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Look, be alert, call an expert

FEATURES

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It's 10 years since Cyclone Yasi hit the Queensland coast leaving cane crops flattened and flooded.

COVER IMAGE: Isis grower Mark Weiss was one of three cane farmers to take part in a project celebrating the shed and its important place at the heart of Queensland's farms.

CONTENTS IMAGE: CANEGROWERS Cairns Region Chairman Stephen Calcagno is one of an increasing number of cane growers achieving their five-year re-accreditation in the Smartcane BMP program.



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Australian ag's man in Japan briefed

CANEGROWERS representatives sat down with Australia's new Agricultural Counsellor to Japan, Tom Parnell, ahead of him taking up his position in Tokyo in January.

It was an opportunity to ensure he is across important sugar industry issues, including Japan's testing of pol in sugar imports and improving the terms of the Japan Australia Economic Partnership agreement, CANEGROWERS Head of Economics Warren Males said.

"Australia has enjoyed a strong sugar trading relationship with Japan for more than 50 years," Mr Males said.

"The Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement signed in 2015 and the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership, which came into

"Australia has enjoyed a strong sugar trading relationship with Japan for more than 50 years."



force in December 2018, have provided a platform to further strengthen this relationship and the commercial ties between our two countries.

"As a result, Japan now imports around one million tonnes of Australian raw sugar annually.

CANEGROWERS is continuing its efforts to further improve the terms of these agreements and to resolve a technical issue in relation to the interpretation of pol test results in Japan. ■



Falling fert prices good for growers

Fertilisers prices are predicted to drop in 2021 according to market analysts at agribusiness specialists, Rabobank.

In its latest *Semi-Annual Global Fertiliser Outlook: Demand Revival*, the bank says while global fertiliser prices had climbed off their 10-year lows during the second half of 2020 – primarily due to improved worldwide demand – this newly-found price strength is expected to tail off during quarter two this year.

"Heavy supplies and growing production capacity will continue to weigh on prices across the nutrient complex," the report says. ■



Work underway

It may not look like much right now, but this cleared site in Childers is a major step towards securing the future of Maryborough's cane industry, while also boosting the viability of the Isis Central Sugar Mill.

The site will host a transfer station, where cane hauled by truck from Maryborough will be transferred to train for transport to the Isis Mill for toll crushing, following the closure of MSF's Maryborough mill at the end of the 2020 season. ■



Call for cane exemption from new cropping regulations

A Queensland Government move to impose a new bureaucratic process on farmers expanding their cropping area along the coast is unnecessary and duplicates existing regulation on the sugarcane industry.

"Sugarcane growing should be exempt from these proposed new rules in Great Barrier Reef catchments because cane crops are already subject to a raft of regulations governing farm practices," CANEGROWERS CEO **Dan Galligan** said.

"Any new sugarcane planting would be subject to existing reef regulations so there's no need to slap another layer of regulation, in the form of a new approval process, in the way of growers."

From 1 June 2021, new or expanded commercial cropping along the Queensland coast from the Burnett Mary region to Cape York will require an environmental permit and will need to meet 'standard conditions'. Read more about the proposal and CANEGROWERS response on page 43.

"This is straight duplication of what is already an unwarranted level of regulation on our industry," Mr Galligan said.

"This new regime of requiring a permit to expand will just make it harder for growers and the industry

to seize the opportunities offered by producing a renewable, sustainable feedstock for new bio-products and bio-fuels."

CANEGROWERS is preparing a submission against the regulations to be lodged before the February 17 deadline and will continue to advocate for growers and the future of the industry as the government process continues.

"We have always opposed the heavy hand of regulating farming practices as a way of achieving water quality outcomes for the Great Barrier Reef," Mr Galligan said.

"The best approach is always collaborative, voluntary engagement which we have through our industry best practice program Smartcane BMP – 80% of Queensland's cane farmland is part of the program and 35% is fully accredited.

"This approach achieves productivity and export market outcomes as well as environmental ones." ■



Include cane in water price cut

Calls to include sugarcane in a proposed 50% reduction in irrigation water charges have widened, with the Queensland Farmers' Federation saying the State Government's promised price cut should be extended to all irrigation customers of Sunwater, Seqwater, Local Management Authorities (LMA) and other water providers.

Labor promised to slash irrigation water prices heading in last year's election. However, the proposed cuts will be implemented in two tiers, with broadacre crops like cane and cotton only receiving a modest 15% reduction, while horticulture growers will see their water cost slashed by 50%.

CANEGROWERS Chairman **Paul Schembri** said the two tier system is not only unfair, but unworkable.

"The proposal to deliver cuts to water prices at two different rates for horticulture and broadacre crops, including sugarcane, needs to be worked through," Mr Schembri said.

"Affordable and reliable water is a key enabler for Queensland's agriculture sector to continue growing world class food, fibre and foliage while managing the ongoing effects of drought and COVID-19."

"We can't see how the differential pricing system, with some crops eligible for a 15% water price cut and others a 50% cut, is going to work.

"We will be encouraging the Queensland Government to make good its promise but to take a simpler approach and help all of agriculture by reducing the cost of all irrigation water by 50%.

"We are an industry producing 400,000 hectares of stored energy each year – it's a renewable resource with great potential and we're ready to talk to the government on how it can help us realise opportunities."

QFF has come out in support of the CANEGROWERS position, calling on the State Government to extend the 50% cut to all irrigators.

QFF CEO **Dr Georgina Davis** said it was wrong to favour one agricultural commodity, or regional community, over another by selectively providing favourable pricing.

"Given that the mainstream definition of horticulture includes fruit, vegetables, nuts, flowers, turf (grass), and nursery products, all of QFF's members including sugarcane and cotton producers are

categorised as horticultural producers," Dr Davis said.

"Equity is further eroded by the decision to apply the discount to bills issued by Sunwater or Seqwater, while not offering the same assistance to customers of the recently established LMA schemes, Category 2 Water Boards and co-operative irrigation water providers servicing irrigation customers."

"Additionally, providing the two level of discounts in a transparent and robust manner would be extremely difficult and expensive for the government and its corporations."

Dr Davis said while it may have State Budget implications, extending the 50 per cent discount to all irrigation customers would provide a welcome boost to all of Queensland's irrigated agricultural industries.

"Affordable and reliable water is a key enabler for Queensland's agriculture sector to continue growing world class food, fibre and foliage while managing the ongoing effects of drought and COVID-19." ■

Premier tours cane farm in the Tweed

The New South Wales Premier Gladys Berejiklian has visited a Tweed Valley sugarcane farm to see firsthand the impact of local drainage problems and hear how the industry contributes to efforts to remove carbon from the atmosphere.

The Premier was greeted by Robert Hawken, President of the Tweed Cane Growers, Robert Cossley, chief scientist of Carbon Link, and farm owner Robert Quirk.

Mr Quirk said the visit, organised by Tweed MP Geoff Provost, was an opportunity to explain how agriculture provides ecosystem services, contributing in a positive way to a healthy environment.

"We know that in these coastal floodplains there can be a problem with acid sulphate soil which, if it leaches into the river, can cause fish kills," he said.

"I explained to the Premier and showed her how our sugarcane crops keep the acidity in place but flooding from poor drainage puts the river at risk."

Robert Quirk's farm was recently inundated after a three-day 500mm downpour. Sugarcane in some areas was in water for seven days and plants in the lowest end of a field have died.

"We explained how critical the drainage was, as the low end of the fields are just 20cm lower than the high end," he said.

Growers in the area are expecting there will be productivity loss implications for the 2021 crush.



"Resolving the drainage problem, so water can get away quickly, will help our cane in these circumstances as well as protect the river from the acid sulphate soil," Mr Quirk told the Premier.

He was also keen that Ms Berejiklian, and community in general, gained more of an understanding of how agriculture was a key part of a healthy ecosystem.

"An in depth study on my farm has shown that growing sugarcane can capture nine

tonnes of carbon per hectare per year (around four times that of a wetland) removing it from the atmosphere," he said.

"The Premier has indicated she will send her Environment Minister to the northern rivers to discuss these issues further." ■

Pictured: Tweed grower Robert Quirk with NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian and Tweed MP Geoff Provost.

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SOGGY START TO SEASON

Cane growers across far north Queensland will be keeping an anxious eye on the weather over coming weeks, with a number of heavy rainfall events leaving many areas saturated and needing some fine weather to dry out.

While the first cyclone of the season tuned into a bit of a fizzer, Kimi still brought plenty of rain to the north, dumping up over 150mm in some areas and causing minor and moderate flooding.

The downgrading of Cyclone Kimi to a tropical low and its failure to cross the coast came as a huge relief to

many growers, already struggling with saturated paddocks and poor drainage following weeks of uninterrupted rain.

From Cairns to Proserpine, cane-growing regions along the coast smashed their average rainfall figures for January, as the long awaited La Nina event brought monsoonal rain to the north Queensland coast.

Coming on the back of previous rainfalls in November and December, the soil profile in many areas is already full and will be prone to flood if more heavy rain is received in the coming weeks.

Babinda received over 900mm during the first three weeks of the year, while Tully almost doubled its January average with 1138mm falling by 22 January.



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The Burdekin and Proserpine districts also received some significant falls.

