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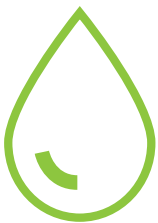


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## FEATURES

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After 40 years in the industry, many of them on the frontline in the fight against cane diseases, Isis Productivity chief Bruce Quinn is hanging up his work boots.

### 30 Reduce nitrogen, not profit

A group of Burdekin growers have shown it's possible to reduce nitrogen inputs without reducing profits, as part of the three-year project by NQ Dry Tropics.

**COVER IMAGE:** After more than 12 months of fractured CSA negotiations with the local mill, CANEGROWERS Tully Chairman Jamie Dore was glad growers could turn to the Sugar Industry Code of Conduct to secure a resolution before the 2020 harvest gets underway.

**CONTENTS IMAGE:** Burdekin cane grower Jim Richardson took part in NQ Dry Tropics successful nitrogen reduction trials.



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CANEGROWERS

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## Goodbye spreadsheets

Agricultural economists at Queensland's Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) have developed and launched an online version of the popular farm management tool, FEAT.

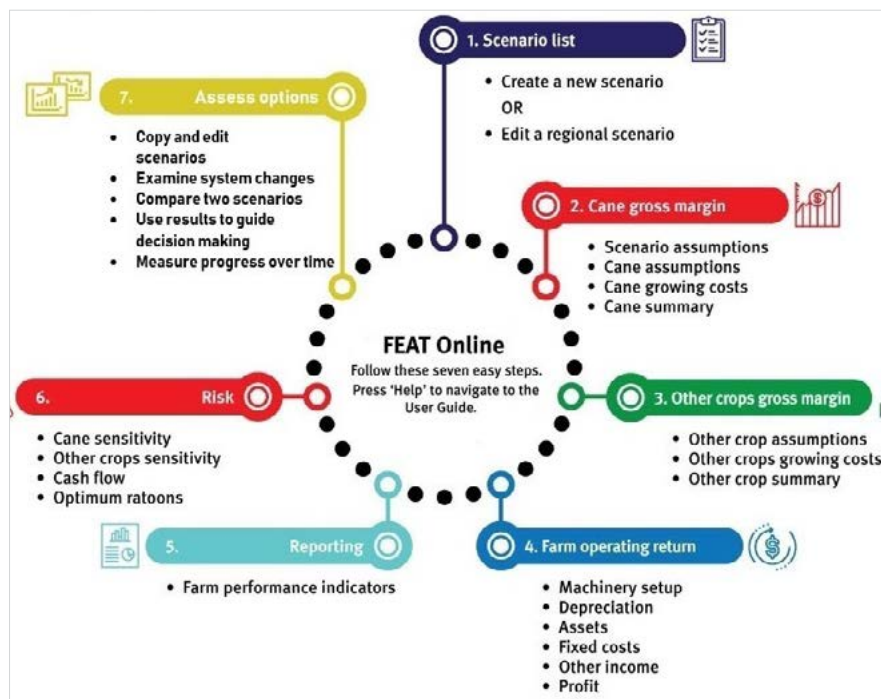
Previously only available in Excel spreadsheet form, the new digital version of DAF's Farm Economic Analysis Tool will make it quicker and easier for sugarcane growers to measure their farm's profitability, CANEGROWERS Industry Manager **Burn Ashburner** said.

"FEAT has been tried and tested and is a great way to compare the financial impacts of proposed changes on the farm," Mr Ashburner said.

"In particular it is able to provide a comparison between different farming systems.

"This new online version is a big improvement on the previous spreadsheet format and will enhance the useability for growers."

FEAT streamlines data entry, allows growers to access regional scenarios and can be used on phones, tablets or computers.



The tool is free for the Australian sugarcane industry and growers can sign up online at <https://featonline.com.au>

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries is also offering free FEAT online training workshops in key sugarcane growing regions.

To register your interest and to find out more information, please email [FEATregistration@daf.qld.gov.au](mailto:FEATregistration@daf.qld.gov.au) or call (07) 3330 4523. ■

## STOP PRESS

### Transport regs unchanged - for now!

CANEGROWERS has been working in conjunction with the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator and Transport and Main Roads Queensland to resolve some access issues relating to oversize agricultural vehicles under the new National Class 1 Agricultural Vehicle Notice.

At this time, it has been decided not to revoke the Queensland Coastal Zone 1 and Northern Coastal Zone 1 Notices.

Growers can continue to travel under either of these two state Notices or under the national Notice, but must operate under one Notice only. There is no 'mix and match' of provisions, exemptions, conditions, or approved areas and routes between the Notices.

CANEGROWERS will continue to liaise with the NHVR and will advise members when the situation changes. ■

## Cane to boost PPE stocks

The sugar industry was already doing its bit in the battle against COVID-19, with a number of Queensland distillers such as Bundaberg Rum and Beenleigh Rum using local cane to produce ethanol to bulk up Australia's supply of hand sanitiser.

But the humble cane stalk could be about to make another important contribution to the cause - one that will help frontline responders breathe a little easier - with scientist from Queensland University of Technology developing a way to turn cane waste into face masks.

QUT process engineer Dr Thomas Rainey said the material is able to filter out particles at the scale of 100 nanometres, which is in the range of viruses such as SARS-CoV-2.

"We have tested this material thoroughly and found it to be more efficient in its ability to remove virus-size nanoparticles than the high-quality commercially available masks we tested and compared it with," Dr Rainey (pictured left) told the *Brisbane Times*. ■







## JUST FIX THE DAM THING

Sugarcane growers in the Childers region are calling on the State Government to undertake urgent and serious work to determine how Paradise Dam can be fixed now – without its wall being reduced in height.

The calls come after the release of a report by independent dam expert **Dr Paul Rizzo** which found the dam could be repaired at its current capacity and for a reasonable cost.

CANEGROWERS Isis Chairman **Mark Mammino** says he acknowledges and welcomes Dr Rizzo's report and his view that the dam, while in a distressed state, is highly unlikely to experience a catastrophic failure.

"I am reassured that Dr Rizzo, one of the world's top experts in this kind of dam construction, believes the Paradise Dam can be fixed at its current height and at a reasonable cost," Mr Mammino said.

"Time is of the essence – agriculture needs confidence to move forward with investment and on farm work to secure food for Australians in the coming season.

"We need a plan now on what is the best course of action to take.

"This planning should not wait until after the wall lowering essential work program is completed - that will add another six to twelve months to the process.

"If the dam is in a distressed state now, then simply lowering its wall by 5m without any remediation work still leaves us with a dam sitting there in a distressed state, we don't end up in a better position.

"We need the best option which protects the lives of downstream residents AND the livelihoods of irrigators who rely on this dam and contribute to the economy of our local community.

"I call on the Queensland Government and Sunwater to talk with Dr Rizzo, and other experts in the field, to determine the most cost-effective way of remediating the dam at its current height to meet current safety standards without impacting irrigators' water security into the future." ■

*Pictured: CANEGROWERS Isis Chairman Mark Mammino.*

## AgForce decision is disappointing and divisive

AgForce's decision to establish a cane division has been labeled disappointing and divisive by CANEGROWERS Chairman Paul Schembri but he says the organisation won't be distracted.

By setting itself up as a rival voice on sugar issues, despite the very real prospect of having only a few dozen cane-growing members, AgForce will only dilute the message growers need governments and the wider community to hear on important industry issues, Mr Schembri said.

"It is disappointing that rather than building on the historic collaboration and cooperation CANEGROWERS and AgForce have shared, the AgForce Board has decided to intentionally work as an alternative voice on sugarcane issues through an agreement with a small group based in the Burdekin."

"To suggest, as AgForce has done, that setting up another sugarcane voice at the state level is somehow creating more unity within agriculture is an insult to our sensibilities, especially given their public statement outlining a plan to recruit for members from within our industry."

In the *Queensland Country Life* newspaper, Queensland Farmers' Federation President and CANEGROWERS Director Allan Dingle said AgForce's claim that its move would create further cohesion in agriculture was a poor attempt to something that would have the opposite effect.

"It is unfortunate that recent actions and events have sought to create an alternative voice on sugarcane issues in Queensland, particularly when CANEGROWERS and the Australian Cane Farmers Association continue to provide capable representation, leadership and services to growers across the state," he said.

Mr Dingle's predecessor at QFF, Stuart Armitage also weighed into the debate on social media, labelling the move a farce.



**Stuart Armitage** Agforce is going to claim they now represent the sugar industry when they will only have a few dozen members at best. What a farce

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While these types of organisational manoeuvrings gain headlines, CANEGROWERS refuses to be distracted and will continue working to ensure the 2020 harvest gets underway on time in light of the COVID-19 pandemic while continuing to focus on the core issues that need to be managed to deliver a profitable and productive future for growers. ■

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# NEW DEPRECIATION RULES

## Is it time to upgrade the contents of your shed?

Supplied by RFCSNQ

Now is a good time to act if you are thinking of investing in machinery for your operation, according to Rural Financial Counselling Service North Queensland.

Changes have been made to legislation governing asset write-offs, which sugarcane growers can use to their benefit. Since March, the threshold amount for an instant asset write-off for eligible businesses has increased from \$30,000 to \$150,000.

"This means you can claim up to \$150,000 that you spend on machinery against your tax in one financial year, rather than depreciating it over a number of years," said Rural Financial Counsellor Nick Birchley.

If your turnover is less than \$500 million the new rules apply to you.

Nick Birchley has been assisting sugar growers with their finances for 18 years.

Rural Financial Counsellors are a free service funded by the State and Federal



Nick Birchley, Rural Financial Counsellor.

Governments to work with primary producers at risk of financial hardship.

"Depreciation is a means by which producers can reinvest into their business," Mr Birchley said.

"Each year the ATO allows write downs on assets such as plant, machinery, vehicles and office equipment at various rates and over various timeframes. It allows for upgrades in the business working assets and allows businesses to be more efficient.

"But it's not a case of buying just for the sake of the advanced depreciation. The business needs to know the asset is at a cost benefit to the operation over the long term and part of your longer-term replacement program," he said.

Costs have continued to rise over the past decades and the median price for sugar has stagnated excepting an odd spike.

"Farmers have had to reduce their costs through embracing new techniques, implementing efficiencies and building up the size of their business to make profit," Mr Birchley said.

So, what is it that can make a cane farm really profitable?

"Many people believe that to have a profitable business you need to be able to pay the bills and have a little bit for living expenses – but it takes more than that," he said.

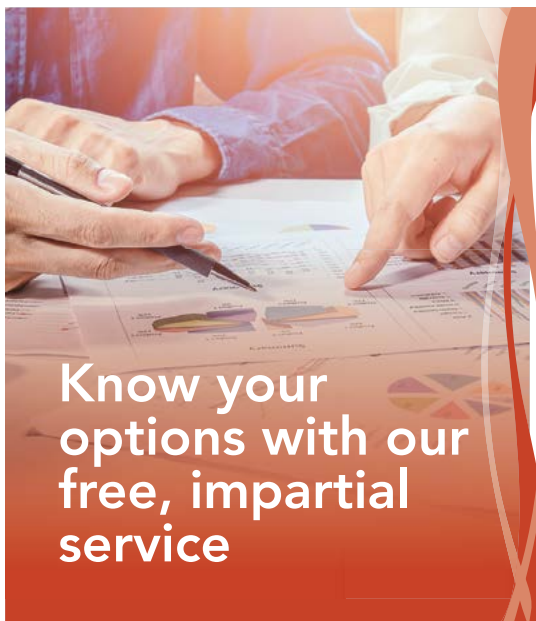
### Mr Birchley says the business needs to:

- pay the bills
- pay tax liabilities
- provide a comfortable living - the owners of the business deserve that.

### It is important for a business with a long-term focus, to also be able to:

- provision funds or assets to provide for the farmers' comfortable retirement
- build up reserves for investing back into the business such as:
  - upgrading machinery
  - implementing new practices
  - provisioning for adversity such as severe weather events or market failure.

To achieve these in modern agriculture, it is important to have efficient machinery as this will go a long way towards reducing costs and increasing productivity on the farm. ■



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# CANEGROWERS State Member Levy 2020

CANEGROWERS will hold its state membership levy at 2019 levels amid uncertainties associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and its potential impact on the sugarcane industry.

The QCGO Board has announced the state levy for the 2020 season will be 18.58c per tonne ex GST on all sugarcane supplied to a mill by a member.

Chairman Paul Schembri said it was one step the organisation could take to support members. He stressed that CANEGROWERS would maintain its level of services and activity over the coming year.

CANEGROWERS would also continue to apply a cap at the state level, offering a rebate to members when more than 50,000 tonnes of cane is delivered.

A table of combined state and district membership charges is provided for information. CANEGROWERS members with questions about their levy are urged to contact their district office. ■


## Total Membership Fees - 2020 season

(cents per tonne of all sugarcane supplied to mills by members)

District Company	Crop Insurance (inc. SD & GST)	Total Membership Fees (inc. GST)
Bundaberg	TBA	TBA
Burdekin *	1.88	48.72
Cairns - Babinda	Note 1	47.94
Cairns - Mulgrave	2.20	50.16
Herbert River *	3.30	48.16
Innisfail	Note 1	50.31
Isis	TBA	TBA
Mackay *	4.91	49.52
Maryborough	Note 1	34.19
Mossman	2.20	34.52
Plane Creek *	3.36	52.40
Proserpine	Note 1	38.04
Rocky Point	4.23	71.97
Tableland - Mossman Mill	3.36	56.41
Tableland - Tableland Mill	3.36	45.41
Tully	2.75	42.77

### KEY:


1. This fee schedule will apply to all sugar cane supplied to Queensland mills by all members during the 2020 crushing season. Fees vary from district to district due to the size and extent of operations and services offered.
2. Note 1 - no additional charge for crop insurance, covered as part of your membership.
3. TBA - District Board has not yet set their fee for 2020. Total levy to be advised.
4. \* - Local district and state levy cap may apply.



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completely reverses the dynamics of how the chopper drums on a John Deere harvester perform. In the event of a rock or piece of steel feeding through the machine, the adjuster slips allowing the bottom blade to separate away from the

top blade reducing excessive load on the gear box components.

To find out more you can call EHS Manufacturing on 07 49 598 880 or email [admin@ehsmanufacturing.com.au](mailto:admin@ehsmanufacturing.com.au) ■

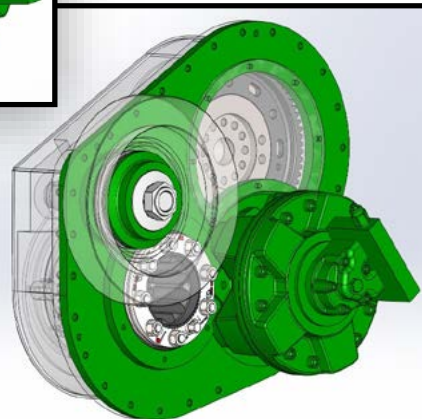
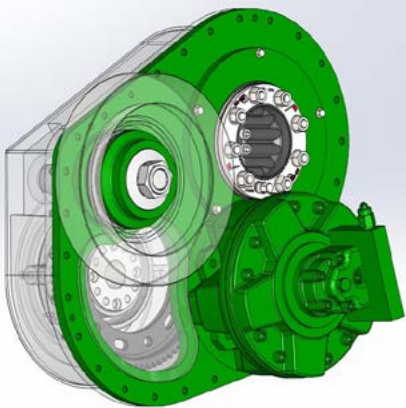


Pictured: Matthew Hildreth EHS and Andrew Deguara from Melandy Harvesting.

