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GROWER



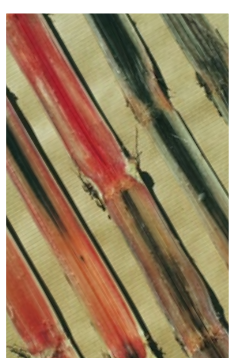
CANEGROWERS

30 January 2017 Price \$9.95

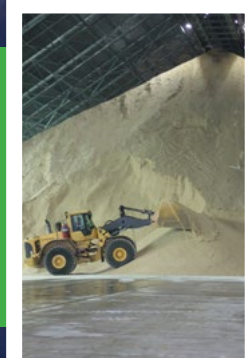
CANE PROVES A PERFECT FIT FOR ATHERTON AGRI-TOURISM ATTRACTION



Industry
push to
save TPP
despite US
withdrawal



Shirtan®
phase-out
means rise
in costs for
growers



QSL's
forward
pricing pool
options
explained

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- CH Series available from 4.7m to 6.2m

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- New underbody anitclogging device.
- 330RPM as STD

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Equipment ordered by 30th March 2017. Minimum 10% Deposit. Delivery by 30th April 2017. 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 30/03/2017 can obtain a finance package at 3.99%p.a. for the same loan structure.



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COVER IMAGE: Third generation dairy farmer Johnny Gallo has helped turn the family farm into a thriving cane and agri-tourism enterprise.

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Politics is in the air!

By Dan Galligan, CEO CANEGROWERS

Politics - you can almost feel it in the air. It is palpable in the positioning of our political parties as they start jockeying for attention and headlines.

Print, television, and social media outlets are gradually being dominated by the typical staples of sport, disaster and politics.

The sense that Queensland is galloping towards a state election is not a matter of speculation, it is a sure thing.

As we move into what will be four year fixed terms for future governments, this should be the last time we must endure the endless speculation and long-winded pseudo-campaigns that seem to have become normal.

The current State Government has only been in power since January 2015, so, in theory, it could continue to govern for another 12 months. But that is unlikely to happen.

Almost inevitably we will be voting by September and possibly much earlier.

The parties are furiously developing policy behind the scenes and preparing their campaign pitches.

The government, as is typical in these circumstances, is appearing to 'clear the decks' by either recasting decisions in such a way as to remove political divisions and opportunities for their opponents, or make investment decisions and announcements that will garner votes.

But it's timing that is on every political tactician's mind.

It is the rise of One Nation that is keeping political strategists up at night as they watch Senator Pauline Hanson's polling figures climb into the mid-20% of votes.

The Labor Party will inevitably try to determine at what point the attention and policies of One Nation are doing more damage to the LNP than to Labor. But this is no easy task.

Senator Hanson has learnt a lot since her last foray into politics and she is now more influential and astute and has access to more resources. A volatile concoction.

This could be a long, drawn out year of campaigning.

That is why at CANEGROWERS we too are gearing up.

As is the case for any challenge, we will face it by using our strengths, the greatest of which is that we are the voice of farmers, by farmers, for farmers.

We carry clout and can command respect by putting farmers front and centre of a well-articulated, reasoned and strategic campaign that we will bind them together.

There should be no surprises for any politician or candidate when they hear what we will have to say over the coming months.

Effective advocacy does not start now. For years we have been establishing relationships and communicating for effective policies that secure farmers' rights and establish an environment that will help them improve their bottom line and increase production.

As a \$2bn industry, any effective Queensland Government should always be keen to listen and be cognisant of our needs, the needs of our members – your needs.

This year will be an opportunity for us to pass the slide rule over both the current government and the contenders, along with those who propose to be political swing makers.

This *Australian Canegrower* magazine will be pivotal in our strategy as we look to share our insights, explain ourselves and profile the policies.

We always welcome your feedback, contributions and participation in our campaigns, as it is through your voice that our industry can be heard and respected. ■



"As a \$2bn industry, any effective Queensland Government should always be cognisant of our needs, the needs of our members – your needs"

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NEWS IN BRIEF

TPP push despite US withdrawal



CANEGROWERS, along with other farming groups, will keep up the pressure on the Australian Government to push ahead with the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) despite the United States pulling out of the multi-nation trade agreement.

Within days of assuming office, US President Donald Trump signed an executive order to formally withdraw from the 12-nation TPP.

CANEGROWERS immediately expressed disappointment that a significant opportunity to gain increased access to one of the most lucrative markets in the world had been lost.

"The big prize in the TPP was not the immediate benefit to our industry," CANEGROWERS Chairman Paul Schembri said.

"We were initially going to be able to sell another 80,000 tonnes of sugar into the United States, taking our access to 150,000 tonnes.

"The big prize we have lost is the framework for increased access in the future, up to 500,000 tonnes to help meet the United States' production/consumption shortfall."

CANEGROWERS is urging the Australian Government to continue work to close the TPP deal with the other Pacific nations involved.

"Trade deals like this only come along once or twice in lifetime," Mr Schembri said. "It is important to remember that this US decision doesn't mean the end of our hopes for an improved trading environment for our export-focused industry.

"We have been encouraged by the discussions between Australia and Japan recently and the Prime Minister's talk of a revised TPP with the other nations involved."

"We have been encouraged by the discussions between Australia and Japan recently and the Prime Minister's talk of a revised TPP with the other nations involved," he said.

CANEGROWERS believes that the US decision on TPP also puts greater importance on the other avenues Australia is negotiating for improved trade access – the Asia-focused Regional Cooperative Economic Partnership and free trade agreements

EXCAVATIONS START FOR POWER PLANT

Site preparation work has started on the Tableland Mill Green Energy Power Plant Project.

MSF Sugar says construction will start in May, but its project team has begun ordering equipment including a steam turbine generator package which is the most expensive item needed for the power plant. It will take 12 months to engineer and manufacture.

Once operational, all of the mill's bagasse will be used to run the new boiler, which will create steam to generate power that will ultimately supply the electricity grid.

In an update on the project MSF Sugar says, *"Our commitment to the project demonstrates that sugarcane is a progressive industry that is aware of its role in creating a sustainable, positive future for Australian agriculture. It also demonstrates that sugarcane plays a key role in the emerging bioenergy industry, which is focused on reducing waste while increasing renewables-based fuel production."* ■

with the European Union and United Kingdom.