In the Herbert region, low-lying paddocks were inundated when creeks burst their banks following weeks of heavy rain.

"Usually the wet season doesn't start here until late January or early February, but this year it really started in December," CANEGROWERS Herbert River Chairman **Michael Pisano** said.

"I've had about 1200mm since mid-December and there have only been a handful of days that it hasn't rained over that period."

Mr Pisano said State Government rules preventing the clearing of creeks has exacerbated flooding.

"The laws prevent us from getting in there and doing the necessary work to clear these creeks, which would alleviate flooding when we have heavy rainfall events.

"Studies have been done by James Cook University that have shown the clearing of these creeks can be completed without any environmental impact but the government just doesn't want to know.

"It's difficult to tell how much damage has been done to the crop by this latest flooding because it's just too wet to get into the paddocks and assess the cane right now.

"From the headland you can see that the early cut ratoons are holding up well but the late cut ratoons are looking pretty ordinary. There's definitely going to be some loss there."

Rainfall totals for the year to date can be found on page 48.



Image Credits: Herbert River canegrower Jeff Cantamessa

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CEO COMMENT

By Dan Galligan, CEO CANEGROWERS



PREPARATION IS KEY TO DISASTER RECOVERY

The first significant cyclone of the season to have sugarcane in its sights thankfully fizzled to a tropical low and avoided crossing the coast. But it was a good reminder to us all.

With the potential impact regions around Herbert River and Innisfail already very wet following a series of significant rain fall events, a cyclone was really the last thing needed.

While this cyclone has glanced past, it was a timely reminder to check in on our disaster preparations. Natural disasters are an all-too-common experience for Queenslanders, particularly in the north but just because something is considered 'part of life, it doesn't mean it is easy to deal with, nor should it make us complacent.

Having spent plenty of time talking to growers who have gone through the experience of preparing, surviving and recovering from cyclones, including Larry, Yasi and Oswald, I have the utmost respect for the hardship they endured.

It is one of the reasons I feel it's important that CANEGROWERS plays a strong and supportive role in helping growers prepare for and, if necessary, recover from natural disasters. Simply put, your industry body should be there when you need it the most.

Our traditional and well-known role is to work with our districts to assess and then communicate disaster impact and recovery needs to policy makers and the community.

However, preparedness is by far the more proactive course to managing disaster impacts. This is where the CANEGROWERS Insurance team kicks in.

With our relatively unique insurance broker model, which places insurance experts directly into district offices, we have the capacity to provide an insurance service that is becoming not so commonplace.

The insurance industry has become crowded with online products offered by seemingly different providers who are in fact mostly underwritten by the same one or two companies.

CANEGROWERS has found great value in providing an on-farm, personal experience, with brokers who understand the complexity of grower needs and who can offer a range of insurance products - from crop and business insurance, to house and contents policies, motor vehicle insurance and more - but do so in a way that is custom built for growers and their families.

These brokers can come on farm and talk through all the options, enabling them to broker an insurance portfolio that best fits your business. The focus of our insurance model is on service first, then price.

There is no doubt that insurance premiums are a huge part of any business. Like any other farm input cost, CANEGROWERS is looking for ways to reduce these costs and maximise profits for growers. But with insurance, we also seek to build resilience and confidence into your business.

In the end, farmers are the best risk managers in any business environment, and if CANEGROWERS can help manage those risks then we are helping you grow your business.

If you wish to know more about CANEGROWERS Insurance, you can contact your local district office or visit our website. ■

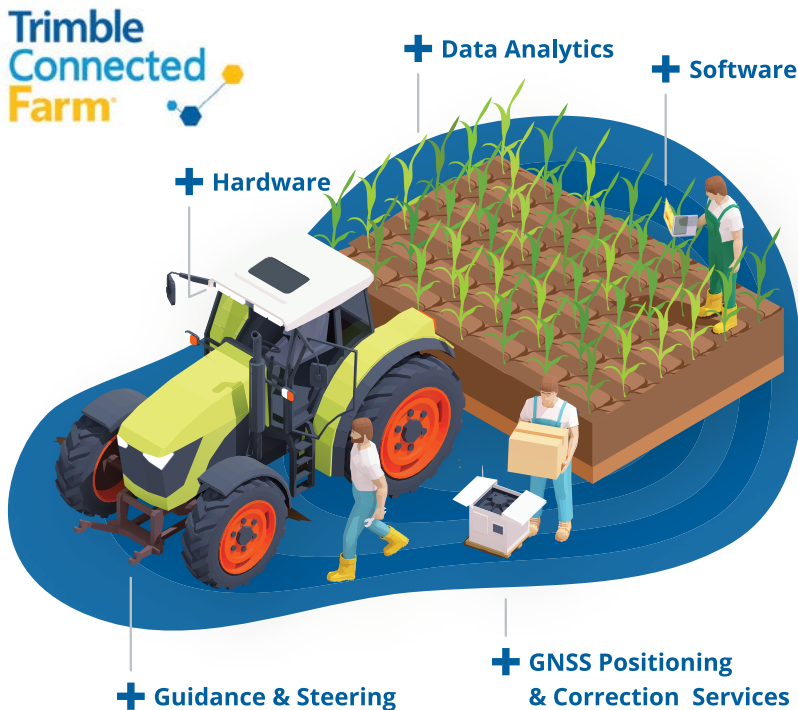
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Isis growers wish Leigh well

CANEGROWERS Isis stalwart Leigh Ritchie will take up a new challenge in 2021 after 14 years of service to the local sugar industry.

"Leigh has been the backbone of the office, supporting members with everything from pays, fire permits, insurance and hospitality, not to mention organising (and often winning) the annual footy tipping competition," Isis District Manager Angela Williams said.

"We appreciate and will miss her dedication, reliability and kindness – she never forgets a birthday or special event."

Leigh said she leaves CANEGROWERS with many fond memories.

"I joined Wayne Stanley and Nicole Kirk in January 2007 to make a small team of three, and during this time have supported growers through two floods and too many drought years to count," she said.

"I have enjoyed building relationships with growers and their families and assisting them where I could, as well as the comradery of the CANEGROWERS team. I take with me many fond memories."

Leigh is undertaking a new challenge, learning the property conveyancing ropes at local Childers law firm, Finemore, Walters & Story.

Global sugar deficit predicted

Market analysts have predicted a global sugar deficit of 0.3 million metric tonnes raw value for 2020/21 in Rabobank's latest Global Sugar Quarterly report.

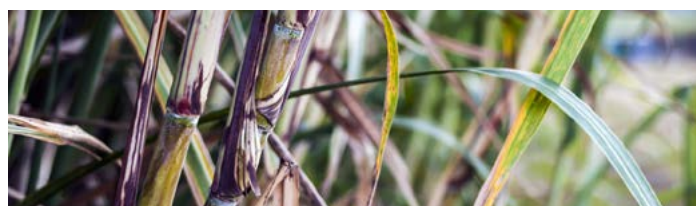
In its Q4 2020 report, the specialist agribusiness bank forecasts the deficit despite an expected increase in world-wide sugar production, which, it says, will be offset by a projected 1.7% year-on-year recovery in global consumption.

This follows an estimated 1.8 million global sugar surplus recorded for the 2019/20 (October – September) season.

Rabobank commodity analyst Charles Clack says production increases are particularly expected this season in China, India and Pakistan, and also in North America, as crops there recover from recent years of drought.

"At the same time though, we expect a recovery in global sugar consumption from last year's rates which were hit by the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic. That said, our consumption forecasts for 2020/21 have been tempered slightly, given the second wave that is occurring in many parts of the world," he said.

The onset of a La Nina will prove an advantage for the Australian sugar-growing season ahead, with forecast strong rainfall to assist cane development and yields, Mr Clack said.



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FROM THE CHAIR

By Paul Schembri, Chairman CANEGROWERS

2021 OFF TO A PROMISING START

The first few weeks of 2021 have delivered much needed rain to most cane-growing regions, boosting the prospects of a good crop to harvest later in the year.

Of course, the sugar industry is spread along more than 2000kms of coastline and weather varies greatly from one region to another.

While the northern and central regions of Queensland have fared well, to the point that there was some localised flooding, some southern areas are still needing significant rainfall to make up for the drier seasons of the past few years.

All this considered, the crop has responded well and has established the foundations for a productive season.

I look forward this year, COVID-19 permitting, to visiting as many regions as I can for meetings with members and hearing and seeing how the 2021 season is shaping up.

On another positive, the world sugar price continues to look promising, rising as high as US\$16.75c/lb in recent times.

Some market commentators are even describing the current market outlook as the most constructive since 2016.

The fundamentals of supply and demand appear to be the driving force behind the recently price rise, with several respected analysts suggesting world production will fall short of demand by as much as 3 million tonnes in the 2020-21 crop cycle.

Lower levels of production in Thailand and Europe, coupled with dry weather in Brazil, have combined to boost the sugar price.

A recent announcement of Indian export subsidies at a lower rate than previous years has further supported prices.

On the negative side, it is not clear what impacts on demand will transpire as a result of the escalating second wave of COVID-19 around the world. That said, recent reports suggest the negative consumption impact may be less than originally thought.