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ADVERTISING FEATURE

# CEO COMMENT

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By Dan Galligan, CEO CANEGROWERS

## CLARIFYING OUR SENSE OF PURPOSE – EVOLVE, ADAPT AND MOVE FORWARD

I'm pretty sure we've all done it. In fact, I know that many farmers, when faced with forces beyond their control such as weather, global market volatility and political changes, regularly do it.

When faced with uncertainty, we stop and ask, 'Why on earth are we doing this?'

It's no different at the organisational level. Moments of change and uncertainty provide perfect opportunities to reflect on our purpose, our objectives and our actions.

At CANEGROWERS our purpose is clear. We provide representation, leadership and services, and promote unity in the interests of our members. We do this to deliver on our vision of a secure and profitable future for growers. Our goals are to:

- Assist in maximising grower efficiency and profitability
- Contribute to long-term industry efficiency
- Enhance organisation effectiveness
- Develop a positive external environment for cane growers
- Recognise and manage diverse grower needs while maintaining organisation unity
- Provide a foundation and structure for future industry development and planning

We do this by having:

- Accountability to our members
- A focus on issues relevant to our members
- Credibility, integrity and professionalism
  - Open and effective communication between growers, organisational units and external stakeholders
  - Community consciousness

When I reflect upon our organisation, I wonder how we can do more, be better, achieve more. But, when focusing on how we do things, it's also important ensure we're on the right path, knowing that what we are aiming to achieve is worthwhile.

What we do and how we do it may change. There is no doubt that every day we are working to be more agile, taking lessons from our rich history and applying them to today's challenges - to be informed by our past but not let it dictate our future.

Our current working environment and industry situation prove how powerful organisational resilience is.

We have worked tremendously hard with our supply chain partners over the past six weeks to ensure the industry is in a good position to see this year's harvest proceed as planned, even within COVID-19 restrictions.

At the same time, we have pushed the government for adequate responses to the impending decisions around water pricing, called for clarity on national transport notices and, at the international level, we've been working with the Federal Government to ensure the WTO action against Indian sugar subsidies remains on track.

Despite the tremendous uncertainty in the world right now, we do see milestones being reached, or at least established as markers for success for both local and global challenges.

The pace of achieving resolutions is never as quick as we would like. But all these issues are relevant to the current and future profitability of growers across the industry.

By working together as a unified industry, we will position ourselves to face these challenges.

By being open, honest and forthright, but fair, we can achieve a great future for the industry, for the individual and for the local community. ■





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# STAYING SAFE AND CONNECTING WITH SRA DURING COVID-19

In recent weeks, growers have asked SRA about decontaminating surfaces in machines, such as cabs of tractors and harvesters, during the COVID-19 pandemic.



SRA's Leader for Disease Management, Dr Rob Magarey, suggests the following, which incorporates advice from the World Health Organisation:

## 1. DETERGENT + WATER

Wash dirty surfaces with either detergent and water or soap and water – using a suitable cloth. If the surfaces end-up relatively clean, this itself will lead to removal of much/all of the virus load. If the surfaces are not dirty to start with, this step could be skipped if you intend to spray or wipe with alcohol.

## 2. ALCOHOL

Finish the job by wiping or spraying with a 60-70% solution of alcohol. Ensure there are no sources of ignition, particularly before using a spray, as ethanol mist is subject to an explosive flame.

In the sugar industry context, it is suggested that benzalkonium chloride (the active ingredient in Sterimax) is not as good as alcohol.

Safe Work Australia has developed a comprehensive information sheet for agricultural industries and minimising the risk of exposure.

SRA recommends accessing this information, along with other official sources of information such as the World Health Organisation and the Australian Government.

You can also see a short video about on-farm hygiene prepared by SRA Adoption Team members James Ogden-Brown and Hannah Russell at [www.sugarresearch.com.au](http://www.sugarresearch.com.au)

The COVID-19 situation also means there are changes to how SRA is able to interact with industry.

If you have questions or need to contact SRA, we ask that you phone your nearest office.

In the interest of physical-distancing, it is our preference to communicate with you via phone or email.

If you are interacting with SRA in person, such as on your farm, we

respectfully ask that you not shake hands and observe the physical-distancing advised by the government.

In addition, if you are displaying any symptoms associated with COVID-19, have been in contact with a confirmed case, or have been overseas in the last two weeks, then we respectfully ask that you not visit an SRA site or meet with our staff.

We are continuing to explore new tools to interact with industry including videoconferencing, webinars and other digital technology. A number of webinars are already scheduled, including an upcoming webinar with Gerard Scalia on yellow canopy syndrome.

You can find more details about how to access the webinar via the SRA website.

*Pictured: SRA COVID-19 Cleaning Video.*



# Control and choice a winning combination

*Supplied by Wilmar*

When it comes to pricing, Burdekin producer Andrew Cross believes there's a lot to be gained from taking control of your own risks and rewards.

Mr Cross manages MH Premium Farms' Burdekin operations, which cover about 1250ha and produce about 130,000 tonnes of cane annually, as well as 800 tonnes of soy bean and 1000 tonnes of corn.

He's been using Wilmar's Grower-Managed Production Risk Scheme (GMPRS) since 2018 and says the industry-leading pricing mechanism is a good fit for the business.

"With GMPRS, we have priced in and out of season via the March and May contracts with limited time constraints – a feature I believe is unique. It gives us the ability to control and price the full 97% before the season even starts should we decide to, or to hold until the February and April expiry dates."

Mr Cross said MH Premium Farms used the innovative pricing mechanism to internalise its risk profile.

"It allows us to price as we see fit in the current environment with consideration for the market outlook.

"One of the key benefits of GMPRS is that it removes many of the scheduled time constraints of other pricing and pooling options. It enables us to focus the in-season production on the July and October contracts and, ideally, increase exposure onto the March and May contracts if we feel the market is favouring this scenario."

Mr Cross said the ability to manage the company's production buffer sugar was another advantage.



*MH Premium Farms Burdekin Manager Andrew Cross and Wilmar Senior Grower Marketing Consultant Chris Winship.*

"Our production outlook and sales position is obviously a consideration we must take into account prior to locking in a GMPRS sale.

"If we believe the price on offer provides best value and we see our production as secure, then the choice is ours. If our production concerns outweigh our pricing desire, we can leave it all out of play until the sugar is in the sheds, and sell it from there."

Mr Cross said GMPRS was a good option for growers wanting more control over their final price.

"I would recommend GMPRS if it fits the grower's risk preference and skill set. I believe it enables growers to potentially increase the average sugar price achieved." ■

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# FROM THE CHAIR

By Paul Schembri, Chairman CANEGROWERS

## CORONAVIRUS: A LIFE-CHANGING EVENT

Former CANEGROWERS Chairman, the late Harry Bonanno would often say, “The things you thought couldn’t happen in your lifetime, have happened”. It is an apt reminder that the world can change in a heartbeat.

We’re now in May and just weeks away from the scheduled start of the 2020 cane harvest, yet the threat of COVID-19 is still with us, albeit the rate of transmission and infection has slowed.

The Australian sugar industry, through all of its sectors, has worked collaboratively to mitigate the risk of the spread of this disease.

Growers have sought, from CANEGROWERS and other industry organisations, the procedures and practices they need to adopt to mitigate the spread of the disease. Refer to the CANEGROWERS Sugarcane Farm COVID-19 Guide on page 33.

Everyone is taking this seriously and playing their part. The sugar mills in particular have been very innovative in adopting measures to protect the health of their workforce.

While current health statistics point to a slowdown of infection rates, we’re not out of danger by any stretch of the imagination.

Despite all of that, one thing is very clear – the world we live in will change forever. Things that we took for granted are not as secure as we once thought.

In fact, this pandemic will likely bring about the biggest change in our lifetime to our economic, social and environmental values.

Farmers and food security are not taken for granted now as they once might have been. I never thought that in my lifetime basic foods would be emptied from supermarket shelves. One image remains vivid to me – supermarket shelves devoid of sugar in Mackay!

Australian farmers are perhaps some of the most innovative, resourceful and resilient in the world.

We produce enough food and fibre to feed 75 million people, hence we export more than 70% of our production.

Our farmers produce high quality food and fibre under world-class, environmentally sustainable practices.

Despite droughts, floods, spiralling input costs, low commodity prices, excessive regulation and anti-farmer activism – we still deliver!

When and how this pandemic plays out is unclear. What is clear, however, is that we can’t take farmers and farming for granted.

The area under cane in Queensland contracted significantly last year. The combination of low prices, poor weather and increasing reef-related regulation is taking its toll.

If one of the outcomes of this crisis is that agriculture and the Australian community can reset our understanding of each other, then that is a good thing.

Throughout this crisis we have heard a lot of talk about the importance of farmers and food security but will government act in the aftermath?

Contemporary policy-settings around agriculture have to change. Economic rationalism and the want to over-regulate farmers must change.

For example, the over-exposure to a world sugar price tainted by subsidies, the high price of irrigation water and excessive reef regulations are areas that government could change. Will these be changed?

We hope so otherwise little will be learned from this crisis and an opportunity will be lost. ■





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# HARNESSING THE ECONOMIC POSSIBILITIES IN SUGARCANE HARVESTING

By Carol Norris, Adoption Officer, Sugar Research Australia

In a bid to get the best outcome from the crop, harvesting best practice (HBP) has been promoted in the Australian sugar industry for many years. This article looks at the research and the future of HBP.

Research dating back to the 1970s identified substantial losses of both cane and sugar from mechanically harvested green cane. Despite this, the uptake of efficient harvesting practices has been slow. The reasons for this are complex:

1. Lack of recognition of the scale of losses and opportunity to minimise them through improved practices. It has been stated that current machines are very good at disguising the losses in harvesting.
2. Harvester owner and machine operator perception that the messaging around, and implementation of, HBP is a criticism of their current practices.
3. Harvester-owner expectations that changes to practices will incur extra costs which they'll be unable to recoup.
4. In many groups, the grower and harvester operator seldom communicate on harvesting expectations.
5. Pressure on harvesting groups to harvest at high flow rates to ensure that bin allotments are filled.
6. A concern that large contracts (already meaning long hours in the paddock) do not allow for lower flow rates.
7. Pressure to maximise bin weights, leading to a perception of the need to shorten billet lengths in an effort to increase bulk density.
8. Concern that reducing fan speed would lead to an increase in extraneous matter (EM) and a subsequent loss of CCS.

Nevertheless, it is accepted that if change in harvesting practices occurs across the Australian sugarcane industry, full adoption of HBP has the potential to deliver an additional 1.2 million tonnes of cane and 164,000 tonnes of sugar valued at over \$69 million (an additional \$2.86/t of cane) for industry.

This significant growth in yield and revenue can be achieved without any increase in land under cane.

In 2017, to maximise this opportunity, SRA in partnership with the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and funded by the Rural R&D for profit program *Enhancing the sugar industry value chain by addressing mechanical harvesting losses through research, technology and adoption* commenced an adoption program to strengthen the knowledge, skills and capacity required for practice change in the harvesting sector.

The fundamental objectives of the program were:

1. Industry acceptance that current losses can be transformed into future yield gains through the implementation of planned, proactive and collaborative strategies between growers and their harvesting contractors.

2. The ability to distinguish the critical point where harvesting losses can be minimised, and yields improved, to achieve the best economic return not only for the grower but the contractor's harvesting operation.
3. Improve cane quality, which is assessed by a combination of sound billet quality and an acceptable level of Extraneous Matter (EM).

To achieve these objectives, the project delivered a program of 95 replicated green cane harvesting trials in the 2017/18 seasons (*pictured below*).



The program included individual trial data analysis and the delivery of collaborative grower and harvesting contractor workshops.

This initiative occurred over 12 sugarcane regions between Harwood and Mossman in order to inform industry of the opportunity to convert current harvesting losses into potential yield gains.

In addition to the green cane trials, SRA conducted five burnt cane trials in the 2018/2019 seasons to understand the implications of reduced fan speeds in burnt conditions.

There is a belief that cane loss is less of a concern under burnt conditions when compared to harvesting green cane.

This is a reasonable assumption given the far lower EM levels found in burnt cane. However, initial trial results suggest that losses may be an important factor to consider in burnt cane, particularly in relation to extractor fan speed.

The green cane trials were conducted using the SRA infield sucrose loss measurement system (ISLMS) together with mass-balance analysis. The burnt cane trials excluded ISLMS testing.

Data collected for both green and burnt cane trials included cane and sugar yields, CCS, gross and net grower revenue per



hectare, extraneous matter (EM), billet quality and length, and for green cane trials, amounts of sugar and biomass left in the field.

Data analysis was based on a comparative of performance of HBP (determined by the specific field conditions on the day) against each harvesting operation's standard (commercial) practice.

Across industry, the green cane trials suggest harvesters are typically operated at ground and fan speeds that are on average 0.9 km/hr and 95 rpm above those recommended under HBP parameters.

Higher ground speed delivered an additional 21 t/hr of cane into the machine on average, overloading the cleaning capacity of the harvester, resulting in higher fan speeds to remove the additional EM entering the machine, and ultimately ejecting additional cane through the extractor into the paddock in the process.

The burnt cane trials assessed three treatments: control, moderate and aggressive.

The 'control' treatment was designed to deliver total biomass available in the paddock. The primary and secondary extractor fans were turned off. As the cleaning chamber is not overloaded (as would occur in a green cane scenario), ground speed remained constant across all treatments.

The 'moderate' treatment targeted a similar ground speed as the control, but fan speed was operated between 600 – 700 rpm depending on fan blade and hub type, variety, field conditions and burn quality.

The 'aggressive' treatment consisted of the same ground speed as the 'moderate' treatment with an increase of 150 rpm on the primary extractor. The secondary extractor was on for both 'moderate' and 'aggressive' treatments.

As all trials were conducted in "good" burnt blocks, productivity was measured against the controlled treatment (recommended practice in burnt cane) and aggressive (contractor standard practice).