In 2016 the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties recommended the Australian Parliament ratify the TPP deal in part because of the significant benefits for Australian agriculture exports.

National Farmers Federation Chief Executive Tony Mahar is urging the Government to progress the ratification in the 2017 Parliamentary year as a matter of priority. ■

Shirtan® phase-out

A phase-out period is looming for a fungicide used by approximately 80% of cane growers to treat Pineapple Sett Rot disease.

Shirtan® comes under the Minamata Convention on Mercury which the Australian Government signed in October 2013.

The treaty aims to protect human health and the environment from emissions and releases of mercury and once it is completely ratified, Shirtan® will no longer be available.

In 2015, the Australian Government indicated the phase-out of Shirtan® would occur in 2020 and CANEGROWERS called for that to be extended to 2025.

However, a report released in December 2016 by the Australian Environment Department has suggested that Shirtan® will be phased-out sooner than expected.

It is anticipated an accelerated Shirtan® phase-out will cost the sugarcane industry \$84,000 for a single year (approximately \$26 per farm) due to the higher cost of the recommended alternate fungicide.

A final submission on the issue is due by the **17 March 2017**. ■



MARCH CONFERENCE – BOOK NOW!

Smartcane BMP and CANEGROWERS are excited to be sponsoring the Next Gen Step Up! 2017 Conference in March.

Cane farmers, industry professionals and stakeholders, young and old to are invited to the **Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre** Monday 27 - Wednesday 29 March.

To find out more and to book, go to www.nextgenstepup.com

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- Contribution splitting – split some contributions made in the previous financial year to your spouse's superannuation account.
- Self-employed contributions – you may be eligible to claim a tax deduction on your super contributions.

Learn more about voluntary contributions by visiting our website austsafe.com.au, or contact us on **1300 131 293**, Monday to Friday between 8am-6pm (AEST).



Policy Update

Environment with Matt Kealley

Industry with Burn Ashburner

Economics with Warren Males

Chemicals in your shed

All of you will have many chemicals in your shed, but one product that may not be there for much longer is the fungicide Shirtan®.

The Australian Government signed the **Minamata Convention on Mercury** in 2013 to protect human health and the environment from mercury.

In 2015 the government indicated Shirtan® would most likely be phased out by 2020. However, the *National Phase Down of Mercury - Final Regulatory Impact Statement* released in December 2016 recommended phase out by mid-2017.

Approximately 77% of sugarcane growers use Shirtan® to treat Pineapple Sett Rot disease. Over the next few weeks, CANEGROWERS will seek feedback on the phase-out of Shirtan® and will provide our position on the ratification of the Minamata Convention on Mercury to the government for consideration.

Pigs, rats and weeds

Rats are an ongoing problem in some districts due to cane lodging and have been difficult to manage. Thankfully, a new solution may be at hand. CANEGROWERS is working with Animal Control Technologies, the maker of Rattoff®, Herbert Cane Productivity Services Limited (HCPSL) and DeGroot Technical Services to apply for a minor use permit to manage rats using aerial application of Rattoff.

The proposed application from UAVs and helicopter will be trialled in 2017.

In the meantime, make sure you're only using registered rat bait products Rattoff® and Racumin® for baiting in your cane between 1 October and 30 June, and keep your records. ■



Defending Fuel Tax Credits

CANEGROWERS is part of a fuel tax credit (FTC) alliance, known as the Powering Regional Australia Alliance, which includes agricultural, fishing, forestry, shipping, tourism and mining industry bodies.

Every year at federal budget time the fuel tax credit comes under scrutiny, with Green groups in particular believing that scraping the fuel tax credit would reduce the amount of fossil fuel being used, while freeing up a significant amount of money for other green agendas.

The basic allegation made is that the fuel tax credit is a subsidy, which we all know is not the case. To quote a recent letter sent from the alliance to Dr John Hewson from the Tax and Transfer Policy Institute:

"Fuel tax credits are not a subsidy for fuel use, but a mechanism to reduce or remove the incidence of excise or duty levied on the fuel used by business off-road or in heavy on-road vehicles".

Fuel excise, as an implicit road user charge, should not be charged on off-road use of diesel. Many regional industries, including the sugar industry, are locked into an international market and have no ability to pass on additional costs. Thus, without the fuel tax credit, regional Australia is at a disadvantage.

The alliance is planning to meet with Senators and MPs in Canberra and will invite policy makers on a field trip to see firsthand how this

fuel is used. This is a proactive move that will demonstrate the importance of fuel tax credits for off-road vehicle use. ■



Marketing

CANEGROWERS has been actively encouraging QSL and Wilmar to conclude their OSA negotiations, and while progress has been made in recent weeks, it has been slow, with a number of "substantial issues" remaining unresolved, according to QSL CEO Greg Beashel. In the meantime, growers in the MSF and Tully districts and all other areas can select QSL as their marketer of choice for the 2017 season and beyond, should they wish to do so.

Wilmar is resisting a tripartite meeting with QSL and growers. However, there now appears to be little impediment to such a meeting. In its draft decision in response to CANEGROWERS' application for authorisation the ACCC wrote, "to the extent parties within the sugar industry consider a tripartite approach to negotiating On-Supply Agreements could lead to mutually beneficial outcomes, any such negotiations are unlikely to result in public detriment".

Trade

The Australian Sugar Industry Alliance (ASA) has appointed Mr Peter Grey to review the issues inhibiting the sale of high pol Australian sugar to Japan.