Importantly, however, the change in market fundamentals is positive news for our industry. While world prices have moderated a little, they are the strongest we have seen since May 2017.

Sugar price movement can be volatile; however, the recent price strength is a positive note to start the season.

As you consider your pricing for the coming year, I urge you to take a look at the CANEGROWERS Marketing Information Service on the website. It is designed to be an independent information and education source specifically for members.

On a sad note, I have recently attended the funeral of a former Chairman of

Queensland CANEGROWERS, Mr Fred Soper.

Fred was a cane grower in the Mackay region who served as Chairman from 1982 to 1989.

Growers, like me, who were around in those years will remember how demanding they were on our leaders, with governments taking a path of deregulation and prices well below our costs of production in Australia.

As an industry, it is important to reflect on the contributions of those who worked to bring about a greater sugar industry.

Fred gave unselfishly of his time to work for the welfare of all cane growers.

By one account, this work kept him away from his farm in Marian for a total of 276 nights in a single year!

My memories of Fred Soper are that he conducted himself in a very professional and gentlemanly manner at all times, no matter how stressful the situation or complex the issues.

History will record that Fred Soper gave his best to make for a better industry and we thank Fred for his contribution to the Australian sugar industry and offer our sincere condolences to his family. ■



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Rain chasers

working to answer growers' water quality questions

Cane growers in the Innisfail and Tully districts received a perfect gift in 2020 with much-needed rain arriving on Christmas morning. But for the region's water quality monitors, the downpour was exciting for different reason.

The rain event signaled what's known as the 'first flush', a critical sampling time when gathering water quality data.

The Wet Tropics Major Integrated Project (MIP) has been working with growers in the Johnstone and Tully basins for a little over three years to better understand how farming and other land uses impact water quality.

During this most recent rain event, MIP's dedicated rain chasers braved torrential conditions and crocodile-infested waters to collect over 370 samples.

The valuable data generated from these samples will be reported back to primary producers at shed meetings and extension events in the coming months.

"The Wet Tropics MIP prides itself on its grassroots approach," MIP Johnstone Basin Coordinator and CANEGROWERS Innisfail Manager **Sandra Henrich** said.

"Through this approach the project is trying to answer the top three questions local growers ask: 'How do I know it's my N?', 'Is what I'm doing making a difference?' and 'What else can I do?'"

These questions underpin everything the MIP does.

"We don't want to lose our inputs but without knowing what happens on my farm or in our local creeks, we can't fix it."

With a broad range of systems and equipment used to capture the water quality data, the project is providing information about nutrient, sediment and pesticide losses for the first time.

Some of the feedback from growers during the first round of shed meetings included: "We should have had this ten years ago", and "We don't want to lose our inputs either but without actually knowing what happens on my farm or in our local creeks, we can't fix it."

Banana and pawpaw growers in Innisfail have also joined the MIP in this area.

Wet Tropics MIP sampling is undertaken at three different scales:

- Paddock monitoring – which includes paddock run-off monitoring and shallow groundwater monitoring;
- Sub catchment monitoring – which includes routine monitoring and event-based monitoring, in-stream continuous monitoring;
- On-the-spot nitrate monitoring and end of catchment monitoring.

Continues next page ►



Pictured: (left) Chris and Kelly O'Kane with their daughters Grace and Bridie at their farm in East Feluga; (above) CANEGROWERS Innisfail District Extension Officer for the Wet Tropics Major Integrated Project Dalton Howden.



Rain chaser: Innisfail Canegrowers District Extension Officer for the Wet Tropics Major Integrated Project Will Darveniza gathering samples

"I wanted to see what was coming out of the rainforest and what was agricultural ... going by the data, we're doing pretty well."

Third generation East Feluga cane grower **Chris O'Kane** has sampling points on his property and finds the information he gets from them beneficial in his decision making.

"About three years ago Fiona from the MIP Farm Services team approached me for some possible water monitoring sites," Chris said.

"I had some spots in mind – a little creek that comes straight out the rainforest and another spot down at the bottom of our farm. I wanted to see what was coming out of the rainforest and what was agricultural.

"I see it as a positive, because as a farmer I can actually see the results. There are some areas which I think we can improve, but going by the data, we're doing pretty well," he said.

Growers gather at regular MIP shed meetings which are designed to be a comfortable and open environments for data to be shared and discussed.

"I like seeing the results, you can sit down and talk to the team, go through the results and see what is happening when we have rain events or dry times," Chris said. ■

Article and images supplied by the Wet Tropics Major Integrated Project.

The Wet Tropics Major Integrated Project is funded through the Queensland Government's Reef Water Quality Program, and coordinated by Terrain in partnership with CANEGROWERS, Australian Banana Growers' Council, Local Government, community groups, traditional owners, consultants, investors and researchers.



Q&A with Sunsuper's Chief Economist, Brian Parker

We took time out to speak to Brian Parker, Sunsuper's Chief Economist to find out about Sunsuper's approach to investments during 2020 and COVID-19

Q: 2020 was a year that no one will forget quickly. What investment strategies did Sunsuper enlist during COVID-19?

A: "We were able to take advantage of opportunities in share markets and credit markets that emerged as a result of the crisis. Our purchases of Australian and international shares and non-government securities, during the worst of COVID-19, have generated meaningful gains for members. However, we also faced a significant increase in demands for liquidity from our members; initially from members moving into cash at the height of the crisis and then from the Government's Early Release of Superannuation program. And all the while, we've been able to maintain a strong underlying liquidity position in the fund.

"We also increased our exposure to foreign currencies. This step does not necessarily reflect an expectation of a decline in the Australian dollar. Given the long-standing tendency of the Australian dollar to fall sharply during times of market stress, a higher allocation to foreign currency is a way to provide additional protection to our diversified portfolios in the event of a further major share market correction."

Q: What do you think is likely to happen in 2021?

A: "We have no way of knowing with any certainty how the COVID-19 outbreak will evolve from here, or how the economy and financial markets will evolve over the course of this year and we don't invest money based on our own, or anyone else's short-term economic or market forecasts. Vaccines have started to be rolled-out and that's great news for the global and Australian economies. However that roll-out is going to take time, there's still going to be setbacks along the way and there's likely to be a wide variation in the strength of recovery across countries and industries. And even with vaccines being rolled out, economic recovery is going to need the ongoing support of macro policymakers (particularly governments). More recently, a new US administration coming to power and a Democrat majority in Congress means the US economy is going to get more support from fiscal policy.

"We remain of the view that shares offer very attractive value relative to bonds and cash where future returns are likely to be very low. Within our shares' exposure, both Sunsuper and our international share managers continue to favour European over US shares on relative valuation grounds. Sunsuper continues to hold a significant allocation to alternative asset classes, particularly the key unlisted asset classes of property, infrastructure, private equity and private credit. From here we expect these assets to deliver strong, long-term returns – above those of the traditional asset classes – while reducing our members exposure to share market volatility."

Q: Brian, how can people find out more about Sunsuper investment options?

"There are a number of Sunsuper investment options that give exposure to a diversified range of asset classes, including both public market and unlisted investments. Sunsuper offers members a range of 19 investment options to allow you to tailor your investments to your needs.

"There is plenty of information on the Sunsuper website, or, if you'd like to speak to a real person, give our team a call. We also provide Market Watch updates, podcasts and member seminars, so you'll never run short of great ways to access the information you need.

Start making a real difference to your retirement today. Contact us on 13 11 84 between 8.00am to 6.30pm (AEST) Monday to Friday or visit [sunsuper.com.au/choose](https://www.sunsuper.com.au/choose)

To view Brian's latest Market Watch update, go to www.sunsuper.com.au/marketwrap

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QSL MARKET UPDATE

Current as of 21 January 2021.

Sugar



- Positive macro-environment trends pushed commodities higher in January, driving the March 21 ICE 11 to a 'life of contract' high of 16.33 USc/lb.
- Despite a new Indian export subsidy, a slow Thai crop indicates a tight supply of sugar in Q1. Q2 looks to be better supplied once the Brazil season begins.
- Oil continues to support the market at \$US56 a barrel, as tighter supply offsets global virus-based demand concern. Saudi Arabia has said it will cut output by 1 million barrels a day for February and March to stop inventory build-up.
- The latest Commitment of Traders (COT) report published a 247,000 lot net-long position held by funds as at Tuesday, 12 January. The flat price of sugar had fallen by around 70 points on that date, which leads to the assumption of a net-long position sitting above 250,000 lots on a live basis.
- Rain in Centre South Brazil has led analysts to believe the crop may not be as bad as initially estimated given the dry weather in late 2020. Early estimates sit at 34/35 million tonnes of sugar.
- ICE 11 trading range going forward:** Broader trading range estimated to be 14.00 to 16.50 USc/lb.
- Closely watching:** Indian export pace, La Nina weather updates, speculative activity, trading volumes, and overall technical indicators.

