

*Pictured above: The 2015 Sundown crew*



**Australian Government**

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

# IMPROVING WATER EFFICIENCY THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Supplied by Lindsay NZ

Precision agriculture technologies continue to push the limits and can allow cane growers to sustainably manage natural resources and reduce negative environmental impacts.

Variable rate irrigation (VRI) is a prime example, it enables growers to target resources to maximise sugar cane growth, ensuring efficient use of inputs such as water, fertigation and chemigation yet prevent leaching and run-off.

With innovative technology such as Growsmart Precision VRI growers can customise exactly the right amount of water to each area of their cane crop.

This is achieved by individually pulsing sprinklers on and off, while also controlling the irrigator speed to modify the application depth along the length of the irrigator.

Control of the irrigator speed and individual valves allows the amount of water applied to each area to be carefully regulated, optimising water application.

Yield increases through improved crop uniformity and water savings can be achievable by reducing irrigation to heavier soils, high run-off areas and low areas prone to getting too wet and boggy.

Irrigation can be completely avoided over buildings, tracks, roads and non-productive areas.

Buffered avoidance zones can also be placed around environmentally sensitive areas and waterways.

This may be particularly prevalent for growers choosing to inject chemigation or fertigation through their irrigation system.

Tailored irrigation plans can be created based on field information and water application can be optimised for both the area irrigated and the water source.

Electromagnetic (EM) soil mapping is commonly used to identify soil characteristics and spatially divide irrigated areas into management zones.

Soil moisture monitoring then allows growers to apply irrigation depths to the different zones to maintain optimum cane growth rates but not exceed the soils ability to retain the applied water and nutrients.

The improved water use efficiency can be measured and analysed through the as-applied application reports, these show proof of placement to a resolution of 5x5m.

These application reports can be generated for any given time frame, you may want to prove that irrigation was withheld from an environmentally sensitive area on one given day or you may want to measure the irrigation applied over the entire area for an irrigation season, this is all possible with Growsmart Precision VRI's smart features.

A recent advancement announced by Lindsay is the integration of Growsmart Precision VRI with FieldNET® providing complete remote pivot management, with VRI control, monitoring and reporting.

This development means irrigation plans are very easy to create and edit.

"The correct amount of water on every part of the field is essential for maximum yields. When coupled with FieldNET, Precision VRI gives growers the pinpoint accuracy they need along

with the efficiencies that result from full remote capabilities," said Richard Hall, Lindsay Regional Manager for Australia and New Zealand.

"Configurable inputs allow for real-time system status data feeds, and the cloud stored backup reduces maintenance and repair system downtime."

Growsmart Precision VRI is compatible with centre pivots, laterals, pivoting laterals and reverse pivoting laterals. It can be installed on new irrigation systems or as an add-on to existing systems.

For more information, contact your local Growsmart by Lindsay dealer or visit [www.growsmartprecisionvri.com](http://www.growsmartprecisionvri.com) for more information.

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The Company's Zimmatic, Growsmart and FieldNET brands are highly recognized for their quality and technological leadership. ■





# Why going 'sugar free' isn't healthy

By the Australian  
Sugar Industry Alliance  
Nutrition Team

Sugar has a bad reputation. There is now a trend to 'quit sugar' or go 'sugar free'. Websites, documentaries and books are devoted to having us believe that all sugar is bad for us but this is misleading.

Sugar naturally occurs in many foods which have terrific nutritional benefits. Eliminating these foods could do more harm than good.

## WHY WE NEED SUGAR

The term 'sugar' is usually used to describe table sugar (sucrose). This can be misleading. Sucrose is one of many types of sugars (carbohydrates) found in food. Our body requires carbohydrates for energy and breaks them down into simple sugars, such as glucose, so they can be easily used in the body.

## WHAT DOES 'SUGAR FREE' MEAN?

Accredited dietitian, **Helen Bauzon**, says many believe 'sugar free' is the removal of processed or table sugar from the diet only. However, this is incorrect.

"A true sugar-free diet should be viewed as removing all dietary sources of sugar. That's any foods containing carbohydrate of any type, as these foods are broken down into glucose and absorbed into the bloodstream," she says.