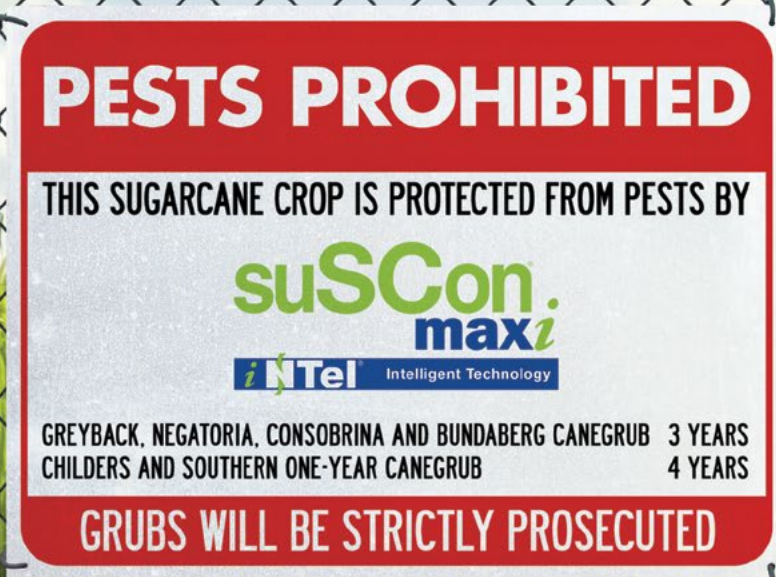
ASA is also responding to an investigation initiated by China into its import of sugar products from a number of countries, including Australia. As part of the investigation, Chinese Ministry of Commerce officials are planning to visit Australia to gain a greater understanding of our sugar industry.

Electricity

CANEGROWERS is continuing to advocate for competitive and fair electricity tariffs for irrigation use. To this end, Ergon is developing implementation arrangements for an agricultural electricity trial. More details will be provided as they become available. ■



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Collaborative use of mill data creates a **PATH FOR PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENT**

Research that has analysed mill data to help improve productivity in the Herbert River region is being extended across the Australian sugarcane industry.

Over the past two years, the Herbert research project has looked at a range of characteristics of both high and low-yielding farms.

It has analysed farms according to factors such as overall production (tonnes) in terms of small, medium and large businesses, with the aim of identifying steps that growers can take to boost their productivity.

The objective of this study has been to the question – what farm practices are occurring on high yielding farms that aren't being used on low yielding farms?

SRA Leader for Data Analysis, Dr Jo Stringer, said the project looked at vast volumes of data on the Herbert industry, with all individual information being confidential and only available to that grower and/or harvesting contractor.

The work occurred in collaboration with Wilmar and Herbert Cane Productivity Services Limited (HCPSL).

"We know that there are small farm size high-producing growers and there are also small farm size low-producing growers. Our project looked at what practices are the high producers implementing to make them high producing," Dr Stringer said.

"Is it their Pachymetra level and use of clean seed? Is it their soil type? Is it the timing of their farming practices?"

Industry in the Herbert has initiated a program called Target 85, a program targeting an average district yield of 85 tonnes of cane per hectare.

It appears that the region is likely to meet that yield target in 2016, and this project has identified a number of practices that could help the region continue to meet that target even when seasonal conditions are less favourable, via long-term extension programs.

Dr Stringer said the project identified common practices across top performing farms.

"We know soil and climate play an



important role, but there was a number of practices that were common across the high yielding farms," she said.

"A major finding was that growers who have adopted the modern farming system had significantly higher productivity than those who used traditional practices.

"The impact of Pachymetra was also apparent, suggesting incorrect variety selection may also be a factor contributing to poor ratooning."

She also said the project identified the value of clean seed in the region, which had translated into a huge demand for hot-water treated cane from HCPSL since the project began.

"Growers who regularly obtained clean seed had 10% or greater yields than growers who never or infrequently obtained clean seed."

According to HCPSL manager, Lawrence Di Bella, many more growers now undertake Pachymetra screening and want to source Pachymetra resistant varieties from HCPSL approved clean seed plots.

Over the last two years, HCSPL has distributed between 800-1200 tonne of cane as whole stalks and billets out of clean seed plots, compared to 200t previously.

There have been group extension and one-

on-one extension activities as a result of this project, as a collaboration between SRA, HCPSL, and Wilmar. This extension activity has been targeted to the different groups of growers.

The project also collaborated with Norris ECT to identify the impact of harvesting practices in relation to productivity.

Their work overseas has demonstrated that while accelerated ratoon yield decline is usually associated with a move to machine harvesting, this need not be the case, if all aspects of the harvesting operation are optimised to reduce damage.

Locally, the information from HCSPL indicates that there is a strong relationship between reducing yields and increasing harvesting speeds, with a number of factors believed to be driving this relationship.

The work by both NorrisECT, SRA engineering, Wilmar and many other milling companies has demonstrated significant improvements in crop recovery and quality associated with reduced harvesting speeds.

The research is now being extended across the industry, working in collaboration with millers and productivity services.

For more information contact Dr Jo Stringer jstringer@sugarresearch.com.au or (07) 3331 3337. ■



Neroli Roocke

CANEGROWERS Manager -
Communications

“Social media allows us to directly communicate CANEGROWERS stories, opinions, messages and pictures.”

SOCIAL MEDIA

keeping growers connected

Celebrity gossip, business networking, news, hobbies and campaigns. From fashion and food to friends and family there are many reasons people are drawn to social media platforms.

Over the past two years, CANEGROWERS has put an increased effort into using Facebook and Twitter. So why does CANEGROWERS put time and effort into being active in this space?

SHARE

Social media allows us to directly communicate CANEGROWERS stories, opinions, messages and pictures.

There is no need to convince a journalist to do an interview or an editor to run a story. We are in control of what we publish and when.

We also share the stories that we believe are important in the media or published by other Facebook and Twitter users.

REACH

Our CANEGROWERS Facebook page has 2,047 likes. 71% of them are people aged under 44 and 38% are women. They are CANEGROWERS members, their families and people with links to our industry and communities. As our posts are liked and shared, they have been seen by up to 4,800 people.

Our Twitter account has 2,177 followers. These are largely organisations (farming, NRM, research and green groups) and people (politicians, journalists, suppliers) with an interest in the industry. Because of the word limit, CANEGROWERS tweets usually contain an image or a link back to a media release or article which provides more information.

CONNECT

Both Facebook and Twitter are more than broadcast mechanisms for CANEGROWERS. They are a point of interaction.

We can contribute the CANEGROWERS message into a Twitter discussion on an

issue, reaching the people of influence who are interested in that topic then and there. On Facebook, we can spread the word about an event or story of interest to our community, ask for opinions and feedback and prompt discussion.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Facebook and Twitter are not the same and, because of the profile of the users explained above, CANEGROWERS does not use them in the same way.