### Green Cane Results (Patane et al.,2019)

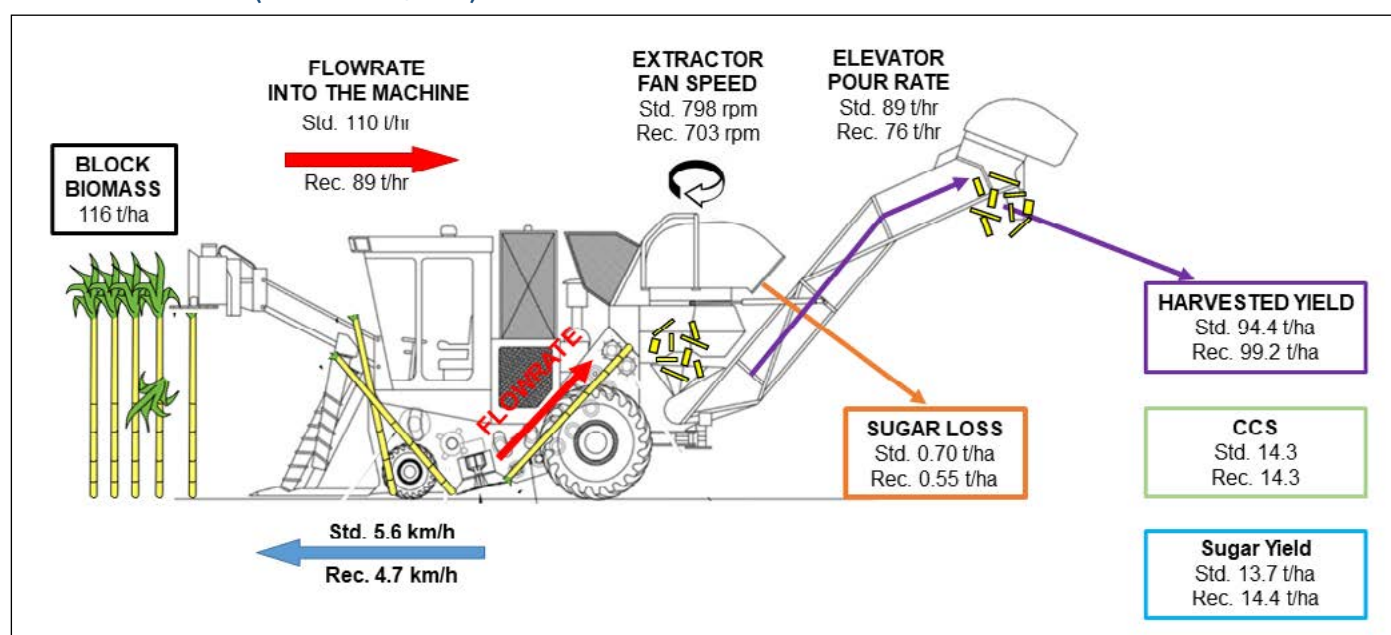


Figure 1: Green cane results 2017/2018

Data from the green cane trials (fully randomised and replicated) indicated the following:

- The average sugar loss out of the extractor at standard contractor practice increases by 0.15 t/ha (+21.6%) when compared with HBP settings.
- No significant difference in EM, bin mass, CCS and fibre (See Table 1)

Table 1: Average EM, bin mass, CCS and Fibre comparison

Parameter	Practice	
	Standard	Recommended
Extraneous matter, %	11.3 b	11.6 b
Average bin mass, t/10-t bin	8.84 b	8.78 b
CCS, units	14.31 b	14.31 b
Fibre levels, %Cane	14.54 b	14.45 b

\*Common letters within a row indicate no statistically significant differences among treatments ( $p = 0.0$ )

Continues next page ►

- Cane loss through the extractor results in less cane per hectare delivered to the mill when compared to HBP settings. Mill analysis across all trials identified cane and sugar yields for the recommended practice were 4.8 t/ha (cane yield) and 0.69 t/ha (sugar yield) higher than standard harvester operator practice.
- The increased sugar yield translated to a \$ 181/ha in additional gross grower revenue (calculated using a 5-year average sugar price).

### Burnt Cane Results (Patane et al.,2020)

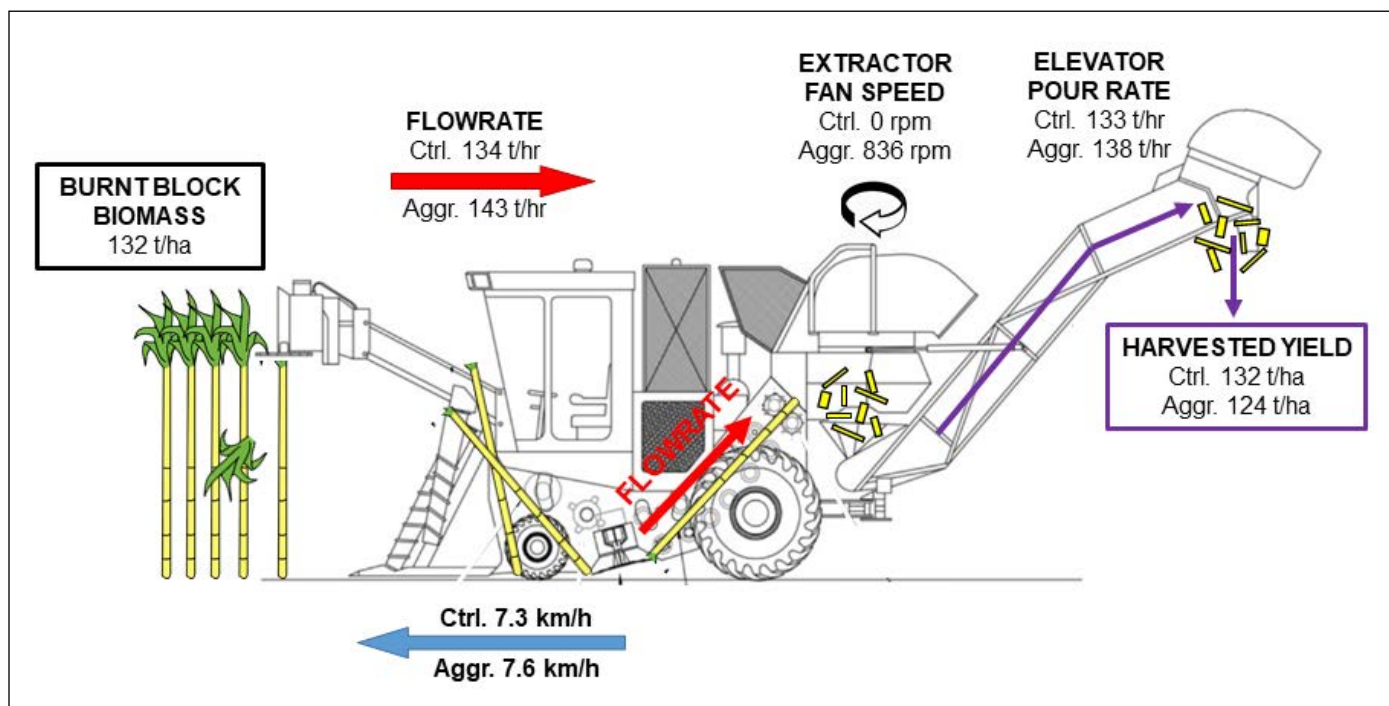


Figure 2: Burnt cane results 2018/2019

Preliminary indication from 5 “good burn” trials concluded that:

- Running the primary extractor reduces delivered yields by 8 tonnes of cane per hectare (supporting work published by Hurney et al. (1984) which identified cleaning losses of 5-8 t/ha in burnt cane).
- Turning the primary and secondary fan off in good burn scenarios resulted in increased sugar yield of 0.7 tonnes (700 kgs) per hectare.
- An additional \$249/ha (\$1.88 per tonne) increase in grower gross revenue (calculated using the 5-year average sugar price).
- Fuel burn decreased from 53.6 L/hr to 44.2 L/hr (-9.4 L/hr).

### ECONOMIC IMPACT OF HARVESTING BEST PRACTICE

The key to adoption of harvesting best practice is an understanding between growers and their harvesting contractors of the cost to move to recommended practices. Reduced flow rates into the machine (i.e. lower ground speeds) increases the cost of harvesting. To understand the impact of HBP to contractor harvesting costs the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries evaluated costs for nine of the green cane trials. The cost evaluations were comprehensive and considered the full spectrum of costs (machinery depreciation, labour, fuel, maintenance, etc.), which drew upon trial data and

required a substantial amount of operational information to be collected from the respective harvesting operations.

Growers must remember that in general harvesting, contractors across the industry are striving to deliver the best service for their growers within a constrained operating environment. However, to improve adoption rates, growers would need to consider compensating harvesting contractors for the additional cost associated with reducing harvester flow rates. The increased cane and sugar yields generated by the recommended practice implies an increase to grower gross revenue of \$181/ha (4.8%) but initial costings indicate reduced ground speeds increased the cost of harvesting by \$61/ha (excluding any additional incentive payments to the harvesting contractor). Subtracting the additional harvesting cost (including fuel and levies) from the gross grower revenue will see an average net benefit of \$120/ha.

At the time of writing, burnt cane cost and net benefit analyses had not been completed.

In summary, the adoption project has seen some success but a significant portion of industry has indicated it would only consider adopting HBP practices if tools to guide and validate their harvesting best practice decisions existed.

There is now a need to move from demonstration trials to a directed and well-structured strategy to link awareness of



research outcomes to the actual ability to convert identified losses into yield gains. To address this gap, the SRA/DAF harvesting team is now focused on:

- delivering a decision support tool to assist growers and harvesting contractors in their decision-making process when planning their harvest, mentoring and supporting growers and harvesting contractors through knowledge building workshops and field days, group and peer to peer learning,
- the development of an affordable operator training program in harvesting best practices,
- further investigation into the cost and implications to the milling and transport sectors, with a particular focus on cane supply logistics and milling efficiencies.

SRA extends a big thank you to all harvesting contractors and their grower groups who have participated in demonstration trials across all the sugarcane regions. Their input has been invaluable on the path towards realising substantial yield gains for the Australian sugarcane industry. Further thanks go to the milling sector, which continually supports the project through

its thorough analysis of trial mass balance samples at the mill. A final note of appreciation goes to regional CANEGROWERS organisations and productivity services which have been instrumental in the identification of participating harvesting contractors and growers, assistance with trials, workshops and presentations to regional boards.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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*Pictured: (below left) SRA Adoption Officer Phil Patane in the field talking harvesting best practice with Tom Major, ABC, Townsville. (Below right) Ollie Rowan (front) in the harvester with Damien Morelli during the 2019 crush. (Below main) In the field with SRA during one of the in-field trials.*





# QSL MARKET NEWS

**QSL**  
Your Trusted Partner



By Matthew Page  
QSL Trading Manager

## LATEST QSL COVID 19 UPDATE

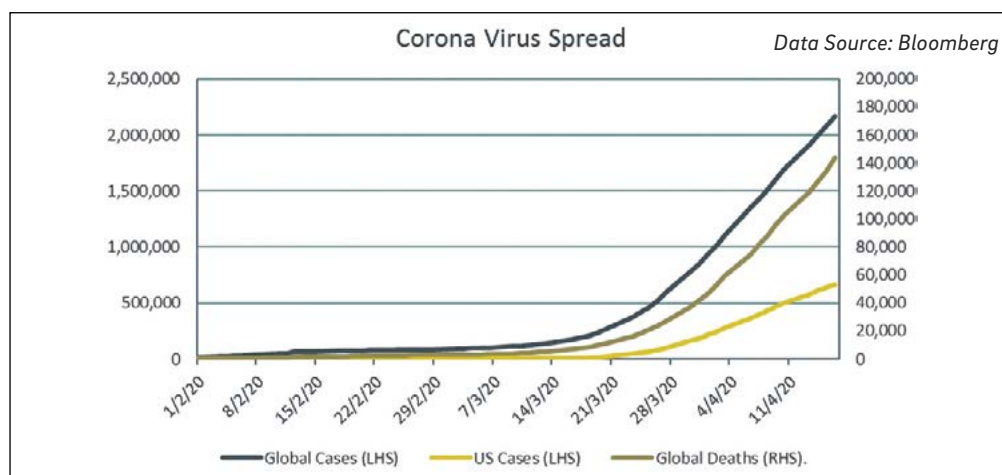
As preparations for this year's crush ramp up, many growers are understandably concerned that the current COVID-19 pandemic could impact production. While there has been no significant impact to our raw sugar sales or export shipments to date, QSL is continuing to closely monitor the situation. You can read the full QSL COVID-19 update from QSL Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Greg Beashel in the QSL Weekly Update on our website ([qsl.com.au](http://qsl.com.au)) or on our Facebook page.

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*This report contains information of a general or summary nature. While all care is taken in the preparation of this report, the reliability, accuracy or completeness of the information provided in the document is not guaranteed. Information about past performance is not an indication of future performance and nothing contained in this report should be relied upon as a representation as to future matters. The update on marketing and pricing activity does not constitute financial product or investment advice. You should seek independent advice before making any pricing decisions. 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.*

## Market Update: Is it safe to come out yet?

Financial markets still have far more questions than answers at present. As we all get used to the confinement of our own abodes, the main one of course is when will this all end? Governments around the world are actively pursuing policies to firstly contain the virus itself and 'flatten the curve', while also deploying their fiscal and monetary howitzers\* to deal with the resulting economic fallout of that containment. That said, we are yet to see a material slowing of cases globally and despite what their President says, the US still looks to be struggling to contain the spread.



Thankfully, sugar appears to have found some base level of support around the US10c/pound mark. While on the face of it it doesn't feel like much of a win given we were at US15c/lb a short two months ago, a quick glance at other markets such as oil shows how much worse it could have been. ICE 11 prices are currently trapped in a tug-of-war between a more supportive, bullish, fundamental picture and a bearish, macro and technical backdrop. It's a delicate equilibrium which may see us range-bound for the next month or two until the virus situation becomes clearer and we return to assessing the fundamental impacts of the Brazilian crop, which is now starting in earnest.

The Centre-South Brazil crop will almost certainly see mills opt to start running at maximum sugar output given ethanol prices remain depressed below US9c/lb sugar equivalent. It is worth noting however, that even when producing maximum sugar, they still produce a base volume of ethanol, and this is where the risk lies. Ethanol demand at the pump in Brazil has evaporated in the face of virus lockdowns and, as such, logistical supply lines are full. There is ethanol storage capacity at the mills that will suffice until around mid-June but unless demand returns and supply gets moving again, mills may have to face tough choices on whether to slow down crushing and potentially leave standover cane, or risk having to stop altogether – so we're in for an important couple of months ahead for markets to observe.

The Brazilian Real (BRL) remains weak against the USD at a touch over 5.50 as we go to press. However, given the large volumes of pricing already done by Brazilian millers it seems to be a diminishing factor on sugar price at present. Similarly, given a maximum sugar mix is already accepted and largely priced in by the market, we are seeing a decreasing relevance of oil prices. Despite an agreement through OPEC (the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries) to cut production, prices have plummeted to negative prices for the first time in history on the back of virus-related demand destruction that is significantly larger than the 10 million barrel per day cut agreed.



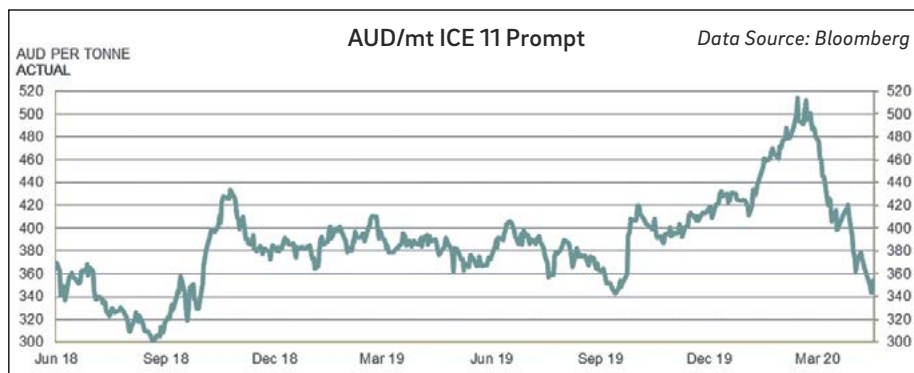
# QSL UPDATE



Volatility in the Aussie dollar remains, however it has reacted very positively to a return of risk appetite that has been spurred by the successive monetary and fiscal stimulus measures announced over the past couple of weeks and is currently sitting around 0.6350.

The speed and magnitude of the response from governments and central banks worldwide has calmed markets and shifted base-case scenarios away from the freefall we witnessed at first. This likely means the AUD will no longer take a nose dive towards 50 cents as initially anticipated, and is much more likely to experience a slower grind lower as the global recession bites, and risk and growth assets struggle to gain traction.

With the currency now feeling more resilient and sugar stuck at the bottom of its range, AUD/mt sugar prices have slipped further towards A\$350.