"This includes breads and cereals, fruit, all types of potatoes, corn, pumpkin, legumes, milk and yoghurt, as well as processed foods such as chips, chocolates, cakes, ice-cream, juice, sauces and condiments, honey, jam and table sugar as some examples."

## THE PROBLEM WITH 'SUGAR FREE'

There are varying degrees of a 'sugar-free' diet. The most extreme eliminates all foods containing added sugars, as well as fruit and any vegetables containing natural sugars. The less extreme allows fruit and vegetables, yet restricts all foods containing added sugars. In between, are other variations eliminating breads, potatoes, pasta and rice.

Eliminating foods that contain carbohydrates in a bid to cut back on sugar is simplistic. Carbohydrates are the preferred fuel for our bodies and play an

important part in overall health. Many of them are high in fibre and essential vitamins and minerals.

According to the US-based Mayo Clinic, drastically and suddenly cutting carbohydrates can lead to headaches, bad breath, weakness, fatigue and constipation or diarrhoea.

## BALANCE IS KEY

With overweight and obesity statistics remaining alarmingly high (an estimated two out of three Australian adults are overweight or obese) there is a need to re-evaluate diet and activity.

However, simply cutting a particular food group from the diet is not the answer.

Ms Bauzon recommends a more balanced approach by eating from all core food groups to ensure adequate amounts of fibre, for bowel health; calcium for bone strength; and vitamin C and other micronutrients for general well-being.

Carbohydrates also provide us with energy to exercise, which is good for our health.

"Carbohydrates are not bad," says Ms Bauzon. "But when it comes to weight control and overall health, we need to be aware of our portions, from both the core food groups and foods high in processed sugars [treats or extras foods]."

For more info or to ask the Nutrition Team a question, visit [allaboutsugars.com](http://allaboutsugars.com) ■



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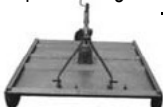
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Tractor-Cane Harvester-Machinery Wreckers



## Mossman –Tully

Hard hose irrigator, 110 x 400m, Trailco, \$22,000. Irrigation everflo ball pump, 75kw, auto transformer starter, 100,000 litres per hour capacity, up to 70m depths, \$20,000. New Holland side delivery rig, \$1500. Ph: 0491 1226

Kubota B6100 4x4 tractor with slasher and Triple-K scarifier to suit. 3-point linkage fert bin. 2 inch arch bar. 3-phase plasma cutter, Unimig 105. Ph: 4066 9889.

JCB 2135 New 190HP Engine, coupled to 6T HBM Tipper. JCB 155-65 New 190HP Engine & Tyres, coupled to 6T HBM Tipper. (Willing to separate) \$55,000 for each inc GST. PH: 0427 337 601

NEW HOLLAND TS115 4WD cab tractor, 115 HP fitted with 4T HBM side tipper bin 3 to choose from \$33,000 incl gst each. PH: DAVE 0429 627 904

Toft 6000 with Rotary Chop & Cat 3306DI Motor, good Billet machine. Mob. 0428 100 564

McGrath Flat top tipping Dog Trailer, Comes with removable peanut bin and also Grain sides, Tyres at 90%, Has just passed QLD machinery inspection, Good condition, 11 months rego, ready to go. \$12000+GST. Ph: 0409 912 062

1 pair 7710 John Deere front mud guards, complete, excellent condition. Mulgrave area, Ph: 0431 036 229

Stick Planter (Biancan) with insecticide tank. Plant cutter (Silkwood implements. Kennedy Valley. 0437630577

## Herbert River – Burdekin

1987 Volvo FL7 8x4 Fitted with 2012 Carta bin. Truck has new clutch and has had recent machinery inspection. No further use, Bin is in excellent condition and would suit new buyer. \$110,000 inc Gst. Ph: 0413 863 474 or email rian.swindley8@bigpond.com

1 AR rotary hoe with full crumble roller \$3,000 inc GST Ph: 0429 821 266

5/6 Kelly & Lewis high head pump, bronze impeller with 25 HP motor. Never been used \$4,500 inc GST Ph: 0429 821 266

Inter Prime Mover 2670 1982 model, 40ft Mcgrath trailer PH 07 47766249

## 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) Toft 4000 cummings motor 4ft ext rams on elevator very tidy machine \$15000.00 +gst ono. Ph: 0427588037.