Facebook is like the pub. It's an informal place where people get together with family and friends to chat, share pictures, view news and tell jokes. Groups form around common interests and people can follow the pages of businesses and organisations that interest them. CANEGROWERS is one such page.

Twitter is more like a cocktail party. There is a lot going on and it can move very quickly. News headlines and statements of opinion can trigger many simultaneous conversations. People drop in and out and can randomly interact with users they have no connection to.

Mostly, social media platforms are cordial because they are very public but if things get out of hand or abusive, the best advice I have been given is to walk away (ignore or block the offensive party) unless you feel like a public spat!

JOIN IN

The success of the CANEGROWERS social media effort depends very much on the networks we can tap into – so get involved!

If you are on Facebook or Twitter, like and share the CANEGROWERS posts. Throw in a comment and post a picture.

If you want any more information, get in touch Neroli_Roocke@canegrowers.com.au



2017 Season QSL Pricing and Pool Options

By Bryce Wenham, QSL Finance Manager – Supplier Relations

QSL will continue to offer growers a range of pricing pool options in 2017, including QSL-managed in-season and forward-season pools and a variety of grower-managed forward pricing products.

Here is an overview of what is on offer for the coming season:

QSL-MANAGED POOLS: *QSL makes pricing decisions on behalf of growers.*

QSL Guaranteed Floor Pool	A Committed Sugar Pool which provides a guaranteed minimum return with the potential for higher returns across the season. The minimum tonnage required to participate in this pool is 50 metric tonnes. Growers using this option can expect to receive 90% of the value of the pool's completed pricing by the end of crushing.
QSL Actively Managed Pool	A Committed Sugar Pool which targets the best return over the season by pricing more frequently as short-term market opportunities arise. The minimum tonnage required to participate in this pool is 10 metric tonnes.
QSL 2-Season Forward Pool (2018 Season)	A Committed Sugar Pool with pricing undertaken across the 2017 and 2018 Seasons. This pool aims to target the best return, with some pre-set price triggers. The minimum tonnage required to participate in this pool is 1 ICE 11 futures contract (50.8025 metric tonnes).
QSL Harvest Pool	An Uncommitted Sugar Pool designed to manage possible production variation throughout a season. All QSL growers must allocate 35% of their initial production estimate to the QSL Harvest Pool.

INDIVIDUAL GROWER PRICING POOLS: *where individual growers make their own pricing decisions.*

QSL Target Price Contract	A Committed Sugar Pool which enables Growers to price their GEI Sugar during the current season plus up to 3 seasons ahead. Orders must be in a minimum of 10 metric tonne lot increments**, with price targets in \$10 increments (e.g. \$410, \$420, \$430). Pricing to be completed by 15 June in the year crushing is to commence for the relevant season. Growers using this option can choose an accelerated Advances program or the standard QSL Advances program.
QSL Fixed Price Contract	A Committed Sugar Pool which enables growers to price their GEI Sugar up to 3 seasons ahead of the current season. Orders must be in a minimum or multiple of 6 lots (304.815 mt) with pricing to be completed by 28 February in the year crushing is to commence for the relevant season. Growers using this option can choose an accelerated Advances program (up to 90% of the value of their completed pricing by the end of crushing) or the standard QSL Advances program.
QSL In-season Fixed Price Contract	A Committed Sugar Pool which enables growers to price their GEI Sugar incrementally during the current season. This product provides a longer pricing window, with pricing to be completed by 15 April 2018 after the crush is completed. Allocations must be in a minimum and multiple of 6 lots (304.815 mt). Individual pricing orders may be in a minimum of 1 lot (50.8025 mt) with separate pricing decisions able to be made for each individual futures position.

** Growers may be required to nominate in increments greater than 10 mt depending on their local pricing agreements for the QSL Target Price Contract.



Upcoming QSL Information Sessions.

QSL is holding a number of information sessions next month. Details are as follows:

Growers can choose a combination of pools and/or forward pricing products, however:

- QSL Harvest Pool participation is mandatory (35% minimum)
- US Quota allocation is automatic (1-5% allocation)
- Everyone gets a +/- allocation from the QSL Shared Pool (Premiums + Corporate Earnings less Costs)

Growers should note that not all products/pools are offered by all millers.

so it's important to clarify what is available in your region.

Growers will need to have their Pricing Declarations finalised by **28 February 2017**, although some millers require their growers to finalise their nominations before this date, so please check with your mill representative.

To help with the decision-making process QSL will host a number of Pool and Pricing Information Sessions early next month.

See your local Canegrowers newsletter and newspapers for details of these events in your district.

DATE	VENUE	PURPOSE	CONTACT
Thursday 2 February	10.30am Alloway - Tony Chapman's Shed, Dahls Road.	QSL 2017 Season pricing options	Cathy Kelly 0409 285 074
	2pm Childers - Canegrowers Isis building		
Thursday 2 February	9am Canegrowers Hall, Home Hill	QSL Marketing Choice Update	Carla Keith 0409 372 305
	6pm Ayr RSL, 101 Burke St, Ayr		Rebecca Love 0429 054 330
Friday 3 February	8.30am Wallaville - Drinan Hall, Wallaville Goondoon Road, Drinan	QSL 2017 Season pricing options	Cathy Kelly 0409 285 074
	12 noon South Kolan - St Georges Hall, Bundaberg-Gin Gin Road		
Tuesday 7 February	2pm Mossman Bowls Club	QSL 2017 Season pricing options	Daniel Messina 0429 660 238
	6pm Jackaroo Motel, Mareeba		
Wednesday 8 February	10.30am Gordonvale venue TBC	QSL 2017 Season pricing options	Daniel Messina 0429 660 238
	2pm Babinda venue TBC		
	5.30pm Sugar Museum, Mourilyan		
Thursday 9 February	10.30am Tully Senior Citizens Hall, Tully	QSL 2017 Season pricing options	Daniel Messina 0429 660 238 Carla Keith 0409 372 305

DISCLAIMER:

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CANE PROVES A PERFECT FIT FOR ATHERTON'S THRIVING AGRI-TOURISM BUSINESS

By Wayne Griffin

Diversification has been at the heart of Gallo family farming since 1937, when Italian immigrant Giovanni Gallo purchased a property on the Atherton Tablelands and began raising dairy cows. 80 years on and the business has changed in ways Giovanni could never have imagined.