Currency



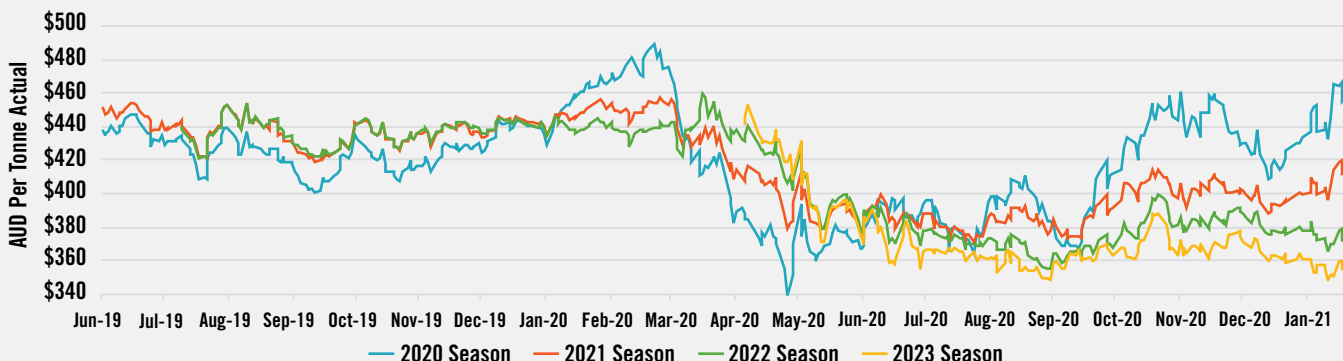
- Following a 4 cent rally over December, the Australian Dollar (AUD) steadied in the new year as it tested key support levels of 76.60 and 76.40 cents against the US Dollar before chopping either side of 77c for the majority of the month.
- Surging COVID-19 caseloads in Europe and the US, along with reports of some new strains of the virus have raised concerns and seen risk appetite tempered slightly. However, markets remain hopeful the vaccine rollout currently underway will see the world finally turn a corner.
- Joe Biden was inaugurated as the 46th President of United States in January. The first 100 days of a new President's term are usually closely watched, but this one may be the most important in over a generation as Biden will attempt to tackle the virus and reunite a bitterly divided nation.
- Iron ore has been trading above \$170 a tonne and this, along with a firm commodities complex, will keep the AUD well supported with the medium-term outlook retaining an upside bias, and 80 US cents still within reach.
- AUD/USD trading range going forward:** 0.7600 to 0.8000 by the end of 2021.
- Risks Ahead:** US politics, Australia-China relationships, RBA commentary, virus news.

KEY INDICATORS

	21/01/2021	Monthly change
ICE11 Prompt (MAR21)	16.27 USc/lb	+1.06 USc/lb
Brazilian Real/\$US exchange rate	5.30 BRL	-0.09 BRL
Brent Crude Oil	\$US54.75/barrel	+\$US9.79
Ethanol/Raw Sugar Parity	12.21 USc/lb	+0.08 USc/lb
Net Spec Position	234,000 (net long)	-23,000

	21/01/2021	Monthly change
\$AUS/\$US exchange rate	\$US0.7708	+\$US0.0435
\$US Index	90.77	-1.6250
Chinese Yen/\$US exchange rate	6.49 CNY	-0.0672 CNY
S+P 500 Index	3,768.25	+210.71
RBA Overnight Cash Rate	0.10%	0.00%

RAW SUGAR PRICES



This is a whole-of-season ICE 11 price chart current as of 21.01.21, based on the Target Price Contract's current 5:1 pricing ratio for the 2020 Season and 1:2:2:1 pricing ratio for the 2021, 2022 and 2023 Seasons.

Disclaimer: This report contains information of a general or summary nature and is based on information available to QSL from many sources. 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. The update on marketing and pricing activity does not constitute financial, investment advice. You should seek your own financial advice and read the QSL Pricing Pool Terms, which are contained on QSL's website. Nothing contained in this report should be relied upon as a representation as to future matters or that a particular outcome will be achieved. Information about past performance is not an indication of future performance. The information in the report is current as at the time of publication and is subject to change, as the information is based on many assumptions and is subject to uncertainties inherent in any market. 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.

QSL GROWER PRICING UPDATE

Grower Pricing

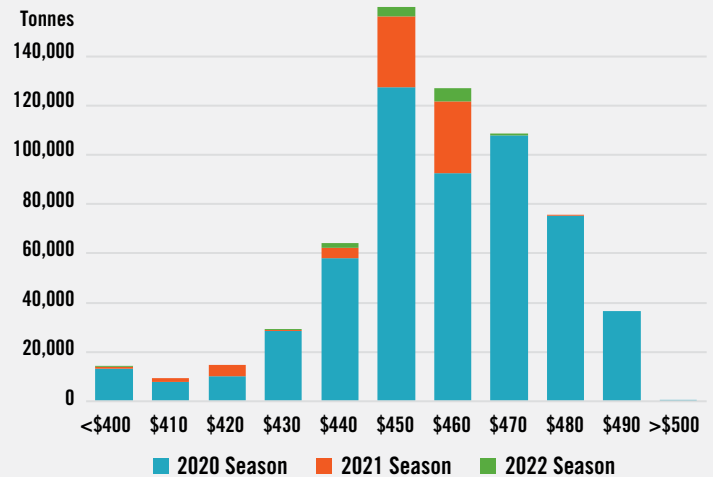


- A recent rally in the sugar price has resulted in some growers' orders being filled at as high as \$A460 for the 2020 Target Price Contract, and \$A475 for the March 2021 Individual Futures Contract.

Important Dates

- **15 February:** The Pricing Completion Date for the March 2021 contract in QSL's Individual Futures Contract and Self-Managed Harvest Contract. Tonnage allocated to this contract that remains unfilled after this date will be priced by QSL at the next market opportunity.
- **22 February:** Last day for growers to achieve remaining 2020-Season targets before their order is rolled and their pricing window is automatically extended. Costs may apply. This also is 2020-Season Pricing Completion Date for MSF Sugar districts – Any unfilled orders after this date are priced by QSL at the next market opportunity.
- **1 March:** 2021 QSL Actively Managed Pool opens for nominations.

QSL GROWER-MANAGED PRICING FILLS – 2020, 2021 & 2022 SEASONS



This chart captures all pricing achieved as of 21.01.21 using QSL's Target Price Contract, Individual Futures Contract and Self-Managed Harvest products. Prices quoted at AUD/tonnes actual gross.

What effect does the US election have on global markets?



The US Dollar has continued to weaken since the announcement US Democrat candidate Joe Biden had emerged victorious over sitting US President Donald Trump.

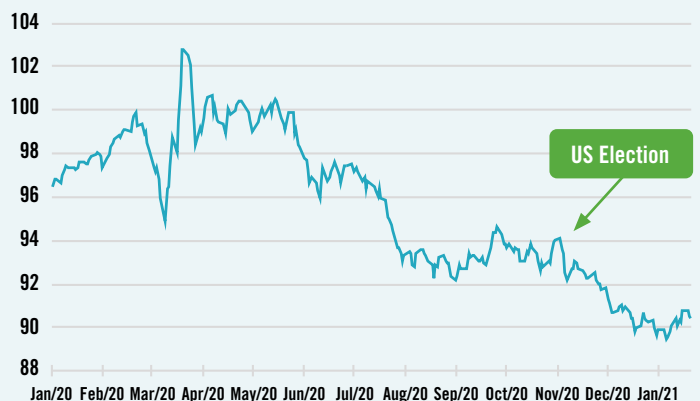
Traditionally, Democrats have tended to increase government spending, particularly when there is an economic downturn, in an attempt to stimulate the economy.

With the current COVID-19 pandemic, Biden looks set to increase spending on relief packages for the US.

Now the 46th President of the United States, Biden has already announced an additional \$1.9 trillion-dollar stimulus package. To fund this spending, Biden may implement progressive taxation by reintroducing higher tax rates on large businesses and high-income earners. These policies and views of the new Democratic government are likely to result in a weakening US dollar (USD) and increasing inflation.

As inflation begins to accelerate, so does the likelihood of an increase in the price of USD-denominated commodities, such as sugar. Commodities are known as inflation-based assets as they tend to increase in value alongside inflation, and therefore act as a natural hedge against inflation. Coupled with low interest rates giving access to cheap money, funds are incentivised to invest in inflation-based commodities.

US DOLLAR INDEX



This US Dollar index graph shows the value of the USD deteriorating throughout 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic unfolded. There is also a clear drop in early November as the USD weakened at the time of the US election in response to Joe Biden's victory.

QLD-DEVELOPED HARVEST SYSTEM LANDS MAJOR INTERNATIONAL AWARD

A Queensland developed cane harvest monitoring system has achieved international recognition, taking out a top gong at the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE) 2021 AE50 awards.

SCHLOT Live, a world-first cane loss monitoring system developed by Queensland engineering and research firm Norris Energy Crop Technology, was crowned one of the top 50 ag tech innovations globally by an international panel of engineering experts.

SCHLOT Live is the world's first cane loss monitoring system to provide a real-time suite of complete cane loss information to harvester operators, opening the door to multimillion-dollar cane loss recoveries in the Australian market alone, NorrisECT Director **Stuart Norris** said.

"Winning an AE50 is an honour for the SCHLOT Live team, reflecting the hard work and innovative thinking that has gone into its development," Stuart said.

"SCHLOT Live is the culmination of over 20 years of field research, data analysis, and engineering innovation.