John Deer cotton picker with 3 point, mister, spray boom, 1200litre tank, elect controls, \$1100+gst .PH 0427 588 037

## Rainfall Report

brought to you by AustSafe Super

Location	Recorded rainfall (mm)		Average rainfall (mm)	
	7 days to 9am	Year to date		
	09.05.16	16.05.16		
Mossman	0	6	974	1668
Mareeba AP	0	0.2	332	702
Cairns	0	10	704	1551
Mt Sophia	0	41	1209	2470
Babinda	0	18	1937	3055
Innisfail	0	27	1732	2525
Tully	0	20	1895	2953
Cardwell	0	0.4	1255	1608
Lucinda	0	0	1365	1583
Ingham	0	0.2	1300	1509
Abergowrie	0	0	919	1379
Townsville	0	0	798	847
Ayr DPI	0	0	373	686
Proserpine	0	0	926	985
Mirani	0	0	907	1060
Mackay	0	0	1081	1104
Sarina (Plane Ck)	0	0	1214	1225
Bundaberg	0	0	465	560
Childers South	0	0.4	480	472
Maryborough	0	0	480	660
Tewantin	0	0	630	1019
Eumundi	0	0	515	995
Nambour	0	0.4	487	996
Woongoolba	0	0.2	156	745
Murwillumbah	7	0	591	938
Ballina	8	0	572	948
Woodburn	6	0	314	765



**AustSafe  
Super**



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](http://www.bom.gov.au). Weather report provided by the Bureau of Meteorology's Commercial Weather Services Unit.

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133 Schmidke Road Mackay 4740

## Classifieds

MF2640, low hours, 20.8x34 rear tyres 80% rubber, new injector pump, new clutch, good condition, \$8500. Hodge 2 tonne side dresser/trash incorporator, good condition, \$6000. MF 35 rear end and gearbox, suitable for parts, \$300. Set of half tracks to suit Toft 6000, \$2000, Ph.0428 541 040

Valtra 6400 4WD Tractor - 100HP, air-con cab, 2004 model, 3700 hours, good condition, \$30,000 (incl GST) ONO. Ph: 0418710958 / 49503048

Rear Tipper 5ton electric over hydraulic lift, 23.1x30tyres. Good condition, always kept in shed, \$6000. Ph 07 4959 0447 or 0412 164 647

Fiat 115 4WD Tractor air cab and 6 tonne BSM tipper - good condition. Phone 0427 186 570 or 0407 644 142

Brand new 14.00 R25 tyres for sale under half of new price. Ph 0488 300 361.

Mac's Built Toyota Landcruiser tray with rollover protection, as new, 2425mm x 1840mm. Ph: Paul 0427 617 807

Don Gough Planter, Merrel Whole Stick Plant Cutter, 3 Fan Blower, 3 Plant Trailers, Marking Out Implement. Good condition 0417 272 424

19 bottles Shirtan - \$100, 10L Bobcat I MAX - \$100, 20kg Box Baton Low - \$100, 10kg Dirurex WG - \$50, 1x Tractor splitting frame + carriage - \$250, 1 x 4" Drain Mole - \$100. Ph: (07)49561984 or Mob: 0447 561984

### 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

MF 3505 tractor FWA 110 hp (needs tyres), Bonel 5 m hyd fold multi weeder, Bonel 3 row hyd fold tracking plant cane cultivator, Bonel contra rotating plant cane weeder, Bonel plant cane cutter. Ph 0448 174 691 or 0412 708 937

Cane Harvester - Modified 4000 Corradini - rotating extractor hoods, primary and secondary. The latest 6000 epi-cycles, Austoft shredder topper, front end 7000, GC. For sale or parts. Ph: 0427 598 333