2017 marks a major milestone for Atherton's Gallo family.

The third generation dairy farmers are celebrating not only 80 years since patriarch Giovanni purchased the family farm, but also ten years since the opening of their agri-tourism business venture, Gallo Dairyland.

Located just 10 minutes east of Atherton, on the Malanda Road, Gallo Dairyland is a unique destination where visitors can experience the sights, sounds, and smells of a working dairy farm, while also enjoying the fruits of Dairyland's 350 Friesians in the form of luxurious hand-crafted cheeses and chocolates.

The brainchild of Giovanni's eldest son, Frank, Gallo Dairyland comprises a cafe/restaurant, animal nursery and fully functional dairy farm, as well as a factory where cheese-makers and chocolatiers hand-craft Dairyland's boutique cheeses and confectionery treats.

"Frank always dreamed of converting the dairy farm into an integrated educational farm experience," said Linda Gallo, who helps run the business with husband Johnny and his parents Frank and Ann.

"It's been a lot of hard work over the last ten years to realise that dream, but it's been very satisfying to see it become a success.

"We get visitors coming from all across north Queensland - foreign tourists, self-drive travelers, we even have a couple of regular organised bus trips, and we also get the locals coming in for coffee or a meal."

In fact, Gallo Dairyland has proven such a success that it has led the family farm ►





Pictured: (above) Frank, Ann, Linda and Johnny Gallo have turned their 400ha dairy and mixed crop farm into a thriving cane and agri-tourism business; (left) Gallo Dairyland employee Pamela rolls chocolate balls made from a mixture of Gallo milk and fine Belgium chocolate.

"We looked at different options, but decided there was a good opportunity in cane."

in another new direction, the cultivation of sugarcane.

"The family has always had a mixed farming operation of dairying and cropping — mainly potatoes, as well as maize and grain for feed," Linda said.

"We continued cropping after we opened Gallo Dairyland in 2007. But as that side of the business started really taking off, we found the horticulture side of things was taking up too much time, labour and resources."

With the Tablelands' rich volcanic soil suited to a myriad of crops, the family thought long and hard about their next move.

But in the end it was a planting scheme being run by MSF's Tableland Mill that proved the deciding factor.

"We looked at different options, but decided there was a good opportunity in cane," Johnny said.

Continues page 14...



"I probably come up with a lot of the ideas, well the stranger ideas anyway. The others are probably more cautious than me and have to reign me in sometimes so I don't get myself into trouble."

"We could have gone with avocados, that's obviously a big crop in this area, but there are a lot of upfront costs involved and then you're looking at five years before you start seeing a return.

"There were other options like grass seed, where you're harvesting in 16 weeks so you're paid in a few months, but in the end we decided on cane because it was less labour and cost intensive than some other crops and was a good long term option.

"The mill was offering a planting scheme at the time, which meant they would financially assist you to get into sugar, so the loss of income from that piece of ground while you were making the transition to sugar, that was offset by the planting scheme."

The Gallos planted their first cane crop in 2013, harvesting just 845 tonnes the following year.

However, with 130 ha of the family's 400 ha property now under cane, that figure quickly rose to almost 13,000

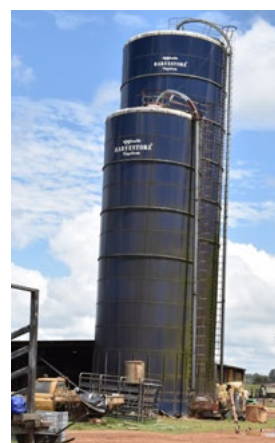
tonnes in 2016, and a further expansion of the cane operation is being planned.

"We're hoping to increase the cane area by maybe another 100 acres over the next few years," said Frank, the driving force behind Gallo Dairyland's continuing innovation.

"Compared to dairying, cane is a breeze, because you're contracting out most of the hard work like planting and harvesting, so it frees up a lot of time to focus on other aspects of the business."

And that's exactly what Frank has been doing, dreaming up new ways to make Gallo Dairyland a tourist hub of the Atherton Tablelands.

"I probably come up with a lot of the ideas, well the stranger ideas anyway. The others are probably more cautious than me and have to reign me in sometimes so I don't get myself into trouble," said Frank, whose plans for extending the farm's animal attractions are already far advanced. ►





"The animal nursery is very popular with visitors, but also being able to walk through and see the dairy in operation, watch the cows being milked and that, it's something different that seems to really attract a lot of families with younger children," he said.

"We're looking at expanding the animal side of things. We've now got some alpacas, but I'm hoping to add some

more animals, maybe some miniature horses and things like that, because that's where I can see a bit of a future for the business.

"People love seeing the animals, especially the children, so it's another way of attracting people to the farm and getting them to experience what we have here.

"There's a big opening for this sort of thing, agri-tourism is getting really big and I just think the more of it we have, the better.

"It's great for people from the towns or cities, who maybe don't have much experience of the country life, to come out and see the animals, but also see a real farm operating." ■

Pictured: (opposite page) Johnny and Frank have plans to extend the farm's animal nursery; regular customers John, Margie, Bev and Alex drop in for a coffee; 2010 Australia Picasso Cow Project entrant, painted by children from the local school.

(Above) Frank in the dairy and (left), inspecting Gallo Dairyland's award winning washed rind Tilsit with cheesemaker Leslie Brown.



FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT:

the key to a successful farming operation

By Smartcane BMP Facilitator, Deb Telford

While Smartcane BMP's Business and People module is one of the program's non-core elements, it is the most important module for those seeking to improve the management of their farming business.

We spend a lot of time considering our soils, crop nutrition, weed pest and disease management, irrigation, drainage, harvesting and varieties - but how well do we manage our farming operation as a business?

We need to think of ourselves as successful business men and women who produce sugar for the international market, and not as 'just farmers'.

The easiest way to assess your farming operation as a business is by completing the **BMP Business and People module** (previously known as Farm Business Management).