"We've started with a blank sheet of paper to overcome what has been regarded up until now an unsolvable problem, and to launch the product commercially this year and also win a major international innovation award makes it a very special year.

"What is particularly exciting at this point is the huge growth we see in the use of data in maximising profitability in the sugar supply chain moving forward.

"We see the potential and scope of the SCHLOT Live system expanding significantly over the coming seasons."

Locally, trials arranged by CANEGROWERS Tully, Tully Sugar Limited and supported by industry research body Sugar Research Australia put SCHLOT Live to the test, verifying the accuracy and effectiveness of the data driven system.

CANEGROWERS Tully manager **Peter Lucy** said that the benefit of a system like SCHLOT was the insight into the value chain it gave to both harvesting contractors and growers.

"There are many experienced contractors doing a very good job during harvest," Peter said.

"With the data from SCHLOT the farmer and harvester operator now have solid

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- Beneficial in stimulating natural plant defences against fungal pathogens¹
- Provides strength to cell walls; contributes to stalk strength and helps resist lodging¹
- Acts as an enzyme regulator in sugar synthesis, storage and retention in sugarcane¹
- Assists plants to resist biotic attack by insects (e.g. stem borers) and disease¹
- Alleviates the toxicity of metal ions (Fe, Al, Mn, Cd, and Zn)¹

¹ AUSTRALIAN SUGARCANE NUTRITION MANUAL June 2019 Chapter 21 : Silicon (Si) 91

² Results may vary based on various climatic and soil conditions Trial work completed by Dr Graham Kingston's from 2014 to 2016 Bundaberg QLD



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information that better reflects the value each is bringing to the table."

"Farmers want to see that their contractor is doing the best job possible, and contractors can prove that they're doing the best job for their customer."

NorrisECT Principle Engineer **Chris Norris** said that while he wasn't surprised by the results from the Tully trials, it was good that local industry bodies were taking the opportunity to verify for themselves what the data said was happening.

"We came in with a good set of results and they match our predictions pretty closely," Chris said.

"In the past the results of trials like these would often get oversimplified or misconstrued, and operators would end up coming away with the wrong message, maybe something like 'you must slow down to do a better harvest'.

"What we can show them in real time, for example, is that yes maybe slowing early in the day is beneficial due to the dew or other factors, but as the day progresses you can maybe do a better job moving faster and can finish the block with less



hours in the cab without increasing losses.

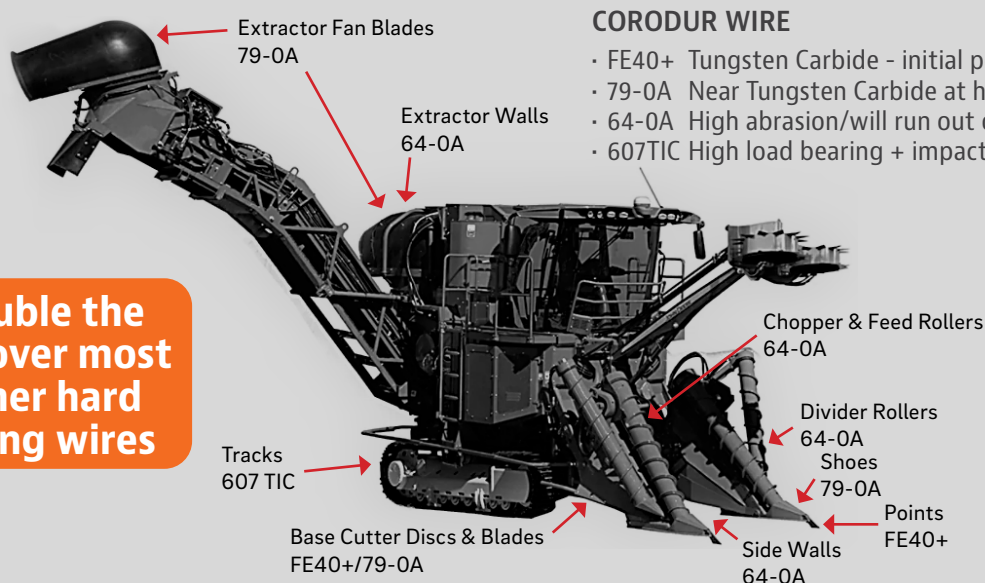
"We've never been able to share this information in a useable way before, and we're looking forward to rolling it out in a much bigger way in 2021." ■

Pictured: The SCHLOT Live program has been developed by Chris (pictured) and Stuart Norris. It's been under development for a number of years with support from SRA and cane growers groups in North Queensland.

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Heading out to the shed

The shed is generally a hive of activity on a farm. It's a workplace as well as a creative space, a place of contemplation and problem solving, a connection to the past and a place to plan the future.

A number of sheds in the Isis District have featured in a special project.

BY CINDY BENJAMIN

Last year something unique happened in 12 sheds dotted around Childers – men talked about what their shed means to them. The men all had different connections with their sheds and used them for a range of purposes including business, hobbies, sports, history or recreation.

Three of the twelve shed owners, **Mark Weiss, Angelo La Rocca** and **John and Matt Russo**, spoke about the life of a cane farm shed.

For Mark Weiss, the shed is a workplace where he and his father always have a project or two on the go. Situated close to the house, the shed is where his workday starts and ends. Some activities are fairly routine, like cleaning down and fueling up tractors ready for the following day, while others are too variable to keep track of.

"The shed is where we fix problems and save money."

One day installing a UHF in the ute and the next day maintaining an irrigator.

"The shed is a great place to plan the next job and solve the problems that keep cropping up," Mark says. "I've worked in other sheds where the focus is on building or servicing equipment to earn an income, but this shed is about saving money. It's a place where we repair and maintain our gear and store spare parts and tools.

"It's also a place to work in wet weather or to get out of the wind. And when neighbours drop in, they always come to the shed first."

Mark says the shed is also where the men of the family can work on projects and make use of shared space, tools and equipment.

"The shed is where family bonds are strengthened with mutual respect."

"Often things will 'go missing' from the shed because they are being used by my son or son-in-law," says Mark. "But that's what everything is for; and there's often one of their vehicles being serviced or fixed in the shed."

Angelo La Rocca is an elder of the cane farming community in the Isis district. He's recently retired after 61 years of active farming. Angelo has lived on his farm all his life and plans to spend the rest of his days there, albeit at a slower pace.

His sheds are a tangible connection to memories of working with his father and of his own time farming. Two of the sheds were once stables and now house farming equipment from the days when horses provided all the horsepower on the farm.

"When I was farming, the main shed was the centre of the farm's activities," he recalls. "Each day I'd meet with the workers in the shed to plan our day and during the year the work in the shed would change according to the season.

"I always feel at ease in the shed and there's always something to do. In the dry times you keep busy preparing for when the rain comes and the weeds grow."

In his retirement Angelo is enjoying the opportunity to reflect on the past and

preserve some of the equipment and practices of yesteryear; and to share the collection with those who remember, and those who can hardly believe, what farming was once like.

"When you leave the shed at the end of the day your mood usually reflects how the day went," he says. "But the sun will shine again tomorrow. In the shed you can make a plan and get yourself ready, then move out into the field and gain that sense of achievement from solving a problem."

Father and son team, John and Matt Russo see their shed as a new beginning for their farming partnership. The shed was built six years ago when John and his brothers dissolved their family partnership in favour of separate business entities to better accommodate the next generation.

"Working relationships in families are not always easy," says John. "We have been fortunate that things worked when I was in partnership with my brothers, and now Matt and I have a good working relationship too."

John, Matt and their workers meet at the shed each morning to plan the day's activities and then usually meet back at the shed for smoko and lunch.

*Pictured: Isis growers Mark Weiss (left) and John and Matt Russo (below).
Image Credits: Sabrina Lauriston Photography*

Continues next page ►



"The shed is where men can plan, tinker, fix and build things and have a sense of self and community."

Pictured: Angelo La Rocca and Kallee Buchanan, ABC Radio Wide Bay. Image Credits: Sabrina Lauriston Photography



Matt is a boilermaker by trade and so he spends much of his day working in the shed, where he likes to have the work area tidy and organised, and appreciates having access to good gear.

He recalls memories of hanging around the shed as a lad and now there is a new generation wanting to be involved in what goes on in the shed.

"As a kid I always wanted to be out on the farm whenever I could and it seemed a natural thing to want to come and work on the farm with Dad and to really build something together," says Matt.

For John, the shed represents the value of spending time with family. He says that respect needs to flow both ways in a father-son working relationship and while the conversations might be different to those had 'with the boys', the shed was a good place to talk.

The idea for the 'In the Shed' project came from a discussion that **Wendy Zunker**, Creative Regions associate producer, had with a woman at the launch of Strength in Words, an arts-led flood recovery project following the 2013 Bundaberg floods.

The woman spoke about her husband's shed, which was washed away in the flood, that had housed tools belonging to his father, who had recently passed away. His sense of loss was immense and it sparked an idea that has now seen the production of more creative works to celebrate the importance of spaces like sheds.

With funding from St John's Grace Fund, and the support of ABC Wide Bay and CANEGROWERS Isis, Creative Regions collaborated with ABC Wide Bay reporter, **Kallee Buchanan** and photographer **Sabrina Lauriston**. The pair conducted interviews and captured images of the men and their sheds.