It will take several months for the economic data to catch up with the current situation on the ground and the full effects to be known. While all the bluster and bravado centres around reopening economies and returning to normal, what is becoming clearer by the day is that the longer this virus remains, the deeper the economic damage it will do and the longer it will take to emerge from the carnage to face whatever that new 'normal' is. Fingers-crossed the vaccine can be found sooner rather than later. Stay safe from all the team at QSL.

*\*Howitzer: A short gun for firing shells on high trajectories at low velocities. The name was taken from the Prussians (Germans) and pronounced, 'Haubitze', which means sling or basket.*

## COMING UP

**13 May 2020:** QSL's 2019-Season Advance Rate is scheduled to increase to 92.5%.

**29 May 2020:** Last day to nominate to receive QSL's Deferred Payments for 2020-Season Advances.

**15 June 2020:** Pricing Completion Date for the July 2020 Contract for growers using the QSL Individual Futures Contract and/or Self-Managed Harvest.

**17 June 2020:** QSL's 2019-Season Advance Rate is scheduled to increase to 95%.

**22 June 2020:** Any 2020-Season QSL Target Price Contract orders which are unfilled beyond this date will be rolled to the October 2020 Contract and costs may apply.

**30 June 2020:** Last day to become eligible for the 2019-Season Loyalty Bonus.

**1 July 2020:** Additional tonnages become available for grower-managed pricing for the 2020, 2021 & 2022 Seasons.

**July 2020:** Final 2019-Season Advances payment made.

**15 September:** Pricing Completion Date for the October 2020 Contract for growers using the QSL Individual Futures Contract and/or Self-Managed Harvest.

**21 September 2020:** Any 2020-Season QSL Target Price Contract orders which are unfilled beyond this date will be rolled to the March 2021 Contract and costs may apply.

## WANT TO PRICE MORE?

QSL Growers wanting to maximise their pricing flexibility and manage their own production risk can price up to 97% of their GEI Sugar each season – that's all of their tonnage except their share of the highly lucrative US Quota – by using QSL's grower-managed pricing options. Growers using our Individual Futures Contract product in conjunction with our Self-Managed Harvest option can:

- Manage all of their own production risk
- Price directly against each season's four ICE 11 futures positions; and
- Price up to 50% of their GEI Sugar after the harvest.

For further details or information about any of the above, please contact your local QSL Grower Services Team representative.

# PROJECT CANE CHANGER: THREE YEARS ON

## WHAT IS PROJECT CANE CHANGER?

Cane Changer is a CANEGROWERS initiative that has been highlighting the positive changes taking place throughout the industry and working with growers to build a more sustainable future.

In April 2019, the project was awarded funding through the Reef Trust Partnership and Great Barrier Reef Foundation to continue the momentum in the Wet Tropics and expand further south.

2019 started strongly for the project, with former Federal Environment Minister, Melissa Price MP, visiting CANEGROWERS Chairman Paul Schembri's Mackay farm to announce funding for the project and learn more about how growers are improving their productivity while protecting their environment.

"Project Cane Changer is about reinforcing positive farming practices and it links into the industry's Smartcane BMP, best management practice, program which is being recognised globally as a guarantee of sustainability," Mr Schembri told the Minister.

"I look forward to Cane Changer expanding in the future and thank the Australian Government and the Great Barrier Reef Foundation for seeing its potential."

Growers are invited to sign up to the project by signing a Cane Changer Commitment, which asks them to highlight the on-farm practice changes they've made over the years and anything they're currently working to improve.

There's certainly been changes worth celebrating, with growers throughout the Wet Tropics collectively reporting more than 2,800 practice changes in recent years.

As Cane Changer Project Director Dr John Pickering explains, statistics like these can go a long way to setting the record straight.

"We'd like to thank growers for their willingness to sign up and participate in the project, these are some extremely impressive statistics," he said.

"It's these statistics that we can show as proof that growers have been doing the right thing and are continuing to make changes on their farms to improve their productivity and protect their environment."

It's been three years since Cane Changer's official launch in the Wet Tropics and one year since the project expanded into the Burdekin and Mackay-Whitsunday regions.

As March came to an end, so too did Cane Changer in the Wet Tropics. It's been a great three years and now it's time to reflect on the project and growers' embrace of change.

## LOOKING BACK

Since Cane Changer first launched in February 2017, more than 900 growers and industry experts have been engaged, with more than 260 Wet Tropics growers signing Cane Changer Commitments to 'set the record straight' about the sugarcane industry.

Since 2017 throughout the Wet Tropics, Cane Changer has worked alongside local CANEGROWERS offices to develop and deliver workshops based on local industry needs.

In May, a series of record-keeping workshops held in the Herbert River saw growers learn more about how to align their record-keeping practices with the program's requirements. Cane Changer also provided strategies based on habit formation for growers to work the practice of record-keeping into their daily routine.

"We know that the process of record-keeping can be an initial challenge for growers who are interested in becoming accredited in Smartcane BMP," said Cane Changer Project Manager, **Sam Moore**.

"What we are trying to do with these sessions is to make it as easy as possible for growers to form a habit with record-keeping and work the practice into their routine," he said.

In the Mossman, Babinda and Mulgrave regions, young grower workshops were organised in partnership with local CANEGROWERS offices to provide a platform for discussion of new methods of farming and future leadership opportunities.

"We want to ensure that the industry's next generation feel that they have a platform to come together and have their say," said CANEGROWERS Cairns Region Chairman, **Stephen Calcagno**. "That's why we're supporting these events and providing them with an avenue to explore future leadership opportunities."

"It is important that we hear from all growers and industry members so that we can form a united approach," said CANEGROWERS Mossman Manager, **Evelyn Matthews** at a recent workshop. "The industry has faced a number of challenges over the years, but we believe that by working together we can build a brighter future for everyone."

In the Tully and Herbert River districts, Cane Changer has delivered workshops for key leaders and extension staff. These workshops aimed to provide attendees with the skills to enhance their on-ground work and provided them with a toolkit for engaging more effectively with the local industry.



"As extension staff, it is imperative that we have the on-ground skillset needed to work positively and collaboratively with growers," said HCPSL Manager, **Lawrence Di Bella**.

"These workshops enabled our team to implement strategies to improve our communication with growers and better understand psychology and points of resistance," he said.

Just a few weeks ago in Cairns, the achievements of local growers were celebrated at an event held with CANEGROWERS Cairns Region. Growers involved in the project were presented with Cane Changer Declarations, recognising the practices they've changed in the past and highlighting those they intend to adopt in the future. Together, Cairns region growers involved in Cane Changer have changed well over 600 practices in recent years.

The Cane Changer team has continued to host workshops with CANEGROWERS Innisfail and the local miller, MSF Sugar. The workshops aim to provide tips and tricks to enhance industry communication and develop a shared perspective on local industry issues and water quality improvement.

"We've faced some scrutiny over our connection to the Great Barrier Reef and over the years growers have been making significant changes to help protect it," said CANEGROWERS Innisfail Chairman, **Joseph Marano**.

"We understand the importance of working together collaboratively and want to ensure we remain positive in the face of industry challenges," he said. "We see value in these workshops for forming a collaborative approach to our industry."

## LOOKING FORWARD

Further south, Cane Changer has commenced the process of designing and tailoring the project to the Mackay-Whitsunday and Burdekin regions – meeting with more than 170 growers and industry stakeholders since April 2019.

This process has seen the project partner with the CANEGROWERS Mackay, CANEGROWERS Proserpine and CANEGROWERS Burdekin boards, alongside other industry collectives, which will lead the design and establishment of the project for their local regions.

"We know that every district is different and has its own set of success stories and challenges," said Mr Moore. "That's why we'll be working with the local boards in each district to lead the delivery and evaluation of the project."

Project Cane Changer is now ready for implementation in the Mackay-Whitsunday and Burdekin regions. Looking forward, the project will continue to work with growers to tell their

story, 'set the record straight' about the industry's embrace of change and innovation, and support growers moving through Smartcane BMP to ensure an even brighter future for their industry.

But as Cane Changer expands south, the team is saying farewell to the Wet Tropics.

"Our Cane Changer team would like to thank the Wet Tropics CANEGROWERS boards and our project partners for working with us throughout the project design, implementation and evaluation stages," said Dr Pickering.

"Most importantly, we'd like to thank all of the growers who have jumped on board with the project," he said. "Thank you for giving us your time, welcoming us onto your farms and sharing your story. Thank you for setting the record straight."

## FURTHER INFORMATION

If you'd like to find out more about Cane Changer or learn what's next for your region, you can contact your local CANEGROWERS Office or speak with one of the team on **0422 625 340**.

*Pictured: Cane Changer's Toneya McIntosh and Sam Moore (front) with CANEGROWERS Burdekin Board Directors Steve Pilla, Phil Marano, Glenn Betteridge, Owen Menkens and Roger Piva.*



# CODE DELIVERS FOR TULLY GROWERS

CANEGROWERS' sustained campaign for the introduction and then retention of a sugar industry Federal Code of Conduct is now paying dividends, with Tully growers invoking it to resolve a long-running and bitter contract dispute with their local mill.

In an industry first, CANEGROWERS Tully members utilised the Code's arbitration provision to secure a 2020-2023 Collective Cane Supply Agreement.

The grower representatives and Tully Sugar Limited had been at loggerheads for more than a year over a number of contentious provisions in the mill's proposed CCSA and, with the 2020 crush fast approaching, growers were beginning to worry they would be left without a contract even as harvesters fired up.

Among the most concerning elements in the proposed CCSA was a clause allowing for a lengthening of the crushing season, effectively withdrawing a crushing performance guarantee relied upon by growers to underpin an estimated \$75 million cane production area increase.

Growers also sought to rectify an oversight from Tully Sugar Limited's 2017 on-supply agreement with Queensland Sugar Limited that had landed farmers with responsibility for harbour dues of \$2.60 per tonne of sugar shipped from Mourilyan Port.

Grower reps began negotiations with the mill in early 2019, but by August with several issues remaining unresolved, both parties agreed to mediation.

This failed to break the deadlock, so in December 2019, CANEGROWERS Tully made the historic decision to invoke the Code of Conduct's dispute resolution mechanism and force independent arbitration.

"After more than a year of deadlock, it took the arbitrator just eight weeks to hear all submissions, consider all the facts and hand down a ruling," Euramo grower and CANEGROWERS Tully Chairman **Jamie Dore** said.

"Our preference has always been to negotiate an agreement directly with the mill, but when that wasn't possible, arbitration was the only avenue left open to us - bar just giving in to the mill's demands, which we weren't prepared to do.

"We've a responsibility to look after the best interests of our members - we're all cane growers and members ourselves - that's why we fought so hard on this."

Tully Sugar Limited fought too. First rejecting a proposed arbitrator and then objecting to the government-appointed arbitrator.

The Chinese-owned miller also pursued separate Supreme Court proceedings challenging the validity of the Code's arbitration process.

This challenge was quickly abandoned after the arbitrator, lawyer **Russell Thirgood**, handed down his final decision on 17 March.

CANEGROWERS Queensland legal adviser **Chris Cooper**, who supported Tully growers and their legal representatives throughout the process, said the ruling was a compromise that took the positions of both sides into account.

"The arbitrator accepted the CANEGROWERS Tully submissions that in making a new CCSA he should only depart from or amend the previous 2017-2019 CCSA if there was a compelling reason to do so," Mr Cooper said.

"There were many issues in dispute including the responsibility for harbour dues and an extension of the target season length.

"Ultimately, the arbitrator made no changes to these harbour dues and season length provisions that applied in the previous CCSA.

"Having said that, both sides expended significant financial and human resources pursuing the arbitration process. So, for that reason alone, resolving disputes by negotiation and discussion is always the best option.

"However, where a fair and reasonable negotiated outcome is not possible, then the Code, having withstood a challenge to its validity, provides an avenue to resolve disputes about the terms of a proposed CCSA."

*Continues page 26* ►





# CANEGROWERS



Despite the countless meetings with growers, mill representatives and lawyers - the CANEGROWERS Board, executive team and members are satisfied the effort was warranted and the correct decision was made.

"On the one hand, you could look at this and say it's the status quo and we're in the same position we were three years ago," Jamie said.

"But the important point is, we're also no worse off than we were three years ago.

"Tully Sugar was trying to fundamentally change the commercial balance in their favour with their proposed CCSA. It would have massively diminished the grower position.

"The arbitrator took the view that the 2017-2019 contract was negotiated in good faith and was a commercial arrangement that had served both parties well, and he didn't want to upset that commercial balance without compelling evidence.

"Without the Code that CANEGROWERS worked so hard to establish and retain, we wouldn't be in the position we are now. We'd be a few weeks away from the start of the season without a cane supply agreement.

"And while we're obviously disappointed that the harbour dues remain in place, at least now we can get on with the next three seasons with some sense of security, which is vital to our businesses.

"It's been an arduous few months. The arbitration process is not for the faint hearted, but these are our farms, our families, and this is our industry and community, so we have to fight for it."

### MORE WORK TO BE DONE

While satisfied to have secured an acceptable CCSA, the CANEGROWERS Tully team won't be resting on its laurels.

"We have more issues to resolve, especially around marketing where there's an issue of direct grower access to alternative marketers," Jamie said.

"At the minute, growers go through the Tully Sugar Limited online platform to market their sugar. This means we don't always have the access to all offerings that we would have if we could deal directly with alternative marketers."

"Having said that, the CANEGROWERS Tully Board and executive now look forward to resuming good working relations with Tully Sugar Limited and the wider industry, for the betterment of the whole Tully community."

### THE CODE WORKS

For CANEGROWERS Chairman Paul Schembri, the Tully result is proof that the Code of Conduct works and the years of pushing to see its implementation have been worth the effort.

"It was exactly these kinds of industry disputes that the Code was designed to deal with," he said.

"When you have an imbalance of power, such as the one that exists between large sugar milling companies and small farming enterprises, then it's imperative you have an independent mechanism in place to ensure that power isn't exploited to the detriment of farming families.

"That's why CANEGROWERS fought long and hard for an industry Code of Conduct. We pushed for years, knocking on the doors of local, state and federal politicians, laying out our case, first for the introduction and later for the retention of this Code.

"The fact that the arbitration delivered a result which involves a compromise for both parties is not a bad thing. In this instance the arbitration delivered a pathway for both parties to move forward and harvest and crush the 2020 crop.

"It shows that the arbitration process works to level the playing field in negotiations

"Most Australians believe that Australian farmers need a fair go. Codes like this help to deliver that in situations where there is a power imbalance in negotiations." ■



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# Strategies to stay calm and focused during times of uncertainty

Article developed in collaboration with SuperFriend

COVID-19 has created a level of uncertainty around the future of work for many people across multiple industries. This uncertainty is having a significant mental health impact with 1 in 3 calls to Beyond Blue's mental health line during April coronavirus-related.

Not knowing when you'll next find work, if you'll be able to reopen your doors and having to stand-down staff is incredibly stressful at any time. Not knowing what the future holds and whether work may dry up is increasing the mental load on employees and business owners alike.

**While it can feel extremely stressful and exhausting having so many unknowns – there are few strategies you can incorporate to help you stay focused and get on top of the things.**

## FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL

While you may be used to planning months or even years ahead, shifting your focus to the immediate future in terms of days and weeks means you can be more responsive to information as it unfolds and your ability to prioritise. This also gives your brain the space to focus on the key priorities around you more effectively.