Complete under carriage for Bonel trash incorporator, 7 tyne Yeomans ripper, MF 4 furrow disc trash plough, 8ft laser guided scoop. Ph 0448 174 691 or 0412 708 937

Trailco T400 Irrigator 200m hose 2 new floatation tyres \$5700inc. Hodge 3 row cane rake \$1500inc. Gandy Box on 2" toolbar ground drive \$800inc. Goph Planter and 2 trailers \$400inc. Naiper 3 tyne Ripper with 6 x 1" tynes spare ripper leg and clamps 2250inc. Hodge 2 tonne fertilizer box 2 row with coulter \$4800inc. Ph: 0418 874 615

97 Case 7000 harvester, ready to go for 2016 crush. Selling due to upgrade. Ph: 0448 034 046.

### Wanted

FORD TW15 or 25 tractor engine block Ph 0418180650 anytime

TRACTOR TYRES of all sizes. 0418 775 698 all hours.

80inch AH Howard rotary hoe for parts will consider any condition Sarina/ Mackay area. Ph: 07 4950 1162.

3 row McLeod adjustable Cutaway in good condition. Ph: 0413 863 474

Motor to suit Fordson Major tractor or a complete Fordson Major tractor. Ph: 0439 006 442.

### Work Wanted

BURDEKIN / AYR REGION - Seeking harvest/haulout work for the 2016 season. Experienced MC quad truck driver, delivery driver, semi-trailer mechanic/fabricator, refrigerated haulage, interstate MC driver, general freight haulage. Ph: 0429 392 391  
PROSERPINE - Seeking work for 2016 season. Have previous haulout experience, as well as agricultural cultivation work. Safe all round operator with extensive truck driving and haulage experience and civil / mining plant operations. Ph: 0418 136 565

ANY AREA - Looking for a job as a harvester or tractor driver. Farm work experience in Australia and overseas. Pls call 0455741955

MACKAY AREA - Seeking employment in the 2016 cane harvesting season or labouring in the Mackay region. I have white construction card, blue card, welding and fabrication experience, full drivers license and own vehicle, fast learner, phone Robert on 0474204430

SARINA/HOMEBUSH - Seeking employment for the 2016 crush as haulout operator. Have a current MC licence. PH-George 07 41685746

MACKAY AREA: Seeking work for the 2016 season, diesel fitter by trade but have had 1 year of hauling out and 4 years of tractor experience, undertaking spraying, slashing and cultivating fields. I have my P2, UG, forklift license and in the process of doing my MR and HR. Also have my own transport. Ph: Dylan on 0448 618 584

MACKAY / PROSERPINE: Seeking work as a haulout driver. Keen to learn and learn fast. Also a trade qualified boilermaker. Ph: 0400 795 757

MACKAY / SARINA: Seeking any haulout/ farm work for the 2016 season. I am a diesel fitter by trade and have basic tractor skills. Very willing to learn and can pick things up fast, have own car and licence. Phone Shawn on 0428 399 344

### 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, 4 lots, all freehold. 2016 crop not included. Interested persons please Ph: 07 4777 4633

BUNDABERG AREA - Cane farm wanted to lease. Ph: 0429 026 690

WALKERSTON AREA: Cane farm for sale, fully irrigated, 42.5ha cane 3.6ha grazing Ph: 0418 185 663

INGHAM: Cane Farm for sale. Hawkins Creek area. Total area 48.3ha. CPA 46.6ha. Shed, electricity & water. Genuine enquiries. Ph: 0407 635 175.



# Spotted anything unusual?

## NOTHING WILL PROTECT YOUR CROP BETTER THAN A GOOD HARD LOOK

Growers have an important role in keeping watch for exotic pests, diseases and weeds that could devastate the Australian sugarcane industry.

Early detection and reporting is the key to protecting farms, industries and the communities that rely on them. Every moment lost harms our chance of successful eradication.

If you spot anything unusual in your crop please call the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881. The call is free (except from mobiles).

Visit [phau.com.au/industries/sugarcane](http://phau.com.au/industries/sugarcane) for further information and a list of the top priority cane pests.



**Look, be alert, call an expert**





**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](http://www.smartcane.com.au)