"The curated collection of images was exhibited at Vintner's Secret Vineyard near Childers for a private viewing by the men and their invited guests, and then opened for a public viewing the following day," says Wendy. "As the men and their families and friends viewed the exhibition there was a general acknowledgement of just how important these spaces are to men's well-being and sense of belonging and accomplishment."

CANEGROWERS Isis manager **Angela Williams** says the project was a powerful and creative way to value the real importance of the spaces that give men the room to be themselves and to grapple with whatever life has thrown them.

"The interviews and the photographs really captured the essence of these 12 men and their sheds," she says. "They have sparked important conversations and a better understanding of why men need to have a space of their own."

ABC Wide Bay's Kallee Buchanan hosts the In The Shed podcast series, exploring the role sheds play in the lives and well-being of their 12 owners - Angelo La Rocca, Joe Menich, John & Matt Russo, Dr Ian Holthouse, Ed Murray, Mark Weiss, Ric (Graham) Richter, Jock

Gardner, Peter Anderson, Terrence Byrne, Ian Glenwright and Darren Enslin.

At the exhibition, Kallee led a discussion focussing on how important a shed, or space, is for the well-being of men. She was joined by **David Facer**, director of Open Door Support Services and comedian **Rob Brown**, who helped keep the mood light.

Plans are in place to re-mount the photographic exhibition at AgroTrend 2021 and at the Bundaberg Regional Art Gallery, and potentially tour to BackDock Arts in Brisbane mid-year during Men's Mental Health Week.

The podcast series is available via this website link: <http://bit.ly/InTheShed-Childers>

MORE INFORMATION:

Creative regions: www.creativeregions.com.au/projects/in-the-shed

Creative Regions receives operational support from the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland. ■

"The shed is where memories are made and history is preserved"



Sugar industry farewells a true gentleman and leader

QUEENSLAND'S sugarcane industry is mourning a man who led growers through one of the most turbulent periods in its history.



Fred Soper died peacefully at Mirani on Friday 8 January 2021 aged 86. Mr Soper, a grower in the Marian region near Mackay, was the Queensland CANEGROWERS Chairman from 1982 – 1989.

Current CANEGROWERS Chairman, Paul Schembri, said Mr Soper was a strong leader who worked for the greater good of growers and the sugarcane industry in difficult times.

"The 1980s were characterised by historically low sugar prices and the start of a period of deregulation for the industry," Mr Schembri said. "At one point, sugar prices collapsed to as low as 2.5 USc/lb which was devastating for Queensland's cane growers. By contrast prices today are at 15.6 USc/lb.

"At the same time, after decades of stability, the structures and rules under which the industry had operated were being stripped away and altered in a process of deregulation, with the most notable being the end of the sugar import embargo."

On Thursday 22 November 1984 cane growers, from Mossman to the Clarence, converged on Brisbane to plead their case for urgent assistance to then Prime Minister Bob Hawke who was visiting the city.

The Cane Train Rally, as it became known, was a desperate move forced on the growers after they'd tried unsuccessfully to focus the nation's attention on their plight for several years.

The 1,000-strong rally waited all day, creating a media sensation and capturing the public's interest.

Mr Soper, as Queensland CANEGROWERS Chairman, received a personal commitment from Mr Hawke to assist the industry after he spoke to the Cane Train Rally from his hotel balcony.

According to the *Australian Canegrower* December 1984 edition: 'It was a great and historic day for cane growers, providing an unprecedented demonstration of industry concern, resolve and strength of purpose.'

"Mr Soper served growers with a fierce dedication," Mr Schembri said. "He gave a 100 per cent commitment to the welfare of growers and was a true gentleman in the way he conducted himself.

"His work carried him to the national and international stage. He attended the first ever world sugar growers congress in Mexico in 1981 before becoming president of the World Association of Beet and Cane Growers in 1987."

Mr Soper is survived by his wife Nola, four children, 11 grandchildren and nine great grandchildren. ■

Pictured: Above, Fred Soper in 1988; below, growers at a cane train rally in 1984 and insert, then Prime Minister Bob Hawke speaking to cane growers.





New Wet Tropics soil health group

An ever-increasing focus on soil health is behind a new farmers group in the Far North.

Ingham cane grower Alan Lynn is calling on farmers from across the region's agricultural industries to join the new Lower Wet Tropics Soil Care Group, which will focus on Ingham, Tully and surrounding districts and work hand-in-hand with the neighbouring Wet Tropics Soil Care Group.

Alan and a committee of farmers from across the cane, grazing and horticulture industries have been working with natural resource management group Terrain NRM to set up the group for farmer networking, shared learning, paddock trials and soil health-related events.

"Soil health is a priority right across our farming industries – from cane to horticulture and grazing," Alan said.

"We all develop systems that work for us, but having others to share ideas and results with when we're trying new things can be very helpful."

The fourth-generation cane farmer has been working to reduce soil compaction on his land by installing GPS equipment in his machinery, widening his cane rows, reducing the amount of times machinery

passes over his crops and planting multi-species crops on fallow land.

Alan said a Digging Deeper soil health course with Terrain NRM six years ago was a catalyst for change and more recent soil health innovation tours - showcasing cover cropping and soil stimulants including compost, biochar and organic fertilisers – had also been useful.

Terrain's Digging Deeper coordinator Rowan Shee said soil health was becoming more of a focus for landholders, and many were seeing good results from improving soil carbon,

"Soil health was becoming more of a focus for landholders."

structure and nutrient cycling to manage soils for the longer-term.

"People are sharing their experiences in keeping soils covered, in increasing plant diversity in fallow crops, inter-rows and pastures and in minimising soil disturbances," he said.

"The groups are also working with us to bring agroecologists and farmers to the region who are improving soil health in other regions and can talk with landholders here about what they're doing."

To find out more about the new Lower Wet Tropics Soil Care Group, phone Alan Lynn on 0419 722 101 or Michael Waring on 0428 771 361.

For more information about the Wet Tropics Soil Care Group phone Mareeba lychee farmer Mal Everett on 0439 829 159 and for information about the Digging Deeper program phone Rowan Shee on 0458 875 745

Join our group: Cane grower Alan Lynn (pictured) is part of a new soil health group for farmers across the industries in the lower Wet Tropics.



Life after Cyclone Yasi... 10 years on

Early-February 2011 is a difficult time to forget for those living in the Tully region a decade ago.

At Category 5, Tropical Cyclone Yasi, crossed the far north Queensland coast between midnight and 1.00am on 3 February. Now known, notoriously, as one of the most powerful cyclones to affect Queensland since record keeping began, Yasi crossed the coast near Mission Beach.

The barograph at the Tully Sugar Mill recorded a minimum pressure of 929 hPa as the eye passed over, suggesting wind gusts of about 285 km/h. With rainfall of around 200-300mm recorded in that 24-hour period, flooding added to the cyclone's damage.



Residents bunkered down for a fearful night unsure what the dawn would bring.

The damage caused by the cyclone was significant and the sugarcane and banana growing region of Tully took the full brunt of the disaster.

The cyclone followed a dismal 2010, with its five months of extensive and unseasonal rain, flooding and several other cyclones affecting growers and disrupting the crush.

Yasi caused undeniable devastation and destruction, "From the air, the sugarcane growing regions of Tully looked like they had been blasted with a giant hairdryer," wrote **Jasmine Hunt**, *Australian Canegrower* Editor at that time.

The Australian Bureau of Agriculture and Resource Economics and Sciences estimated the cyclone caused a \$300 million hit to agricultural production, with banana and sugarcane crops particularly affected.

CANEGROWERS Tully Manager, **Peter Lucy**, remembers the time all too well. He was on the ground supporting growers during the challenging times following the disaster.

Australian Canegrower asked Peter if Yasi prompted any changes for the cane growing community during the recovery work following the cyclone.

"The most significant change for our district was that considerable areas of Managed Investment Scheme (MIS) forestry plantations were devastated by Yasi," Peter said.

In the years prior to 2011, low sugar prices and cashed up MIS investors led cane farms being converted to tree plantations.

"To put it into perspective, in the 2005 season Tully Mill crushed cane from an area of 24,800 ha and by the 2010 season the area for harvest had reduced to 20,300 ha," Peter said.

"The reconversion of cane land from trees back to cane after Yasi contributed to the area for harvest increasing to 27,700 ha for the 2014 harvest season.

"Favourable sugar prices made it possible for some growers to take advantage of the situation," Peter said.

In the aftermath, a small shimmer of promise emerged. Growers seized the opportunity to increase their cane-growing capacity providing a stronger industry with increased potential for financial sustainability.

"In regard to reconstruction, after Yasi, one of the frustrating issues was that removal of debris from streams was managed as environmental rather than as an infrastructure issue," Peter said.



"The rivers and streams in the Wet Tropics are essential infrastructure to agriculture because of the amount of rainfall received and the impact of waterlogging on productivity.

"While significant work was done by the relevant authorities, there was not sufficient priority put on this aspect, and the impact of Yasi is still being noticed today in some parts of the catchment."

But overall, Peter concluded the response at all levels of government, the community and the industry was incredible and well-focused to achieve an outcome that is being felt in the communities today.