### Tips:

- Stop your mind from running ahead to all the 'what-ifs' that may never happen, and instead try to deal with those things that are fact-based or require immediate attention
- Focus on the things that you can do each day, no matter how small. It will help you to re-energise if you tick off small easily achievable goals as you work towards bigger, seemingly insurmountable tasks
- Keep a calm and practical approach to day-to-day activities as much as possible – this will help you to conserve your mental energy and emotional wellbeing

## PRIORITISE YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

You will be far more effective in supporting yourself and those around you, if you're feeling mentally strong. As the saying goes, 'put your own oxygen mask on first and then help others'.

The National Mental Health Commission has come together with mental health organisations, experts and leaders to launch #InThisTogether – a national conversation that everyone can join in on, sharing practical tips online.

Here are some of their recommendations:

- Get sweaty – exercise is great for your mental health
- Take breaks when you need them
- Routine helps – create a new daily routine
- Follow the facts – pause the scrolling
- Financial stress is real – talk about it

## HELP EACH OTHER

While we are keeping physically distant, it is more important than ever that we remain socially and emotionally connected.

Sometimes it can help to talk to someone about these frustrations. That might be with your partner or a friend, your GP, or calling a support service to talk through your worries.

Consider getting involved with volunteer organisations or charities who are providing services to people who need them most right now. We know that people have a remarkable way of pulling together through tough times and if we focus on looking out for one another, we will get to the other side of this.

## BE PATIENT WITH YOURSELF

Do whatever it is that helps you to get some perspective and start to put the stress behind you. Be patient with yourself and remember it's okay to take some time to work through things.

## REMEMBER, THIS WILL NOT LAST FOREVER

While this has been, and will continue to be a stressful period, it doesn't mean we are all going to walk out of this period with poor mental health. But it does mean we need to be more conscious about our efforts to support and protect our bodies and minds during this difficult time.

## STAY INFORMED

There are so many helpful resources out there to support us through this tough time. Sifting through them can be overwhelming, so sticking to a few reputable resources can help to simplify things. Below are excellent online resources that will prove helpful during times of uncertainty, so that you can make the best decisions.

### Online resources

Read market updates from Sunsuper's Chief Economist, Brian Parker and listen to podcasts	<a href="https://www.sunsuper.com.au/covid19">sunsuper.com.au/covid19</a>
Federal government COVID-19 updates (including multilingual translations)	<a href="https://australia.gov.au">australia.gov.au</a>
SuperFriend	<a href="https://superfriend.com.au/covid-19-support">superfriend.com.au/covid-19-support</a>
Beyond Blue	<a href="https://beyondblue.org.au">beyondblue.org.au</a>
Lifeline	<a href="https://lifeline.org.au">lifeline.org.au</a>
Heads-up	<a href="https://headsup.org.au">headsup.org.au</a>
Black Dog Institute	<a href="https://blackdoginstitute.org.au">blackdoginstitute.org.au</a>

If you're a Sunsuper member and are experiencing financial concerns and want to know more about early access to super, take a moment to visit Sunsuper's dedicated page at [www.sunsuper.com.au/covid19](https://www.sunsuper.com.au/covid19) or call us on 13 11 84.

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# BRUCE READY TO HANG UP HIS BOOTS

by Cindy Benjamin

From humble farm hand to digital mapping expert working on the front line of the Queensland cane industry's biosecurity battle – there isn't much Bruce Quinn doesn't know about growing sugarcane.



But after 40 years in the business, the Isis Productivity Limited chief is preparing to hang up his work boots for a well-deserved break at the end of this season.

Bruce's cane industry career began in 1976, working on cane farms in the Moorelands area north of Bundaberg.

Within a few years, Fiji Leaf Gall disease was devastating farms around region, wiping out first ratoon crops of NCo310, the major variety grown on 95% of the cane area in the district.

"In 1979, there were 70 million plants with Fiji disease in the Bundaberg area. I was working as a farm hand for Ray Morgan at the time and met the (then) Bingera Pest and Disease Board supervisor Roy Sinnammon one lunchtime," says Bruce.

"Because I knew about Fiji disease, Roy hired me as a casual for two years to inspect crops while the resistant variety Q87 was being planted to replace NCo."

From 1983 to 2000 Bruce worked for the Bingera Pest and Disease Board, learning the ropes of plant biosecurity and, just as importantly, learning how to best interact with, and influence, farmers.

In 1982 the Bingera board established the Mother Plot on a block at Toweran, isolated from other cane farms. Plant inspections were ongoing, quarantine zones established and plough-out orders issued if the regulations were not

followed.

Ten years of consistent effort led to the disease being eradicated and the last reported plant infected with Fiji disease was destroyed in 1989.

While working at Bingera, Bruce learned the art of accurately identifying the bacteria responsible for ratoon stunting disease (RSD) under a microscope.

The ongoing presence of RSD and the varying susceptibility of cane varieties to the disease has meant that hot water treatment has remained an integral part of the seed cane supply program along with multiple inspections of the plots during the year.

In 2000, he took up the role of assistant supervisor with the Isis Pest and Disease Board and spent his first day learning how to operate the Toft J150 whole stick plant cutter.

Twenty years later he is still the main operator for the machine and sometimes wonders if he was wise to learn that particular skill in the first place!

In 2002, Bruce moved into the role of IPL supervisor and has made it his own – implementing many new initiatives and supporting all industry efforts to assist Isis cane growers.

One of the first initiatives he took charge of was the roll-out of the Isis RSD

Eradication Plan in 2003. At the time RSD was present on 50% of the Isis cane area.

"I started working with growers to identify risky blocks and come up with a harvesting plan to minimise the spread of the disease," says Bruce.

"We also looked at reducing the area of spring replant and better managing volunteer cane plants. The result has been that we now have RSD present on just eight farms in the district, and only 1% of the growing area."

Along with consolidating the production of clean seed supply and expanding the program to accommodate growers from other districts after deregulation in 2005, Bruce is justifiably proud of his achievements with block recording and mapping.

"I would never have thought that I'd be interested in computer mapping, but I really got into it," he says. "I worked with the Mackay Productivity Board to build the first block recording system with MapInfo and it was been such a useful tool to have."

The drawback was that data could only be entered in the office, so when cloud-based platforms started to emerge Bruce worked with Peter Wittle, founder of AgKonect, to build the Sugar KPS – Konect Productivity Services web-based block recording system.





*Pictured: After 40 years in the industry and almost two decades on the frontline of the battle against cane diseases, Isis Productivity supervisor Bruce Quinn is looking forward to retirement.*

With all the same data available, now users can enter data in the field and multiple officers can access the system at the one time.

"The system syncs with smart phones and now our extension officers, Juliette Greenway and Andrew Jakins, can access the platform and add data wherever they are working," he says.

"The system has always been very useful for reporting to the IPL board and underpins many of the important decisions the board needs to make."

"Unfortunately, sugarcane is prone to a variety of diseases and I have the dubious honour of being the one to find Sugarcane Smut – on June 6, 2006," says Bruce.

"The confirmation came through on the 9th and that was the beginning of the most stressful few years of my career."

Bruce recruited his wife, Carolyn, along with Robyn Rapley and Sandra Webb to form IPL's core response team. A variety replacement plan was prepared for growers to remove susceptible varieties over a five-year period.

Having been involved with the extension of the Sugar Yield Decline Joint Venture findings in 2005, Bruce worked closely with the (then) BSES Extension Officer Jim Sullivan to support growers through the Isis Target 100 program to integrate soybean into the cane rotation.

"From 2005 to 2009 I was involved with the coordination of soybean seed and fertiliser supplies, planting and harvesting," he says. "Now Andrew provides that support to growers."

In 2012, Bruce was appointed as the Isis BMP Coordinator and managed to sign up 80 growers and see five of them through to accreditation before handing the job over to Juliette.

Bruce is now transitioning to retirement and knows that he will miss the IPL and other industry teams he works with, but most of all, he knows that he will miss the daily interactions with growers.

"Farming is becoming increasingly difficult and I have the upmost respect for growers," says Bruce.

"I was warmly welcomed into the Isis cane growing community and have found my work so rewarding. Regulation is important, but extension and relationship building is where real change happens." Pull quote

"Not every problem can be fixed straight away. This job requires lots of listening and persistently presenting new ideas until a workable solution is found."



# BURDEKIN GROWERS CUT NITROGEN, NOT YIELD

*Supplied by NQ Dry Tropics*

Burdekin cane growers who participated in a three-year program to reduce the amount of nitrogen fertiliser applied to their crops have received their first “report cards” and the grades are top notch, with all participants getting an “A+”.



## AT A GLANCE

Sixteen Burdekin cane farmers were contracted to reduce surplus nitrogen application, using SIX EASY STEPS methodology, proven under RP20 trials.

SIX EASY STEPS is an integrated nutrient management tool that enables the adoption of best practice nutrient management on-farm. It consists of:

1. Knowing and understanding your soils.
2. Understanding and managing nutrient processes and losses.
3. Regular soil testing.
4. Adopting soil-specific nutrient management guidelines.
5. Checking on the adequacy of nutrient inputs (e.g. leaf analyses).
6. Keeping good records to modify nutrient inputs when and where necessary.

Collectively, the 16 farmers participating in the Pilot Round of NQ Dry Tropics' Reef Trust Tender – Burdekin project, used much less nitrogen (N) on their crops without affecting the quality or quantity of cane grown.

Under the project, growers proposed trialling ways to reduce fertiliser use, and put a price on the cost of making the change.

Trials included matching fertiliser inputs to crop requirements and using technology to only apply fertiliser precisely where it was needed.

The result? More than 700 tonnes of nitrogen that would have otherwise been used in Burdekin cane paddocks stayed in the warehouse.

Individually, the farmers were able to dramatically reduce the rate of N applied (on average, by about 20%) using the Six Easy Steps methodology to determine fertiliser rates.

NQ Dry Tropics Project Officer Shakira Todd said farmers saved money because they had to buy much less fertiliser and the environment benefited because

there was much less chance of damaging Dissolved Inorganic Nitrogen (DIN) from farms ending up on the Great Barrier Reef.

A high level of DIN in water has been linked to outbreaks of Crown-of-Thorns starfish on the reef, and provides ideal conditions for weeds to thrive in rivers and wetlands, which reduces habitat for native fish and migratory birds.

Nitrogen is one of the key nutrients the crop needs to drive photosynthesis and sugar production.

Historically, it has been the “go to” element farmers used to grow more cane, to produce more sugar and make more money.

“We believed that we could grow more cane by adding more fertiliser, and it became a bad habit,” Home Hill grower Eric Barbagallo said.

That belief became entrenched and growers firmly believed that reducing the amount of N – commonly delivered by spreading urea – would directly affect production and, therefore, threaten their livelihood.





*Pictured: NQ Dry Tropics Project Officer Shakira Todd with Home Hill grower with CANEGROWERS member Eric Barbagallo (by Scott Radford-Chisholm).*

*"As farmers, we're environmentalists, that's the best way to describe us. But if you're also saving money... as a farmer it's a win-win."*

The problem for the industry was that the Dissolved Inorganic Nitrogen (DIN) not taken up by the crop and allowed to leave the farm in irrigation run-off and drainage, was more than likely going to end up on the reef.

But the NQ Dry Tropics' project, which was funded by the Australian Government's Reef Trust Program, is changing the way cane growers approach nutrient application to their crops.

Managed by Project Officer Shakira Todd, the project paid growers to commit to a reduction of at least 5% in nitrogen applied to their crop.

The idea was that by taking away the perceived risk, growers could adopt the recommendations from the Six Easy Steps methodology without fear of financial ruin if it went wrong.

Farmers such as CANEGROWERS member Eric Barbagallo had the flexibility to determine which practice changes to implement on their farms to improve nitrogen management.

The project provided Eric with a great opportunity to increase farm

sustainability, reduce costs, and refine their nitrogen use.

Eric, who actually reduced his rates below the SIX EASY STEPS regulated rate, said: "It doesn't matter that you're being paid to trial new practices, if your yield declines you're just going to lose more money.

"SIX EASY STEPS is fine if you follow Best Management Practice. You'll grow cane as long as your irrigation schedule, weed management and fertiliser placement is managed – you won't lose yield."

Project Officer Shakira Todd had plenty of praise for Eric, saying he was an easy grower to work with.

"He provided accurate and organised data for analysis," she said. "It can be challenging refining fertiliser rates when other factors such as seasonal variability can significantly impact yield.

"Eric said he would continue to refine his fertiliser application in years following the project to optimise nutrient use efficiency."

*Continues next page ►*





*Pictured: Burdekin cane grower Jim Richardson took part in NQ Dry Tropics successful nitrogen reduction trials (by Scott Radford-Chisholm)*

*"Where I used my original heavy rates of nitrogen it showed that the extra nitrogen may as well have been dumped on the road somewhere. There was no difference."*

During the 2016-2018 seasons, Eric reduced the amount of N he applied by 13 tonnes, equivalent to 28 tonnes of urea, for a cost saving of more than \$16,000.

Another participant, Jim Richardson, 74, who's been farming in the Burdekin since the 1970s, had concerns about yield decline when the government began to regulate fertiliser application to 240kg N/ha.

He joined some of the early trials and was surprised by the results.

"Where I used my original heavy rates of nitrogen it showed that the extra nitrogen may as well have been dumped on the road somewhere. There was no difference," Jim said.

"In fact, in some blocks, the heavy rates were actually producing less sugar."

Shakira said Jim's involvement in the project shows that age is no barrier to change.

"The project supported Jim to make significant changes to his farming practices, and gave him confidence that any risks were being well-managed so there would be no negative financial impact," she said.

Jim saved eight tonnes of N during the 2016-2018 fertilising seasons, with savings of approximately \$9,808.

In 2018, the average rate for Jim's farm was 160kg N/ha.

"That was a big reduction even on what I was using before," he said.

"We cut it down previously, following SIX EASY STEPS and now, even further, without any effect on our crop, because with everything considered, we've increased our production."

Although the Pilot Round of the project is finished, and farmers are no longer being contracted to reduce fertiliser rates, they continue to examine data and conduct soil analyses to apply even less nitrogen.

That's primarily because not one grower in the project recorded any reduction in yield from the crops they grew with less nitrogen.

The only effect on their bottom line was positive, because the reduced spend on fertiliser has transferred directly to profit.

The financial aspect is important, but so is the environmental benefit.

"It's not really about the money if you're getting results," Mr Barbagallo said.

"As farmers, we're environmentalists, that's the best way to describe us.

"It is about the environment.

"But if you're also saving money... as a farmer it's a win-win."

About 50 growers are involved across three rounds of the project and word of their success is spreading rapidly among their peers. ■





# CANEGROWERS Sugarcane Farm COVID-19 Guide

The industry is working hard to ensure that the 2020 season can progress even under the current impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. This guide puts the management of COVID-19 risks in context for cane growers.

While the virus itself is a challenge that the world has never seen before, management of its risks still fit within the broad area of all workplace health and safety risks. In that sense, as with any other risk on a cane farm, the owner/manager has the responsibility in law to keep workers safe from the risk of coronavirus while at the workplace and also to know what to do if someone becomes ill. It is just as important for the grower to keep themselves and their family safe.

This guide has been put together using information and protocols outlined in:

- The National Farmers' Federation farm workplace guide: [farmhub.org.au/covid-19-nff-workplace-guide/](https://farmhub.org.au/covid-19-nff-workplace-guide/)
- A Safe Work Australia document for minimising the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for the agricultural industry: <https://bit.ly/2KCKSuV>
- A Safe Food Checklist for Reducing Workforce Impact from COVID-19 and Guideline for Reducing Workforce Impact: <https://bit.ly/2xaFk2W>

If you need more detail or information, these are the documents to consult. Please note that this guide is not exhaustive and while every effort has been made to ensure its accuracy, it is intended to provide general assistance. It will be updated as required.