By completing the self-assessment, you can gauge how well you manage your farming business and identify any opportunities for improvement.

The module looks at key business and people management areas, such as:

- identifying business goals,
- identification and management of risk,
- succession planning,
- record keeping (production and financial),
- cash flow and business analysis,
- decision-making skills,
- investment in research and development, and
- human resource management.

This might sound a bit daunting right now, but the truth is, most growers have the necessary skills, they just don't give themselves the credit for being the good business managers that they are.

Sometimes we just need to look at what we do from a different perspective. Completing the Business and People self-assessment allows you to do just that, through a simple step-by-step process.



In 2015, ten growers from the Innisfail area participated in a training course to self-assess and complete the Farm Business Management module.

The practical assessment for this training course was to complete a comprehensive business plan for their farm.

GROWER FEEDBACK FROM THE COURSE INCLUDED:

"Completing the module and training really made you think about where you are and what you want for the future and opened your eyes to the steps that are required. Don't assume you know what your children want."

"The business plan was a good exercise to go through."

"Management and planning within your business is just as important as growing a crop of cane. With the volatility of sugar markets, growers must continually review the performance of their business, particularly costs, in an effort to manage the risk of sugar price."

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We come to you

CANEGROWERS Insurance brokers will visit you on farm to talk over your insurance needs.

Help to lodge claims

If something goes wrong and you need to report a claim, we are here to assist you during the claims process.

Contact your local CANEGROWERS Office to discover how WE CAN HELP YOU!

What does your future look like?

Supplied by Evetts & Allman Financial Advisors

It's a new year, the 2016 crush has finally finished - so now what?

Do you have business and financial goals that you want to achieve this year? Perhaps you want to grow your farm, or bring someone into your farm? Maybe you want to get out altogether?

Whatever your goal, you need to start planning now. If you don't know where to start, we can help.

You may have seen our articles last year touching on the three main checklist items that you need to consider when planning significant changes to move ahead with your farm business:

✓ **Manage and understand your cash flow**

Ensuring your cash flow is distributed correctly, in order to achieve your future goals, requires careful planning and a smart strategy to ensure there is minimal impact on your current lifestyle.

It all comes down to what you want to achieve. Do you want to get bigger? Do you want to improve your farm? Do you want to prepare for life after farming? Understanding where to direct your cash flow is an important aspect in achieving your goals.

✓ **Reduce Debt**

Part of the debt reduction strategy we do with you will include an analysis of the factors that impact your business that are controllable (we cannot control the weather, the price of sugar, expenses, disease or the impacts of legislation). This then opens up what can be controlled – the debt – by simply paying down in the good times or using off-farm income.

Repayment of debt allows you to direct your income to achieve your other goals – building off farm assets, planning for retirement or allowing the transfer of assets to the next generation to give them the best chance of continuing the family business.

Reducing your debt will also strengthen your cash flow when interest rates rise. Paying off debt when interest rates are low allows you to pay back more principal as less money is going towards interest payments.

✓ **Retirement Planning / Estate and Succession Planning**

Thinking about retirement sparks questions such as:

- Will I have enough to retire?
- How can I make my assets work for me?
- How can I position my farm business so the transition is as smooth as possible?
- How will I hand the farm down to the next generation?

Talking to a financial adviser who specialises in the cane industry is imperative to help you find the financial security that you are looking for when you retire or hand over the farm.

We tailor strategies for each client according to their individual situation and our focus is on the 'big picture'.

Our unique approach includes 'project managing' for each client, allowing them the freedom to concentrate on what matters most to them.

We see ourselves as mentors, educators, and sounding boards so that no matter is overlooked.

Our experience working within the cane industry means we have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of how your business works, and the regular challenges that are faced.

Don't let another year go by without putting a plan in place to achieve your goals. Come and talk to us about your future plans. We offer a complimentary one hour consultancy session for new clients.

We encourage you to take this opportunity to talk to us and find out how we can help you be in the best financial position for your family's future. ■

DISCLAIMER

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EVETTS & ALLMAN
FINANCIAL ADVISORS

DO YOU KNOW THE MAGIC NUMBER FOR YOUR FARM?

Supplied by Department Environment and Heritage Protection

We all know cane farmers need fertiliser to grow a healthy crop. But do you know the optimal amount of fertiliser for your farm? There's such a thing as a magic number for each farm, and an easy way to work it out.

Fertiliser plays an important role in growing a good cane crop, but when it comes to calculating the optimal amount of fertiliser required, growers have differing methods.

While some growers rely on their experience in the industry, others talk to their agronomist. But for growers seeking proven guidance when calculating the nutrient requirements of their crop, the industry-developed SIX EASY STEPS™ nutrient management program is by far the best option.

SIX EASY STEPS takes into account your site specific soil test results, plus decades of scientific testing and other nutrient sources, to calculate the optimal amount of nutrients, including nitrogen and phosphorus, that should be applied to best match your crop's needs.

The Burdekin Nitrogen Trials Project (RP20) has shown that using the amount of nutrients outlined by SIX EASY STEPS™, alongside holistic farming practices, can lead to greater profitability.

Many farmers are adopting this learning on their farms, dropping fertiliser rates, implementing holistic farm practices and finding they are maintaining or improving their profitability.

This approach is also beneficial in improving their sustainability, since less fertiliser on the ground means less fertiliser in local waterways.

By using the SIX EASY STEPS™ nutrient management program you are also complying with the Environmental Protection Act 1994 (the Act).

This Act focuses on nitrogen and phosphorus and is enforced by the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection.

Over the past year, departmental officers have been meeting with growers in the Burdekin and Wet Tropics regions to review their compliance with the Act.

These officers are not looking to catch people out. They are working with growers to ensure they are aware of their legislative obligations and helping them meet the record keeping and fertiliser use requirements by providing links to incentive programs and support officers.

You can find more information about your legislative obligations by visiting www.qld.gov.au/FarmingInReefCatchments.

Sugar Research Australia runs regular SIX EASY STEPS™ training sessions. Your local Smartcane BMP facilitator will have information on these and can give you a helping hand to meet legislative requirements while improving your farm profitability.

For more information visit www.smartcane.com.au ■



About to fertilise your cane crop?