It is important to recognise disasters like Cyclone Yasi with respect, to reflect on lessons learned, explore potential opportunities that present and appreciate the resilience of individual cane growers and the extended community.

10 years on and life continues in the region, planting, growing, harvesting but as always, with one eye on the weather.■

"From the air, the sugarcane growing regions of Tully looked like they had been blasted with a giant hairdryer."



Pictured: Peter Lucy, CANEGROWERS Tully Manager (below) surveys the damage to cane and (above) some of the debris and destruction outside the Tully office. (Left) snapped and flattened cane and (main photo above) an aerial view after Cyclone Yasi hit.





SMARTCANE BMP - NOT A FLASH IN THE PAN!

By Kate Gowdie, Smartcane BMP Manager

Smartcane BMP accredited growers now manage 35% of Queensland's sugarcane area, after the program accrediting a 600th enterprise. Just as important as new accreditations, is the retention of existing participants as 20% of the current crop of Smartcane BMP growers are already accredited for five or more years.

Accreditation is granted to successful enterprises for a period of five years (based on an average crop cycle).

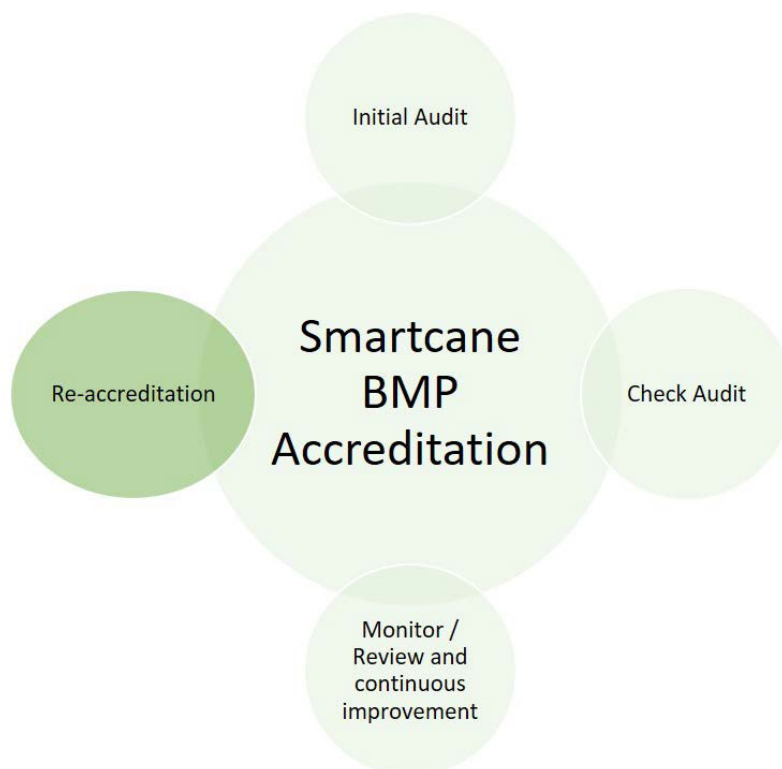
During that time growers may be randomly selected to undertake a check (surveillance) audit.

Successful check audits extend accreditations by another five years from the date of the audit.

Growers who have maintained their accreditation for five consecutive years, but haven't been selected for a check audit, can undertake a reaccreditation audit in the fifth year.

The voluntary nature of the program means that individual growers decide if they want to become and remain part of the program.

To date, the impressive rate of retention and reaccreditation demonstrates the commitment of growers to the long-term sustainability, profitability and productivity of their industry.





Big year ahead

There are over 100 enterprises due for reaccreditation in 2021, the largest number since the start of the program in 2014.

The ongoing compliance and retention of growers is one of the key strengths of the program.

There will always be natural attrition when farms are sold or cane production ceases, however the program has a retention rate above 95%.

Growers aren't just talking the talk, they're walking the walk when it comes to using best practice on their farms and are continuing to demonstrate this very high compliance long after their initial accreditation, said Lana Shoesmith, General Manager of Audits and Compliance with Ardent Group.

Lana is one of the independent auditors who accredit growers in the Smartcane BMP program.

"The majority of growers undertaking a re-accreditation or check audit have demonstrated that their record keeping and on farm practices have continued since the initial certification audits and they are in full compliance," Lana said. "The only lapses I have seen are where the Safety Data Sheets (SDS) have not been maintained.

"A current SDS is required to be kept for all products used (not just the active ingredient) and these SDS expire after five years.

"Growers are recognising the value in keeping a register of the products that they have on farm together with the SDS expiry date as a means of maintaining compliance." ■

Pictured: (above) Lana Shoesmith working with a canegrower for reaccreditation; (right) Cairns Region grower Don Hussey recently received his five-year reaccreditation.

"Growers aren't just talking the talk, they're walking the walk when it comes to using best practice"

Smartcane BMP is supported by the Queensland Government until 2022.

ARE YOU UP FOR REACCREDITATION?

Some key things to remember:

- Ensure your SDS register is up to date
- Have drumMUSTER receipts on hand
- Ensure your nutrient and chemical records are easily accessible
- Ensure you are up to date with all legislative requirements, including any introduced since your initial accreditation
- Chat to your local facilitator if you need any assistance



CANEGROWERS REGIONAL ROUND-UP

Supplied by CANEGROWERS district offices

MOSSMAN

2020 could be classed as quite a dry year for Mossman with only 2,208mm falling between January and December. This is over 1,000mm less than the 52-year average.

But the heavens opened on 1 January 2021, with heavy showers across the district. Between the monsoon rains and the first cyclone of 2021 (TC Kimi), the predicted La Nina event well and truly took hold in January.

The crop has responded strongly to the increase in moisture and we now need some sunshine again after all that rain.

Mossman mill workers got some well-earned time off over the festive season, with the majority back at the end of January 2021 to start slack season work and maintenance.

To support the truck shop with their work, a new overhead crane was installed just before the end of season breakup, replacing the existing crane that had been in service since 1966.

This will be Far Northern Milling's second slack season of upgrading and maintenance work in Mossman Mill. The focus continues to be on improving mill availability.

We congratulate Joe and Carmel Raldini on achieving Smartcane BMP accreditation on their 13 farms supplying Mossman Mill.

We now have 19 Mossman enterprises accredited and 3,697ha, or 44% of the Mossman cane area accredited with as operating at or above industry standard.

Joe and Carmel say it was a team effort and recognise the assistance of Chris and Jill Wilson, and Rebecca and Kate from Mossman Agricultural Services.

We encourage those growers who have done their Smartcane BMP benchmarking to continue their journey and work through the accreditation process.



Pictured: (L-R) Chris and Jill Wilson with Carmel and Joe Raldini.

CAIRNS

Heavy rain has been experienced across the region with some localised flooding and inundation of paddocks experienced in the lower reaches. With the catchments now relatively full, any continuing effects of the wet season will be felt.

Although still very early in the year, the cane has responded well to the rain and broadly speaking the crop looks quite good. The rain did cause the cessation of farming activities for a time.

Negotiations for both the South Johnstone and Mulgrave Cane Supply Agreements have recommenced, with the South Johnstone CSA close to completion. Meetings will be held in the Mulgrave and Babinda Zones in the near future to brief members.

The organisation has several projects that will be rolled out over the next few months. These include some complementary leaf analysis to feed into the GBRF Funded RP222, RP221 whole of farm nutrient management projects, along with the WTSIP Nutrient Management Plans.

The Unlocking GPS Potential project, being run collaboratively with Honeycombes Cairns, has continued into the new year with workshops organised to take place in the coming months.

A similar course for the Trimble platform is in the process of being developed, with the aim to roll the workshops out prior to the commencement of the 2021 season, allowing the involved growers to implement new skills in the upcoming season.

Engagement with the Smartcane BMP program across the district continues to maintain momentum, with several growers edging closer to accreditation in the new year.

With Smartcane BMP having been around for some time now, the first growers to gain accreditation have now undertaken their 5-year reaccreditation reviews.

To date, all growers within the Cairns Region who have undertaken this process have maintained accreditation. Congratulations to these growers.

INNISFAIL

The new year has brought about change in the CANEGROWERS Innisfail management team with **Sandra Henrich** taking on the role of District Manager and **Deb Telford** appointed to the newly created position of Grower Services Manager.

As part of this restructure, both Sandra and Deb remain partially employed in their previous project-funded positions with the Wet Tropics Major Integrated Project and Smartcane BMP.

Specific details of the restructure are being finalised by the Board and will be communicated in the coming weeks.

Growers in the Innisfail district welcomed the first rain of the wet season on Christmas morning, which led into heavier downpours and localised flooding typical of this time of year.

At the time of writing, growers in the region were relieved to learn that Tropical Cyclone Kimi no longer posed a significant wind damage or flood threat to crops.

In early February, the Innisfail region will acknowledge the contribution of Wayne and Mary Thomas to the cane industry with functions planned for growers and industry personnel.

Innisfail district growers are urged to register their attendance with the office for catering purposes if they haven't already done so.

TULLY

The predicted wet season did not start in Tully until Christmas Day. However, by year's end, falls of up to 250mm had been recorded, which was enough to secure the Gumboot Award for 2020 with a total of 3289mm, around 50mm ahead of arch rivals Babinda.