In conjunction with this farm guide, please ensure you and your staff are familiar with any COVID-19 policies and procedures your local mill may have in relation to interactions with its staff such as at sidings or other delivery points.

## UNDERSTAND COVID-19

COVID-19, also known as coronavirus, is spread through close contact with an infectious person, droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze and touching objects or surfaces that have droplets from an infected person and transferring them to mouth, nose or eyes. The virus can survive for many hours on some surfaces.

Symptoms range from mild illness to fatal pneumonia and include fever, coughing, sore throat, fatigue, and shortness of breath. Queensland Health has more information available here: [www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19](https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19)

## HOW TO MINIMISE THE RISK OF ANYONE CONTRACTING COVID-19 WHILE ON YOUR FARM



### CONTROL ACCESS

The most important first step is to check that staff and contractors are healthy before they arrive at your farm and that they have not been in contact with a known COVID-19 case in the previous 14 days. Staff and contractors should be advised to stop working and inform you if they begin to feel unwell, especially if they develop a fever.

Consider using a Personal Disclosure Statement for staff, visitors and contractors and making sure contractors have a plan to minimise the risk of their staff being infected. A sample form is in the NFF Guide referred to above.

Queensland Health requires a Health Plan to be in place before staff from interstate are employed. This is also a good guide to understanding how to minimise a COVID infection on your farm. A template is available to download: <https://bit.ly/2y3uPPD>



### PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- Limit physical interactions between workers and ensure there is space (for example in meal break areas) for people to keep at least 1.5m apart.
- Limit the number of people on your farm at any one time (for example, only one contracting group at a time) by postponing non-essential work or rescheduling work if necessary.
- Avoid handshakes, or any other close personal contact.



## PERSONAL HYGIENE

- Advise everyone to cover coughs and sneezes with an elbow or tissue which should be immediately disposed of.
- Provide facilities and supplies of soap and warm water for regular and thorough hand washing.
- Encourage the use of hand sanitisers.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs, tables and bathrooms
- Ensure cigarette butts are binned and strongly discourage spitting.



## WORKSPACE HYGIENE

- Ensure farm machinery and tools are cleaned after use with a product containing at least 60% alcohol. Provide cleaning agents and training to ensure surfaces are cleaned. To see what's required for machinery clean down, watch this Sugar Research Australia video: [youtu.be/ef44SO5c0Ag](https://youtu.be/ef44SO5c0Ag)
- In addition to the usual requirements associated with the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) during operations such as the use of farm chemicals, consider making additional PPE such as gloves and face masks available to be used if workers or family members exhibit symptoms or wish to further minimise their exposure. The Department of Health does not currently recommend masks for use by healthy members of the public.

## WHAT TO DO IF SOMEONE BECOMES ILL OR HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH A COVID-19 CASE

This is a general process to follow if someone on your farm, or in your family, starts to display symptoms which could be COVID-19:

- Immediately isolate any suspected infectious person and direct or assist them to be tested for the virus. Seek advice if needed from Queensland Health **13 43 25 84** or the National Coronavirus Helpline **1800 020 080**.
- Thoroughly clean and disinfect any places, equipment or objects that have been touched.
- Identify anyone else that the infectious person may have been in close contact with and ensure they are immediately isolated and directed or assisted to be tested. This table is a guide of definitions of contact and is sourced from the Safe Food Queensland resource linked above.

CRITERIA	OUTCOME
<b>CONFIRMED CASE</b> A person who tests positive to a validated test.	After seeking medical attention, the person must remain isolated until health authorities inform them it is safe for them to return to their usual activities.
<b>CLOSE CONTACT</b> A close contact is defined as someone who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• has had more than 15 minutes of face-to-face contact (in any setting) with a person with confirmed COVID-19 (including in the 24 hours before their symptoms appeared), or</li><li>• has shared an enclosed space (e.g. office or sealed room) with a person with confirmed COVID-19 for more than 2 hours (including in the 24 hours before their symptoms appeared).</li></ul>	Workers who may have been in close contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus, are required to self-quarantine for 14 days.  Self-quarantine means staying at home, in a hotel room or provided accommodation, and not leaving for the period required to quarantine. Only people who usually live in the household should be in the home. Do not allow visitors into the home.
<b>CASUAL CONTACT</b> A casual contact is someone who has been in the same general area as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 while infectious. You are a casual contact if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You have had less than 15 minutes face-to-face contact (in any setting) with a confirmed case (including in the 24 hours before their symptoms appeared), or</li><li>• You have shared an enclosed space with a confirmed case for less than 2 hours (including in the 24 hours before their symptoms appeared).</li></ul>	Casual contacts do not need to be excluded from work while well.

Last updated 24/04/2020

**For more information including business support information visit:**  
**[www.canegrowers.com.au](http://www.canegrowers.com.au)**



# CANEGROWERS REGIONAL ROUND-UP

Supplied by CANEGROWERS district offices

## MOSSMAN

CANEGROWERS Mossman remains open to growers by appointment during the current COVID-19 restrictions. We are still contactable by phone and email and we are still dealing with a variety of grower issues.

We encourage growers to be thinking about the start of crushing and talk with their harvesting contractors about harvesting prices and how to work together in this restricted environment given it is likely to persist into June and beyond. Now is the time to plan for business continuity and compliance with the COVID-19 safety so further restrictions are not imposed.

The Mossman crop has had relatively favourable growing conditions, but it was a drier summer period and warmer conditions seem set to continue during our autumn period this year. The current crop estimate has come in lower than the 2019 crop, which is disappointing. The 2020 estimate currently sits at 817,100 tonnes of cane. This will be split between Mossman

Mill, processing 701,850 tonnes, and MSF's Tableland Mill, toll-crushing 115,250 tonnes of cane.

At the 31 March Bargaining Agents' meeting, grower representatives were advised that Mossman Mill was slightly behind, but within a week of its targeted maintenance schedule. The aim is to be ready for crushing by early June. The actual start date for Mossman Mill has not yet been communicated to growers.

With Cane Changer now at an end in the Wet Tropics, CANEGROWERS Mossman is pleased to have received a number of Cane Changer Declaration Certificates. We look forward to a time when we can once again get a group of growers together to celebrate their commitment to improving cane farming practices and being a part of setting the record straight about the Australian sugarcane industry.

## CAIRNS

The crop across the Mulgrave and Babinda area has responded well to the climatic conditions. Most meetings and grower engagements have been transitioned to remote communications, in line with CANEGROWERS and government policies to deal with COVID-19 for the safety of both staff and growers.

Grower services are still maintained and being well utilised throughout this period. CANEGROWERS Cairns Region's banded mud spreader continues to be in demand within the region this year.

There has also been renewed interest in Smartcane BMP from growers who had previously not been involved in the program. The direct drill bean planter will also be available for growers to hire for fallow planting in the 2020 season. Call Joel Tierney on 0472 869 659 if you are interested in trying the mud spreader or wishing to re-engage in Smartcane BMP.

## TABLELAND

The past month has seen COVID-19 impact on how things are being done. Meetings are being held by phone and video conferencing in the endeavour to keep business as usual. The Annual Production Awards night was cancelled, with hope that we can make next year bigger and better. Concerns around Health Plans for farms, harvest groups and the Mills are under discussion.

Tableland Mill and Mossman Mill have set start dates for beginning of June. The Tableland Mill, owned by MSF, are offering growers incentives that include cash bonuses to increase production.

\*New land subsidy - \$1000 per planted hectare

\*New land loans - \$2000 per planted hectare

\*Pre-financing for plant cane farm inputs - \$800 per planted hectare

\*Pre-financing for ratoon cane farm inputs - \$400 per hectare

**\*Conditions apply**

The 2019 season crop of 101 tch was down nearly 10% on the previous four-year average. Although wet season rainfall this year was half the long-term average, the 2020 crop yield is expected to be close to the long-term average of 110 tch. The drier conditions have meant that irrigation has played a crucial role this year in securing the crop. Crop irrigation this season is up by at least 25% compared to last season.

## INNISFAIL

Preparations for the coming harvest and crushing season are well advanced. MSF Sugar has provided details of how they will manage their workforce and what pre-planning they have implemented. Everyone is working together to ensure the 2020 crop is fully harvested and crushed.

An excellent mix of showers and sunshine has been experienced across the district in the past month. The crop is better than that achieved last year, with the average just under 70 tonnes per hectare. The latest crop estimate is yet to be announced by MSF Sugar.

The extension team that works under the various programs

hosted by CANEGROWERS Innisfail, have been either working from home or just using the office as a base over the past six weeks. The main office has continued to operate but has been closed to all visitors unless by prior arrangement, or invited in under strict social distancing arrangements.

The price of fuel and fertiliser, as well as access to spare-parts and consumables, is now appearing as the main issues of concern for our members.

The CANEGROWERS Innisfail Annual General Meeting will proceed on 28 May, but will be conducted via an online platform due to social distancing restrictions.

Continues next page ►

## TULLY

Following a protracted legal process, the 2020 Collective Cane Supply Contract was sent to Tully growers in April, giving the local sugar Industry some much-needed security - at least until the end on the 2023 season.

Preparations for the 2020 harvest are well underway, and the additional requirements of COVID-19 are being considered.

The 2020 crop forecasts are mixed, with some blocks impacted by the dry and hot conditions. However, years without floods tend to deliver better than average crops in Tully.

The area for harvest is approximately 28,500 hectares. This is lower than previous seasons, because of a larger fallow area and the transfer of some 900 ha of CPA to the South Johnstone Mill area.

A crop estimate of 2.4 million tonnes seems reasonable at this stage.

The Annual General Meetings of Tully Cane Productivity Services Ltd and CANEGROWERS Tully have been set for Wednesday 20 May. However, this is contingent on the gathering rules that might be applicable at this time.

## HERBERT RIVER

Parts of the district have had between 130 and 200mm of rain in recent weeks, while other areas have had very little. The crop is not as advanced as it should be at this stage of the year. It is showing good colour but growth has slowed due to dry weather. There are also some indications of Yellow Canopy Syndrome.

The district is on schedule to commence crushing on 16 June, with a mid-November finish being forecast. The estimate for

2020 is 4.16 million tonnes, excluding seed.

CANEGROWERS Herbert River has initiated a COVID-19 working group to compile proactive measures and guidelines for growers, harvester and planter contractors.

Office staff are still working remotely and to date have had no issues supplying essential services to our members.

## BURDEKIN

The 2020 season has officially entered the countdown stage after Wilmar released its Business Update on 8 April, detailing its outlook for 2020 following the finalisation of crop estimates. Inkerman Mill is first cab off the rank with a scheduled start date of 2 June. Kalamia, Invicta and Pioneer will follow on 9 June.

The Burdekin crop has been estimated at 8.04 million tonnes. This is up slightly on the 2019 season crush, which came in at 7.909 million tonnes.

When you drive around the district the crop looks good in some areas and mixed in others, but what stands out is the hold that Yellow Canopy Syndrome has had in the Burdekin this year. Farmers are now busy planting with recent rainfall being both a help and a hinderance, depending on what stage the planting was at.

COVID-19 has taken a bit of gloss off the season in terms of adding a layer of uncertainty and we all look forward to seeing the season get underway to remove some of this doubt. One outcome of COVID-19 has been the change in work practices, in particular meetings and the take-up of conferencing technology and its ease of use should lessen the need for travel in future and save a lot of time and expense.

Local Government elections were finalised and the sugar industry was pleased to see two cane farmers elected as

councillors to the Burdekin Shire Council in Kaylee Boccalatte and Max Musumeci. It is encouraging to see these farmers put their hands up for leadership roles in the community and provides the industry with confidence that a grower's voice will be heard at a senior level on important issues for the industry and grower community.

We wish Kaylee and Max and all the councillors and Mayor the best for their four-year term.

*Pictured: Greg Rossato, Richard Wall and Greg Watson in the Burdekin with Stewart Peters in Brisbane, discuss diversification opportunities via Microsoft Teams.*





## PROSERPINE

The Proserpine crushing season now has a start date, with crop estimates for this year up slightly from last. Crushing operations are scheduled to start at Proserpine Mill on 30 June, with an estimated 1.62 million tonnes to be crushed this year. This number is slightly up from the 1.55 million tonnes of sugarcane processed last year.

While the coronavirus pandemic has caused some uncertainty and challenges for the sugar industry generally, a number of

local measures should see the 2020 crushing season proceed without interruption.

This year's monsoon season has brought minimal heavy rain, however, the crop continues to benefit from light but persistent coastal showers.

Early planted cane is looking particularly healthy at this stage.

## MACKAY/PLANE CREEK

### All sectors working together for a successful crush

Referring to the difficult and challenging times for the industry brought about by COVID-19, CANEGROWERS Mackay Chairman Kevin Borg has said that the organisation has continuity plans in place to handle any problems in the upcoming crush.

We have been regularly in touch with stakeholders to ensure the Mackay and Plane Creek districts have the best chance of harvesting all the 2020 crop.

There has been excellent cooperation with all parties in bringing together a successful crushing season thus far. We are very fortunate that in our industry we see a positive will from all involved to work together for the good of us all.

### Office remains open

The Federal Government has declared agriculture an essential industry, meaning Mackay and Plane Creek growers can continue to do their job of providing valuable export dollars for the nation.

It is up to growers to put continuity plans in place on their farms to ensure the season proceeds smoothly.

Please contact the office if we can help you with this. Due to the generous layout of our facilities, CANEGROWERS Mackay has been able to keep the office open and all staff are at work there.

Having said this, it is still a requirement that growers who need assistance should phone first and attempt to resolve an issue over the phone in the first instance. If this is not possible, they will be advised of other ways and procedures in order to preserve social distancing while also ensuring a resolution to their problem.

Your elected members and staff continue to participate in important meetings through new and existing electronic means. This has been an interesting and challenging way of doing business in our organisation, but it has been successful

and hasn't put any of our people in jeopardy.

As you will know on farm, it has been challenging to put in place social distancing rules and strict hygiene procedures, particularly where growers work both on and off farm, but it is critical that we all play our role in keeping ourselves and those we work with safe and free from infection. It is also, of course, valuable in helping to keep biosecurity threats at bay.

As we move into the season and planting and harvesting gets under way we are seeing added pressures on the field sector to continue and add to the good work others have already done. The latest guidelines for the growing and harvesting sectors can be found on the front page of the CANEGROWERS website.

*Continues next page ►*



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## ISIS

This has been a period of much change and angst as members and the broader community transition to a life and lifestyle that we have never experienced before. The CANEGROWERS Isis Board has rapidly adapted to representing members using online meeting technology such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams. These are both platforms not dissimilar to Facetime, which many families use to stay in touch.

Although new to directors, they have enjoyed the challenge and see some value in using the technology on some issues as a time and money saver into the future.

The CANEGROWERS Isis office is fully operational and 'manned' with the building currently closed to visitors except by appointment. We are adhering to all government guidelines as they come to hand. Isis Productivity Ltd and CANEGROWERS Isis have also aligned field/ offsite practices to protect our staff and growers.

The current district crop is still showing signs of growth potential. Growers are being encouraged to maintain the soil moisture status in the absence of follow-up rainfall and the crop has benefited where growers were able to take advantage of 'out of allocation' irrigation water from Paradise Dam.

Sugarcane growers in the Isis District are calling for an urgent plan to determine how Paradise Dam can be fixed, now – without its wall being reduced in height (see news report on page 5).

Unfortunately, as reported in the media, Fall Armyworm has found its way to the Bundaberg region.