Before you do, visit
[www.qld.gov.au/
FarmingInReefCatchments](http://www.qld.gov.au/FarmingInReefCatchments)
to understand your
legal obligations.

You are encouraged to participate in the industry's Smartcane BMP program. Call your local BMP facilitator on **3864 6430** for more information or visit www.smartcane.com.au.



**Queensland
Government**



FLEXIBILITY FOR AGRIBUSINESS LEARNING

Supplied by QATC

Now is a great opportunity to take a step back from the intensity of harvest and spend some time on business analysis and upskilling, to prepare for the seasons to come.

There are multiple options to develop, or obtain formal recognition of, your skills through Queensland Agricultural Training Colleges.

These range from a four-unit accredited skill set addressing agribusiness fundamentals, through to full agriculture and agribusiness diplomas, undertaken on their own or as a dual qualification.

"The cropping and horticultural industries have embraced these courses because they are flexible and the focus of the learning can be customised according to the particular enterprise they are

involved in," said QATC Executive Director of Education and Training, Kayci Delaney.

For example, an assessment task requiring development of a whole-of-farm plan could be focussed specifically on a sugar cane enterprise, Ms Delaney said.

The ability to address real-world farm planning while studying is an efficient way for busy farm owners and managers to combine work and professional development.

The AHCSS00025 Farm Business Management skill set is a great introductory option, especially for those who are new to study or haven't hit the books for some time.

The four units can be completed online on a self-paced basis, with the support of respected and accredited industry trainers.

Completion of the skill set results in a Statement of Attainment, and participants can apply to have the units credited towards a diploma if they choose to continue studying.

The next step up is an AHC50116 Diploma of Agriculture or AHC51416 Diploma of Agribusiness Management. Queensland Agricultural Training Colleges offers both of these diplomas as online, self-paced courses with optional workshops, and as Recognition of Prior Learning qualifications.

Self-paced study is a handy option for participants to be able to manage their life, work and study commitments, so these courses are ideal for anyone who values the flexibility of being able to work to their own schedule.

Skills recognition, or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), is a process for participants to be assessed on their prior education and experience.

"We have found that experienced farm owners and managers feel gratified when their existing skills can be acknowledged through formal qualification," said Ms Delaney.

"By applying for skills recognition, the study time required to achieve a full qualification can be substantially reduced."

Diploma level training has a strong focus on management practices, and improves skills and knowledge in areas such as business performance, budgeting and financial reports, farm planning, production monitoring, property management, and marketing.

For more information, please contact Queensland Agricultural Training Colleges on 1800 888 10 or visit qatc.edu.au ■

"We have found that experienced farm owners and managers feel gratified when their existing skills can be acknowledged through formal qualification."

Pictured: QATC instructor Peter Scott facilitates a workshop with a group of Diploma of Agribusiness Management students.

Boost your **ag skills** with a **flexible course** studied **your way**

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a skill set...
earn study
credit

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Self-paced online (with optional workshops)

Approx 2 years, multiple intakes throughout the year

Experienced?
Apply for skills
recognition

ADVANCED RURAL BUSINESS SKILLS

AHC51416 Diploma of Agribusiness Management

and/or * **ADVANCED AGRICULTURAL SKILLS**

AHC50116 Diploma of Agriculture

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Approx 30 weeks, multiple intakes throughout the year



*AHC51416 Diploma of Agribusiness Management and AHC50116 Diploma of Agriculture can also be completed as a dual qualification



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Howard M130 Rotary Hoe for sale, \$6000 + GST. Phone Alan on: 0408 665 955

IH766 tractor mechanically VG, tyres VG \$7,000 incl. Kubota B6100 14HP 4WD diesel with slasher and 5-tyne scarifier to suit \$5,000 incl. Ph. 4066 9889.

3PTL Fert Bin \$800 incl; 2" arch bar \$300 incl. 3-phase plasma cutter Unimig 105 \$1,600 incl. Yamaha WR450 VGC \$3,500. Ph. 4066 9889.

JD 3520, 2012 model, adjustable powerfeed roller, elevator extension, GPS, well maintained. Ph. 0427 667 964

Toft Track Harvester - HBM Billet Planter - wide Elevator, 2 double tipper bins on Trailer. Ph. 0427 163 519

Toft Track Harvester. Cummins Motor. Rotary chop. Knife Saver. Base Cutter legs. Sealing Fan. Suit to cut your own cane or Billet Planting. Ph. 0427 163 519

Herbert River-Burdekin

Primer mover 2670 1982 model, Mcgrath 40ft trailer, 1962 Commodore in good condition. Ph. 07 4776 6249

3140 John Deere FWD tractor not registered. As is. \$3,500 incl. GST. Phone 07 4777 7155 or 0437 677 582.

HARVESTER 2015 model 3520 JD. wheels, VGC, 2600 hours. Ph or text 0429960936

TRACKS 2 sets 5-roller Westhill. Ph or text 0429960936

M126X Kubota Tractor, 4 yrs old, runs well, vgc. \$55,000 inc GST, Ph. 0447 215 230
800 litre diesel tank for vehicle. As new. \$800 including GST. Phone 0427 477 742.

Mackay-Proserpine

Greaves 10Tonne side tipper (6&4 tonne bins). Old machine but good working order. \$11000 inc GST Ono. Phone 0407176828.

AR 80" Howard Rotary Hoe fully reconditioned, new galvanised doors and gear box panel, good blades \$6600.00. Ph 49595883 or 0407643441.

Brand new 14.00 R 25 tyres for sale under half of new price. Ph 0488300361.