The district's peanut crop is nearing harvest

end, with the majority of growers achieving good yields and prices. In addition, the smaller than average rotational soybean crop is heading towards maturity with growers well supported by above average bean prices.



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## MARYBOROUGH

Life in the COVID-19 bubble has seen the rain head out to sea, the sugar price tumble, and it's really hard to go out ...for anything.

Government restrictions on large gatherings have seen the cancellation of all industry events planned for March, April and May. While some are simply postponed in the hope of securing alternative dates later this year, many have been cancelled, with organisers planning to try again in 2021.

The crop has remained healthy and most irrigators are in operation to keep the plants happy. The last few weeks have had slim options for any rain. Evapotranspiration rates are in excess of 35mm daily, so the need for rain is again pressing.

The district board met in late-April and commenced discussions with the mill for season 2020. Early thoughts put the crop around the same size as last year and a potential start date at mid-to-late July.

COVID-19 will require all operators to rethink their processes for the cleaning of equipment to reduce the chance of spreading disease. Our newsletter will provide more information on this.

Soybeans have been enjoying a good season, with some very well-developed crops on show. The price has also remained strong and should see a good return on harvest. Productivity services have reported that beneficial bug numbers are evident this year to help control pests naturally.

## ROCKY POINT

It's been a dry couple of weeks in Rocky Point. The crop would have benefited from more substantial rain, but warm dry conditions are persisting.

The soybean harvest has just begun under favorable conditions. The food grade price at farmgate on offer is \$900 + gst.

We have not yet priced any sugar for the 2020 season. The final price we achieved in the pool for 2019 was \$424.78.

Since January, there have been approximately five arson incidents in the area and so far the police have no suspects.

Two-year-old cane is always targeted, making it more difficult to fight. Sadly, growers will again need to be vigilant for this type of activity in the lead-up to the season.

We have a new Council representative, Mark Hammel, who is the son of a local cane farmer. We are looking forward to working with him on local issues.

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# **WE'RE WORKING FOR MEMBERS**

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**CANEGROWERS POLICY UPDATE**





## Mick Quirk

Environment and Sustainability Manager  
CANEGROWERS

### A Climate for Change?

The National Farmers' Federation is reviewing its policy on climate change and how agriculture responds to the challenges of a destabilised climate. It seeks input from member organisations which includes CANEGROWERS. The current policy is based on two propositions. Firstly, that agriculture should do its part to ensure Australia's economy can cost-effectively reduce its greenhouse gas emissions. Secondly, that income opportunities for farmers exist in the carbon economy.

The first proposition will have supporters and opponents given that views on climate change in the community can be polarised. Resolving this in any section of the community will be difficult, especially when constructive discussion of the science has become as rare as rocking horse poo. Perhaps we would do better to focus on this question: **What position is best for the future prosperity and reputation of agriculture?**

The second proposition on income opportunities should be readily apparent. No Australians know more about dealing with climate variability than farmers. It follows, then, that farmers will be at the forefront of innovation and adaptation to manage any directional trends in climate. It is most likely that Australia will continue to have national emissions reduction goals. Agriculture's track record on improving efficiency can translate to reduced intensity of emissions from farming. This, in turn, can translate to income for farmers through participation in carbon markets. We can be part of the solution.

Challenges with the second proposition remain. There has been limited success in developing carbon farming opportunities that are of relevance and appeal to most farmers. Carbon farming payments based on management of woody vegetation have some uptake but this is of little relevance to cropping enterprises. Opportunities around soil carbon have shown promise in theory, but implementation has proven complex and expensive. The issues may be overcome and other options may

be developed. The Australian Government appears committed to getting carbon farming methods that work for the majority.

What about emissions reduction targets? Every Australian state along with various industries, companies and organisations (including the Business Council of Australia, BHP, Qantas and most banks) have committed to net zero emissions by 2050 meaning emissions of greenhouse gases during a 12-month period are removed from the atmosphere through reduction measures during the same period.

As you would expect, NFF is taking a cautious and pragmatic approach to committing agriculture to any such targets. Its draft position is that:

- The NFF supports an aspirational target of net zero emissions by 2050 for Australia as a whole (note the word aspirational, inferring ambition rather than obligation).
- The NFF considers, before 2025, a net zero emissions target for the agricultural sector, achievable by 2050, conditional on the following:
  - There are identifiable and economically viable pathways to net neutrality;
  - The position is reviewed every five years to ascertain if it remains a feasible target; and
  - That Commonwealth and State legislation benefits agricultural interests and does not provide unnecessary regulatory impediments.

The policy remains under discussion. However, this seems a balanced approach given the state of the carbon farming market and the lack of a cohesive and consistent approach from national governments. ■

**" No Australians know more about dealing with climate variability than farmers. It follows, then, that farmers will be at the forefront of innovation and adaptation to manage any directional trends in climate. "**



## Burn Ashburner

Senior Manager - Industry  
CANEGROWERS

### EEF60 Project Results

The second year of harvesting results are in for the CANEGROWERS EEF60 Project and the findings are positive, if a little unsurprising.

EEF60 (also known as the *Support of Cane Farmer Trials of Enhanced Efficiency Fertiliser in the Catchments of the Great Barrier Reef*) is a \$7.1 million project funded by the Commonwealth and Queensland governments to trial enhanced efficiency fertilisers (EEFs).

CANEGROWERS has the head agreement and Sugar Research Australia is providing the technical and operational capacity. Extension is provided by CANEGROWERS Innisfail, Herbert Cane Productivity Services Limited, Burdekin Productivity Services and Mackay Area Productivity Services.

The treatments on farm compare:

1. Urea at SIX EASY STEPS N rate
2. Urea at 80% of the SIX EASY STEPS N rate
3. An EEF blend at 80% of SIX EASY STEPS N rate
4. A grower's choice (mostly nitrogen inhibitor and urea blends at 80% of SIX EASY STEPS N rate).

There are about 60 trial sites across the industry, which as far as possible will be harvested three times, delivering a lot of data. Six of these sites also have water quality monitoring designed to establish the relative water quality of the different treatments from the runoff and deep drainage.

The second year of harvesting has now been completed and the Technical Working Group met in March to discuss the results.

The results show that in general:

- Urea at 80% of the SIX EASY STEPS N rate runs the risk of a small productivity loss
- An EEF product at 80% of the SIX EASY STEPS N rate maintains productivity in comparison to urea at the SIX EASY STEPS N rate
- An EEF product at 80% of the SIX EASY STEPS N rate reduces N losses through run-off and leaching in comparison to urea at the SIX EASY STEPS N rate
- An EEF product at 80% of the SIX EASY STEPS N rate increases nitrogen use efficiency in comparison to urea at the SIX EASY STEPS N rate

The economics show us that in general:

- EEF blends, at 80% of the SIX EASY STEPS N rate, that contain a high proportion of polymer coated product are less profitable than urea at the SIX EASY STEPS N rate
- Urea containing a nitrification inhibitor at 80% of the SIX EASY STEPS N rate returns similar net revenue as urea at the SIX EASY STEPS N rate

In summary, it's not surprising that if you use less nitrogen there will be a corresponding improvement in water quality, or that the SIX EASY STEPS rate using urea is about right. However, the results show that there is also a place for EEFs, with enough data for further analysis to explore regional, seasonal and site differences.

CANEGROWERS would like to thank the growers, research and extension staff who are making this project possible. ■

" The results show that there is also a place for EEFs, with enough data for further analysis to explore regional, seasonal and site differences. "



## Warren Males

Head - Economics  
CANEGROWERS



### Business Continuity Planning Be COVID-19 Aware

COVID-19 has been described in many different ways. Many liken it to fighting an unseen enemy.

CANEGROWERS is working closely with the Federal and Queensland governments and all in the sugar industry's supply and logistics chains to ensure cane growing activities can continue as normally as possible in what can only be described currently as very unusual circumstances.

We are confident that mills and bulk sugar terminal teams have plans in place that meet government requirements and, more importantly, ensure the health and safety of their workers and their families and to ensure business continuity.

There are many facets to business continuity plans. Business continuity planning is not just for the so called 'big business' parts of our industry. Planning at the farm level will help ensure the harvest starts on time and proceeds smoothly.

There are several issues worth considering as you undertake farm activities in the current environment and plan for the season ahead. A good place to start is to give some thought to the critical things you need to be doing and whether those activities can be undertaken in an alternative way during the pandemic.

Flowing from this is the important issue of people management. Whether they are farm workers or contractors, it is important to ensure there are plans in place to keep people safe. These plans should be communicated to workers and contractors when they are on your farm.

Workforce management is critical. Key issues include managing physical distancing requirements, cleaning of plant and equipment and what to do if someone becomes ill. Resources are readily available on the CANEGROWERS website, including a link to the SRA video on farm hygiene.

Part of this is ensuring there is a safe working environment that is meeting the current and emerging requirements of this COVID-19 period. To minimise business disruption, it is important to have plans for what to do if a worker is showing the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 or turns up to work sick. Even with less movement of people it is important to have a plan for people entering the farm and knowing with whom they have been in contact.

Queensland Health is dealing with COVID-19 cases on a case-by-case basis. For all businesses, farms included, showing that managers and workers are COVID-19 aware and have appropriate management and hygiene systems in place will be key to continuing to operate in challenging times.

Documenting plans and communicating the basic requirements with farm workers and contractors is a great place to start. For assistance, please call your local CANEGROWERS office. We're in this fight together! ■

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Males'.

COVID-19 has been described an unseen enemy. We are confident the industry has plans in place to ensure the health and safety of workers and their families.

# Options for using another person's land

Freehold land title is generally regarded as the highest, most secure form of land tenure to hold. As Darryl so eloquently states in *The Castle*: "A man's home is his castle". Such clarity of thinking was supported by Darryl's lawyer Dennis who submitted: "It's the constitution. It's Mabo. It's justice. It's law. It's the vibe".

There are, however, circumstances where a person can be granted the right to use a neighbour's private freehold land. This article looks at two situations where a person's private land rights can be interfered with by their neighbour.

## SUGAR INDUSTRY ACT – ACCESS RIGHTS

The sugar industry enjoys a unique set of rules provided by the *Sugar Industry Act* (SIA) that deal with access rights for sugar industry purposes.

The rights can take the form of a permit to pass or a tramline easement. These access rights can either be granted by consent by the affected landholder or by the Land Court where the landholder does not consent.

### PERMIT TO PASS BY CONSENT

A landholder, by consent or agreement, can grant a permit to pass over the landholder's land.

A permit to pass can be granted to a person to facilitate harvest and supply of cane to a delivery point or a mill.

The landholder can also grant by consent or agreement a permit to pass to the mill owner. This type of permit can be used by the mill to facilitate harvest and supply of cane or to service a tramline easement.

### TRAMLINE EASEMENT BY CONSENT

A landholder, by consent or agreement, can grant to a mill owner a cane tramline easement. The easement can be used to facilitate harvest and supply and transport of sugar cane to a mill via the mill tramline.

### ACCESS RIGHTS WITHOUT CONSENT

Where a landholder refuses to provide consent for an access right, the SIA provides a process that allows the Land Court to grant an access right over a landholder's land even where the landholder refuses or objects.

The Land Court will conduct a full hearing and will consider such applications on their merit.

It will not automatically grant such a right and will

only do so where the facts and circumstances of the case justify the making of such an order.

Where the court grants an access right, it will impose conditions on how the right is exercised. It will also order the payment of compensation to the landholder.

The powers under the SIA are clear, and whilst most sugar industry issues around access are resolved by discussion and negotiation, occasionally the Land Court is called upon to exercise its powers to grant access rights in circumstances where the affected landholder refuses or objects.

## STATUTORY RIGHT OF USER – SECTION 180 PROPERTY LAW ACT

While the SIA relates to access rights for sugar industry purposes, another avenue exists in Queensland for access and land use rights for general purposes to be granted.

Section 180 of the *Property Law Act* (PLA) provides the Supreme Court with the power to grant a statutory right of user.

The PLA sets out a mechanism whereby a person can apply to the Supreme Court for an order that the person be granted access over, or use of, another person's private land.

### GROUNDINGS OF APPLICATION

The person applying for the statutory right of user will need to satisfy the Court that it is reasonably necessary, in the interests of effective use in any reasonable manner of that applying person's land, to have a statutory right of user over the land owned by another person.

To put it another way, Section 180 makes provision for a person (say called A) to apply to Court and seek a statutory right of user over land owned by another person (say called B) so that A can effectively and reasonably use A's land.



By Chris Cooper,  
CANEGROWERS  
Legal Advisor





The person A making the application must show to the Court that the use that A seeks over B's land is reasonably necessary for the interest of the reasonable and effective use of A's land.

### TYPE OF USE GRANTED

The form of the statutory right of user the Court can grant can be for any form of use and can be granted as an easement, licence or otherwise.

The most common form of use granted is an easement. If granted, the easement will be binding on current and all future owners of the relevant lands.

The form of the grant will depend on the type of use applied for and may for example be a form of right of way for vehicles or people or might even be for the laying of pipelines.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Court will not lightly interfere with a person's land rights and will be guided by established legal principles applicable to this type of application including the following:-

- The proprietary rights of a land owner should not be readily interfered with;
- The requirement of reasonably necessary does not mean absolute necessity;
- What is reasonably necessary will be determined objectively;
- Necessity is a question of degree and must be more than a mere preference; and
- The impact on the neighbour's land must be considered.

### COMPENSATION

Section 180 also provides that an order for a statutory right of user will include provision for the payment of compensation to the affected landholder.

### CONCLUSION

Whilst freehold property rights are significant and respected, depending on the facts and circumstances of the case, orders can be made allowing someone to use part of their neighbour's freehold land even where the neighbour objects.

## ACTUAL EXAMPLE INVOLVING CANE GROWERS – WARD-V-HULL

On 21 February 2019, the Queensland Supreme Court granted a statutory right of user to a Mackay region sugarcane grower (Graham Ward) over a neighbouring property owned by Michael Hull.

The basic facts of the case were that there had been a pipeline constructed by Mr Ward on Mr Hull's land in about 1999.

At the time Mr Hull's land was owned by previous owners who had informally agreed to the pipeline construction but no formal documents were ever signed.

The pipeline allowed Mr Ward to access water from a creek on the other side of Mr Hull's land and thus allowed Mr Ward to irrigate his cane crop.

Mr Hull bought the subject land in about 2004. Mr Ward continued using his pipeline through Mr Hull's land without any dramas until about 2016, when there was a falling out and the entitlement of Mr Ward to continue to use his pipeline was challenged.

Eventually Mr Ward became so concerned about the security of his pipeline that he made application in the Supreme Court for a statutory right of user over his existing pipeline pursuant to Section 180 of the PLA.

Mr Ward was wanting to ensure protection of his pipeline and continuity of access to water for irrigation purposes.

Mr Hull opposed the application by Mr Ward. Lawyers were engaged and a two-day hearing in the Supreme Court before Justice North followed, with various barristers and expert witnesses being involved.

The Court ultimately granted the application and held that Mr Ward should be granted a statutory right of user in the nature of a permanent easement over the existing pipeline.

The Court also ordered that Mr Ward pay Mr Hull \$5,000 in compensation.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

Any member wishing to discuss aspects of any legal matters should contact your local CANEGROWERS office or call me on Free Call 1800 177 159, for free initial legal advice. ■

# Engaging in the post COVID-19 world

If Batman was being shown on TV or a streaming service right now, Robin would be exclaiming something like "Holy social distancing Batman!" as they both try to burst their way through the supermarket aisles with bags of flour and packs of toilet paper underarm.

It has been a bizarre month. COVID-19 has shown society just how much the world is interconnected and leveraged.

It has shown some of the best and worst of human behaviour, made our leaders step up, and reminded us that heroes are not always from a sporting arena.

It has put pressure on business, the economy and our health system. Depending on how you view those things, it has created opportunity, uncertainty, anxiety and resilience.

Sure, there is more time to binge Batman on Netflix, but working from home, social distancing and the response to this coronavirus pandemic have challenged the way we connect, engage, act and deliver value.

From a membership engagement perspective, it has shown that we can connect through technology and digital platforms.

Face-to-face meetings have tremendous value and are amplified by the networking before and after the event.

Yet, coming out the other side of COVID-19, we can do it differently. Things will not necessarily return to business as usual.

Most of our grower directors are taking meetings through video conferences on their mobile phones or home computers.

CANEGROWERS has been using Microsoft Teams and this has been a very effective tool to continue to work together.

These types of platforms allow the user to see and hear the other the participants in the meeting, present information, share documents and use messaging to ask questions, seek clarity and add context.

I feel there will be a stronger sense of family and community. Social media is an important tool that's helping this to happen.

In 2019, 17 million Australians visited Facebook, one in two Australians used it on a daily basis and posts with video had the highest engagement rate.

CANEGROWERS has also been using Facebook to engage with our members and the industry.

A recent video, featuring CANEGROWERS CEO **Dan Galligan** speaking about the organisation's response to COVID-19, has reached 4,600 Facebook users.

In the future I expect we will use a mix of face-to-face meetings, print media, and phone conferences to keep in touch.

There will also be a greater use of messaging platforms, social media, podcasts, online webinars and video conferences that are targeted to our member demographics, with information tailored to their business needs.

In truth, we were already heading that way.

Part of the reason why CANEGROWERS is focused on improving our membership database is to deliver more targeted information and services as one part of our membership engagement strategy.

Some examples of this could be quickly reaching members who own harvesters during the crush, providing information on cane firing where it's relevant, or sending updated transport notices to owners of over-sized vehicles.

By collating information about your business and operations, such as tractor dimensions, we could, over time, deliver more personalised and timely information to support you.

While we can still put up the 'bat signal' to inform everyone - we are also developing the ability to get information directly to you and connect in new ways.

Stay safe and I look forward to catching up soon. ■



By Matt Kealley,  
CANEGROWERS Senior  
Manager - Membership  
Engagement & Innovation



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2005 CAMECO 3510 Wheel Harvester, JD 8.1 Litre new engine, 3,500 hrs. SAI chopper motor conversion 8 blade chopper.

1997 CASE Track Harvester Komatsu 325 HP engine 6,000 hrs. 15" x 8 blade, raised cab with tilt kit, standard topper.

1995 CAMECO Track Harvester 325 HP CAT engine 1,500 hrs rebuilt engine. Very good condition for age.

BSM 6 Tonne Side Tipper, Single axle unit 23x1x26 tyres.

NEW! BILLET PLANTER 2500. Rubber belt cane feed. Immediate delivery.

2x TOFT 7 tonne Hi-Lift side tipping trailers. Remote hydraulic's. 23x1x30 tyres on single axles.

Whole Topper late model CASE as new complete with hydraulic valve.

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

IN STOCK NOW 10, 8 & 6 BLADE DIFFERENTIAL CHOPPER DRUMS Suit '05 Cameco to JD 570. Tungsten Hard Faced on Wear Areas. New seal plates, Clamping Bars & Dowels with kit.

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[www.gtmachinerysales.com.au](http://www.gtmachinerysales.com.au)

### Mossman-Tully

KOMATSU MOTORS (125). 2 of - one suitable for parts \$4,400 incl. GST the other in running order \$9,400 incl. GST. Approx. 9000hrs - new oil pump, water pump and harmonic balancer. Ph Alf: 0429386204.

2 Trash extractors 2 fans one with topper. Aloomba. Ph Blair: 0420902342.

TRACTOR TYRES - 2x 380/70/R28 Firestone tractor tyres 75% tread, one needs repair, \$400 + GST for both. Tully area. Ph: 0408728072.

Giant Hippos 23.5-25, 20 ply rating, tubeless. As new. Ph: 0429941218.

2 of John Deere 7810 articulated with 14t Carta Bins \$100000 + GST. Ph: 0408713854.

7ft Slasher duel rubber wheels, VGC, new PTO shaft, \$6000 incl. GST. 2014 Nov Colorado twin cab, silver colour, reg Nov 2020, new tyres, VGC, 102,000 kms. Price on application. Ph: 0408770054.

2004 Cameco Harvester VGC \$150,000. Fert Box 3T Side Stool Dresser \$4,400, Draw Bar on Wheels. GST incl. Ph: 0427655168.

Massey Ferguson 6475. Massey Ferguson 5465. 6t side tipping haulout tractors. Low hours. Very good condition. Can sell separately. Ph: 0740562063.

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3 metre width, 28 discs, All bath bearings \$12,000 plus GST (\$13,200 incl GST) Other size offsets available are 1.8m, 2.2m, 2.5m, 3m & 3.4metres. 3 point linkage offsets available also



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### Herbert River-Burdekin

1999 10t Newton Tipper attached to 2009 John Deere Premium. Fuel Tanker on Ex Tandem Dual Newton Double Bin Trailer. 4500L diesel, 3000L water capacity, firefighting hose, 5 HP pump on fuel tank to clean down. Lombardine 7KVA Generator & Welder. Honda Fuel Pump for Diesel. Work bench, vice, lockable storage compartment. Revolving Beacons, Indicators & Work Lights. Attached to MF 1155 Tractor 140 HP. Parts for Austof 8800 Full Track Cane Harvester. POA. Ph: 0427912277.

2x new 600/65 R28 tyres \$1400 ea, new 23.1-26 tyre & rim \$2600, 2x telescopic ram for 14t Carta Tipper one \$2000 one \$500, Bonfiglioli hub done up \$2000, Delta 2001 3t tray back Truck \$12000, Bisalloy floor left & right for top elevator floor extension 300ml \$300, 2x 2007 Fastrac 3230 with 2007 Carta Tippers, 2010 John Deere 3520 Track Harvester. All + GST. Ph: 0417077343.

### Mackay-Proserpine

Moller billet planter set up for 1.6-1.8m row, wide shute, dual chain, steerable wheel, in good condition ready to go. \$20,000 + GST. Ph: 0418495755.

Case IH 245 Magnum, excellent condition, 2188 hours, new front tyres, 4 remotes, power beyond, RTK trimble guidance excluding the screen, high specked tractor. Selling due to change in farming systems. POA. Ph: 0427504118.

John Deere 4640 with trailhaul \$25K; 1995 Austoft Cane harvester \$40K; Bonel



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## Classifieds

Billet Planter \$9K; JCB Fastrac coupled to gooseneck tandem trailer with 4x2.5 tippers \$20K; 6 Cyl Perkins engine coupled to 4x4 ajax booster pump mounted on trailer \$4.5K; Westhill Trash Extractor \$200; Westhill 1t fertiliser bin \$300; Hodge disc ratooner \$400; Hodge 4 furrow disc reversible plough \$1K; Lincoln PTO Welder \$200; Cummins 6 Cyl head-new-still in box \$500; 900 litre Hardy spray tank and frame \$800; BHC Duster \$100; Montabert 750 Rockbreaker \$4.5K; Montabert 125 Rockbreaker \$2.4K. All + GST. Ph: 0418185663.

J150 Wholestick Harvester. Suitable for wrecking. GIVE AWAY. Ph: 0418416415 or 0427327279.

Chisel plough (Graham Plow Yeomans) 3350 wide or 11' 2230 deep or 7'6", 11 legs (+4 spare legs) with leaf harrows. \$3850. Ph: 49595883 or 0407643441.

Ford 7040 tractor (in working order) with a 16t Maclean elevating bin. Ph: 0427378526.

Wrecking Case mxm175 rear tyres 650/65R42 90% fronts 600/65R28 50% all parts available. Ph: 0428124826.

1988 John Deere 4650, excellent condition, motor had full recondition 500 hours ago, 6900 hours total on machine, back end rebuilt 3 hours ago, \$38,500. Mackay. Ph: 0418783436.

Tyres and rims, 23-1-26 brand new tyres and rims to suit case 7000 harvester \$4000 ONO. Ph: 0427355391.

95' single axle, 10 tonne Carta double door elevating bin. VGC. New Tyres. \$45,000 +GST. Ph: 0417427480.

2x Cane Side Tippers 10t \$22K each, Cane Side Tippers (on 2 axle & 3 axle trailers) \$22K each. All GST incl. Proserpine. Ph: Lionel: 0408755453.

12t self-propelled 6x6 elev infielder. Very good condition. Mackay. Ph: 0438606578.

6t side tipper on Leyland tandem. Good condition. Mackay. Ph: 0438606578.

Don Mizzi 741 model on Fiat 750 special turbo plus MF102 half-tracks to suit. Mackay. Ph: 0438606578.

Celli Tiger spike hoe, 2.5m wide with hydraulic crumble roller and oil cooler. Very good condition. Mackay. Ph: 0438606578.

6t side tipper Ian Ritchie, Excellent condition \$15,000 + GST. Ph: 0478719294.

2015 Case Track Harvester 8800, Trimble GPS, shedder topper, hyd. adj. fronts 1.5m to 1.85m. Balance valve fitted front suspension; iFit engineering chopper drums; Glenella Engineering taper locks on chopper gears; Blackey Bisalloy elevator floors; greasing

system; Tungsten on front shoes; floating side walls & base cutter discs. Track transporter; 2x6t side tippers; V10 Mercedes motor; Robot running gear. All GC. Ph: 0427617807.

2016 Case 8800 Track Machine, 2200 Hours, EHS 8 Blade Choppers, Trimble GPS, Blackey Bisalloy elevator floors, Standard Topper, 2 speed wheel motors, Pro Rata Engine Warranty. Very tidy machine. Ph: 0428182464 or 0427541030.

2x New Holland T7.185 Auto Command's, 145hp boosts to 185hp, 9,000 hrs approx. each, Ex Carting Tractors, full service history, 4 rear remotes, \$46,000 Inc. each or \$88,000 Inc. for both. Ph: 0428236165.

### Bundaberg-Rocky Point

Howard 600 series 100" rotary hoe, new blades, perfect condition \$10000. Silvan 800l spray tank, electric controls, 8m boom with hoods & irvin legs \$9000. Howard 3 furrow square plough \$3000. Stainless fertiliser bin with 4 coulter \$5000. Fertiliser bin with 1 1/4" tynes on 2 1/2" toolbar \$1500. 5 tyne ripper \$500. Nelson water winch head \$600. All + GST. Ph: 0427629434.

Old grey bonel 3 furrow disc plow. Criton Mark 2 Harvester with 135 Massey Ferguson Tractor attached. 2x 6000 Austoft Harvester Elevator Sleys & 1 Ram. Elevator flights to suit Austoft Cane Harvesters 4000

## Rainfall Report

Brought to you by Sunsuper

Location	Recorded rainfall (mm)			Average rainfall (mm)
	Month prior (Mar 2020)	Month to date (1 Apr-29 Apr)	Year to date	Jan-Apr
Whyanbeel Valley (Mossman)	275.8	70.2	1,231	2017
Mareeba Airport	37.6	39.4	421	632
Cairns Aero	134.4	53.8	941	1452
Mt Sophia	362	103	1,315	2268
Babinda Post Office	396.1	98.3	1,329	2702
Innisfail	581.1	290.2	1,611	2211
Tully Sugar Mill	684.5	284	1,548	2606
Cardwell Marine Pde	280.8	91	1,098	1510
Lucinda Township	431.6	77.8	1,249	1474
Ingham Composite	373.8	74.7	1,309	1458
Abergowrie Alert	103	12	516	1003
Townsville Aero	103.4	9.8	663	832
Ayr DPI Research Stn	48.8	100	896	656
Proserpine Airport	100.2	34.8	592	985
Mirani Mary Street	186.8	17.3	783	991
Mackay MO	295	40.2	897	1023
Plane Creek Sugar Mill	264	96.2	1,002	1168
Bundaberg Aero	22.6	53.6	380	494
Childers South	18.4	11.8	314	410
Maryborough	69.2	17	502	579
Tewantin RSL Park	182.8	44.4	905	740
Eumundi - Crescent Rd	132.8	11.8	950	872
Nambour Daff - Hillside	222.2	35	976	955
Logan City Water Treatment Plant	141.7	11.9	711	504
Murwillumbah Bray Park	119.1	16.5	1,100	803
Ballina Airport	85.2	95.6	1,018	763
New Italy (Woodburn)	166	64	954	629



dream with  
your eyes open

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 sourced from the Bureau of Meteorology Recent Rainfall Tables.



& 6000. New Hydraulic Wheel Motor to fit Austoft Cane Harvesters 4000 & 6000. Commercial pumps & motors to suit Austoft Cane Harvester 4000, 6000 & Mark 1. Diff & Episicals to suit Austoft Harvester Mark 1 & Mark 2. Dyna Power motors & pumps. 5 inch irrigation pipes. Topper to suit Austoft Harvesters 6000 & 7000. Ph: 0427598333.

## Wanted

Second hand 24 plate wheel offset. Tully area. Ph Joe: 0428669266.

3-4ft slasher: 3-point linkage. Ph: 0417933344.

Landplane working condition. Ingham area. Ph Rick: 0429182192.

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International 706/806/906/1206/1256 tractor any condition. Ph Ryan: 0408062462. High lift 4 tonne HBM side tipper on 23.1.26 rims. Tully area. Ph: 0429667720.

Hard hose irrigator, 400/450m length or space on the reel to extend the poly to 400/450m. Ph: 0490029387.

## Positions Vacant

Farm hand wanted for busy family farm in Mackay area. Crops include sugarcane, grains and horticulture. Duties include machinery operations, irrigation, spraying, planting, harvesting, maintenance and manual handling tasks. Previous farm and GPS experience preferred. Ph: 0438597270.

Haulout driver required for 2020 season Mackay north coast elevating tippers. Ph: 0428124826.

## Work Wanted

Previous experience includes Sugar Boilers Assistant, Chainsaw and Chipper Operator, Houseman and Maintenance. Located in FNQ. E: lachythomas@gmail.com. Ph: 0432823706.

Looking for haul out operator position for the 2020 crushing season. Hold HR licence and front end loader. Innisfail area. E: maggsjamie@yahoo.com.au. Ph James: 0488170668.

## Property

Pleystowe cane farm. On 2 Lots. Approx 190 acres all up. Teemburra water, 2 pumps & licences, plus 32,000 gallons an hour underground bore. Machinery/irrigation shed. 2x 4" soft hose irrigators, farm lasered, underground main throughout. 2 sidings adjoin farms. Access to farm from Pleystowe School Rd & Formosa's Rd. Does not include 2019 crop. Selling due to health reasons. Ph: 0408733793.

Cane farm Tarakan Road ABERGOWRIE 270 acres freehold Genuine enquiries pls. Ph: 0747774633 or 0408608664.

Tropical Paradise Cane Farm/Equestrian Training Property, 96 acres 6klms to PORT DOUGLAS. All farmable land, 70 acres producing quality cane, 25 acres set up for horses. Easy farm to maintain. Ph: Mandy 0408880724.



## BUYERS BEWARE

Buyers please be aware of scam emails when buying online. Scammers may try to intercept emails between genuine buyers and sellers by sending the buyer a fake invoice with different account details for the payment. Buyers should check with the seller by phone for accurate account details before making payment.

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