For sale, 97' cameco 2500 full track harvester, engine 500 hrs since complete rebuild, swing out twin radiators, tilt cab, extended elevator, 15' choppers with westhill adjuster, hydraulics in good condition. Well maintained machine in VGC. Ph. 49588264

Rainfall Report

brought to you by AustSafe Super

Location	Recorded rainfall (mm)			Average rainfall (mm)
	7 days to 9am		Year to date	January–October
	16/01/2017	23/01/2017		
Mossman	217	106	534	450
Mareeba AP	43	23	296	203
Cairns	121	62	367	385
Mt Sophia	295	77	697	503
Babinda	136	32	541	633
Innisfail	365	55	982	504
Tully	262	0	264	598
Cardwell	156	11	332	435
Lucinda	205	12	500	372
Ingham	125	37	306	372
Abergowrie	68	9	146	335
Townsville	58	5	143	269
Ayr DPI	41	8	216	210
Proserpine	89	28	487	297
Mirani	30	18	321	326
Mackay	8	2	432	278
Sarina (Plane Ck)	19	38	716	362
Bundaberg	16	0.8	65	172
Childers South	0.6	2	46	125
Maryborough	2	1	22	163
Tewantin	23	30	77	218
Eumundi	3	31	96	228
Nambour	10	20	85	230
Woongoolba	0	7	7	164
Murwillumbah	30	11	149	198
Ballina	17	10	76	179
Woodburn	7	23	157	142



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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.

Classifieds

Parts available for Howard AR & AH Rotary Hoes from \$50 to \$500. Ph. 49595883 or 0407643441.

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)

1996 Cameco full-track harvester with 3306 CAT motor, 8 blade Westhill chop with adjuster used for billet planting last six years \$65,000. Phone 0400 915 495

Bundaberg-Rocky Point

Bonel billet planter with suSCon Blue box. Good condition. Best offers. Ph. 0428 598 307

David Brown with 5ft slasher and loader, \$11,000 inc gst; International 856 with loader and bag lifter \$10,000 inc gst; International 766 \$9,000 inc gst; Trailco irrigator T450 with hose 200m, 1 year old \$12,000; Southern Cross irrigator 200, \$9,000 inc gst. Ph. 0419 577 110

2008 JD 3510 Full track. New engine done 760 Hours. Total hours 700. Good overall condition. \$200,000 inc GST. JD 7820 KPH IVT Transmission. Front suspension air brakes. Good reliable tractor \$40,000 inc GST. New Holland M160 40kph. Power shift transmission, air brakes, straight and tidy. \$30,000 inc GST. 32 Plate international 3.5 offsets. \$88,000 inc GST. Ph. 0419 676 630

Wanted

Wanted stick cane planters. All brands considered. No trailers necessary. Ph. 0429 686 230

Wanted to buy: Small elevating scoop; tractor drawn; Matthews or similar. Ph. 0437 011 560

Wanted: High rise spray rig. Ph. 0428 535 385.

10 tonne carter elevating bin with or without tractor. Ph. 0428 590 809

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

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Harvester Operator/Manager Wanted. Childers/Isis area. Cutting 70-80K tonnes. Experience with harvester operation/management and mechanical skills required. Attractive rates for the right person. Email resume with referees to gswebb@skymesh.com.au by 23 Feb 2017.

Looking for a permanent employee to assist with daily operations on our cane farm near Mt Ossa. Person must be obliging and well attended, capable of maintaining farm machinery and possess basic knowledge on electrical and mechanical issues. Experience elevator tipper Toft 6000 wheelie for planting purposes would be an advantage, however applicant should have prior learning with regard to paddock preparation and spraying etc... Person can expect a friendly working environment along with a wage package to enjoy. Ph. 4958 8044

Work Wanted

BURDEKIN AREA: Seeking full time work on vegetable or cane farm. Will consider other work. Chemical certificates, can drive spray rig, tractors in general, forklift ticket, drivers license, honest and reliable, mechanically minded. Call 4782 8259 Brad

Looking for a Haul out jobs in MAREEBA Queensland. Have lots experience on tractors and am doing my HR ticket now. Ph. 0476407636 or email swemmert@yahoo.com.au

Property

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

WANTED TO BUY: Cane Farm approx. 200-250 acres, Mackay Pioneer Valley area. Contact Craig 0428 774 455

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

ABERGOWRIE: Cane farm Tarakah Rd, 270 acres freehold. Genuine enquiries please phone 07 4777 4633 or 0408 608 664.

OAKENDEN: Cane farm for sale. Irrigated, flat, no rocks, good soil, close siding for carting, close to town. Call (07) 4958 5224 or 0428 575 787.

FOR SALE - Lot 190 Old Tully Road - 31.8323 ha (78.6 acres) freehold - 21.04 ha-Good cane-plant to 4th - 3.46ha fallow - .69 ha with 40 - Tahitian Limes - Zinc shed 5bays - 2 lockable - Case 5150 & John Deere 3140 + implements- 2016 cane crop is excl. Call Lyn 0407627942

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GENERAL MANAGER

CANEGROWERS BURDEKIN

- Based in Ayr North Queensland
- Reporting to the Board of Directors
- Includes overseeing an Insurance Brokering service

Canegrowers Burdekin Limited is a representative body for sugarcane growers in the Burdekin. As part of the CANEGROWERS family, we are a membership organisation funded by growers with a mission of becoming a truly effective and unifying force in maximising members' profitability, sustainability and security now and for the future.

In addition to advocacy services, our small team of six provide a BAS accredited payroll and business fee for service and we operate a full insurance broking service. We take pride in our social media presence and our e-news communication. Learn about us on Facebook or Twitter (@burdekincane) or via www.canegrowersburdekin.com.au.

Canegrowers Burdekin is seeking to appoint a robust and passionate individual who is prepared to go the extra mile to lead the organisation into the next exciting phase.

We are keen to hear from you if you possess the following:

- A minimum of 5 years as a successful executive manager reporting to a Board
- Experience as a Company Secretary supported by uncompromising corporate governance
- Relevant Degree qualification highly regarded
- Significant business acumen and financial management skills to ensure sound decisions are made and impacts/risks are anticipated and mitigated
- Strong media, public relations, advocacy and presentation skills to promote and act as the public face of the company
- Highly developed negotiation and delivery skills
- Proven networking and relationship building skills

Applications will close as soon as we find the right person. Don't miss out, get your application in asap.

Please email your application including a cover letter and resume together with details of your expected remuneration and potential start date to marano@bigpond.com

For more information, contact Phil Marano 0404 004 371

YOU ARE INVITED!



Join us!

IN MACKAY

March 2017

Next Gen invites cane farmers, cane professionals and industry stakeholders, young and old, to join us at the Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre on Monday 27 - Wednesday 29 March 2017 to discuss topics of interest to the next generation of the Australian sugar industry.

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