The highest daily recording for 2020 was a paltry 174mm in April, and this has already been exceeded by a more respectable 209mm on 12 January 2021.

Even though more than 900mm has fallen in the first half of January, there has been little flooding and crop growth has been good. It's early days and a lot more water will flow under the Tully Bridge before the wet season is done.

While on the weather, it will soon be the 10-year anniversary of Cyclone Yasi and while we can all recall the devastation caused, it is also important to celebrate the way that the community came together during the clean-up, the assistance provided by state, federal and local governments, and that our industry and community are still thriving.

It is great to see the numbers registering their interest in the Pricing Essentials for Cane Growers TAFE Course.

CANEGROWERS representatives and members put in a huge effort to ensure that growers were able to price GEI sugar through the marketer of their choice.

This course will provide additional tools to assist grower members in their pricing decisions.

HERBERT RIVER

Herbert River welcomed in the new year and the wet season simultaneously, as the region felt the effects of Tropical Cyclone Imogen, which formed in the Gulf of Carpentaria on January 3.

Heavy rainfall left the region on major flood alert, with resultant road closures and localised flooding for several days.

The Upper Herbert River catchment area recorded high rainfalls, while Ingham recorded 800.3 mm during the first 18 days of January, with another deluge was expected thanks to Tropical Cyclone Kimi.

With the landscape already saturated, Herbert growers are hoping any flood waters recede quickly enough to minimise damage to cane paddocks and cause minimal impact to the 2021 sugarcane crop.



Continues next page ►

CANEGROWERS REGIONAL ROUND-UP

BURDEKIN

The benefit of tropical cyclones (the ones that don't roll over the top of you) is the welcome rainfall they bring.

The rain everyone was wanting finally arrived at the end of December 2020 and continued into the new year.

At the time of writing, the rains received in January 2021 are twice the historical monthly average. Thankfully there has been no widespread damage, although some of the bigger crops decided to lay down (pictured).

The wet weather has enabled pumps to be turned off and holidays taken to spend time with family. When the sunshine did come out for a few consecutive days, the crop responded well with a good burst of growth.

February is the month when people start to ramp up their focus on their businesses, weather permitting.

Shed meetings are usually held by service providers from February and are a good source of information both in terms of dissemination and networking within the growing community.

This will also be the month for any farmers who wish to change or restructure harvesting groups to lodge their applications to Wilmar for consideration. These will need to be submitted to Wilmar by 28 February 2021.

Farms seem to be selling and the level of interest is promising. The trend of farmers outside the district buying land in the Burdekin continues, as the attraction of secure water is a powerful draw card.

On the subject of water, NQ Dry Tropics has announced a new water quality project for the Burdekin, funded by the Great Barrier Reef Foundation.

The aim of the project is to improve water quality through increased pumping and irrigation efficiency.

The project will run for 3 and a half years and, once details have been finalised, the first round of participants is expected to be engaged early 2021.

The project may provide avenues to improve irrigation efficiencies through pumping and infrastructure evaluation and planning, energy audits, soil moisture monitoring, irrigation scheduling and automation.

This collaborative project has selected three extension providers for farmers to work with: AgriTech Solutions, BPS, and Farmacist.

We understand farmers can nominate their preference in support providers. Sugar Research Australia will be providing more details in due course.

So far, we are off to a positive start to the 2021 season in the Burdekin with some welcome rain and the crop is looking good.

Even the sugar price is looking more hopeful, rising above \$400 for the 2021 season.

All we need now are some periods of sunshine in between rain events to make the crop grow.



PROSERPINE

Since our last update, Proserpine has received some good general rain to bolster the 2021 crop.

The district remained predominantly dry until the last week of December, when the remnants of Tropical Cyclone Imogen deposited just over 200mm across the region.

The rain has continued for most of January but while the rain has provided welcome relief from irrigation routines, the crop has been relatively slow to respond so far.

At this stage, most growers are reporting an expected crop similar to the previous year's yield.

Storage capacity at Peter Faust Dam is currently at 62%, which should provide sufficient available water for the coming year.

CANEGROWERS Proserpine in conjunction with TAFE Queensland will be hosting a 2-day Pricing Essentials for Cane Growers course in March. There is still time to register your interest and details are on the back of the magazine.

In the coming weeks, CANEGROWERS Proserpine will be meeting with officers from the Lands Department to review the valuations of cane farms in the Whitsunday LGA.

There has been some significant farm sales since the last valuation review and CANEGROWERS will monitor the review process closely.

MACKAY/ PLANE CREEK

Despite a call by Federal MPs **Michelle Landry** and **George Christensen** to address a safety design fault in the construction of the Walkerston Bypass, the State Government has chosen to ignore the issue.

The State Government is building the Walkerston Bypass to connect Peak Downs Highway west of Walkerston to the Mackay Ring Road near Paget.

CANEGROWERS Mackay said that the Department of Transport and Main Roads' intention to build a Staggered T intersection for heavy farm vehicles to cross the Walkerston Bypass in order to undertake normal farming operations, rather than build an underpass to separate the traffic, was "an accident waiting to happen," in the crushing season.

An independent investigation of the road design by consulting engineers on behalf of affected growers showed that DTMR had failed to take into consideration the increased volume of farm traffic which occurs every year during the harvest from June to December.

During the six-month crushing period, an estimated 220 trips per day (22 vehicles per hour) will use the intersection to cross the bypass, significantly adding to existing traffic volumes

during peak periods, slowing traffic considerably and increasing the risk of road accidents.

"The Minister's patronising plea for drivers to simply 'drive carefully' is astonishing when the Minister must be acutely aware of the record rate of traffic accidents in this State. Here is an opportunity to correct a serious flaw in road design to improve motorists' safety and the efficient operation of the highway at the busiest time for the industry, and the Minister ignores it."

CANEGROWERS Mackay will continue to lobby the Government on the issue.



ISIS

In 2021, we are committed to serve our members with renewed energy and a stronger focus on 'Your Business is Our Business'. Our members will decide the farm business priorities they would like their levy to concentrate on and our team will action.

At the invitation of CANEGROWERS Maryborough we attended their AGM in mid December. It was an historic meeting and one filled with sadness, witnessing the final MSF mill crush report and the impacts of uncertainty on the Maryborough growers and industry. It was pleasing to hear the hope and support from Maryborough growers for the toll crush arrangement with Isis Central Sugar Mill and support for a united district into the future. We welcome the opportunity to build together a united district and longer term viability of the sugarcane industry in the southern region.

Both groups welcomed the development of a single Cane Supply Agreement to unite the district albeit with specific inclusions/exclusions. We have and will be working hard toward this end. Construction of the new transloader is underway south of Childers and is currently on track for completion before the start of the 2021 Crush.

Bonson Lam from Ergon Energy visited the district during December at our invitation. This was his only visit outside of Brisbane in 2020. Bonson is a key link to irrigators getting a practical solution and better deal with energy tariffs moving forward.

We are currently working on presenting our growers with information on tariffs which best fit the district and our irrigation/ production systems.

CANEGROWERS REGIONAL ROUND-UP

ISIS

We are continuing to work and lobby for the following:

- Ability to change tariffs more than once per year to match crop needs
- Minimal cost for seasonal tariff changes
- Ergon account managers – we need special contacts to ensure consistency of advice from the Call Centre
- Reclassification of large customers

As part of the Bundaberg Agricultural Consortium will be continuing to strongly advocate and pressure the Bundaberg Regional Council to change the way they value and view farmers contributions to the region. The consortium is continuing to call for agricultural rates to not be higher than CPI in the 2020 rates round. Canegrowers Isis have accessed professional local government advice to assist the consortium in 2021 to continue to lobby against this rates inequity within the Local Government system. We will not stop this action until we have a satisfactory outcome.



MARYBOROUGH

CANEGROWERS Maryborough Chairman **Jeff Atkinson** and Manager **Cam Waterson** visited Childers on 18 January and met with CANEGROWERS Isis representatives to begin to plan for the 2021 season.

They also visited the construction site to check on the progress of the crucial trans-loader, which to date has been very positive. The site has been levelled and orders for the trans-loader components have been placed.

The CANEGROWERS Maryborough board has recommenced meetings with Isis Central Sugar Mill in January for progression of CSA negotiations for 2023 and beyond.

Good growing conditions are reported for all parts of the district and the crop is well placed for good season. There are also some signs of a good sugar price for the year as well.



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ROCKY POINT

Showers have continued to fall across the district since Christmas Day with around 45 mm received in total.

The cane crop has responded well to the growing conditions, and if the weather remains favourable over the next three months, we should have an above average crop in Rocky Point.

Approximately 500ha of soybeans have been planted across the district and the recent rainfall has assisted the beans to get off to a great start.

In mid-December 2020, we held our first young farmers meeting with 15 growers attending.

Topics discussed wide ranging and includes: the future of cane in Rocky Point; younger growers looking for options to grow more cane; how to influence the local CANEGROWERS board; being able to have more communication with the board; succession planning for the board; information on the industry; cooperative farming; sugar pricing; and agronomy.

Our board will continue with the meetings and endeavour to work through the topics raised.

Young growers are encouraged to become involved in representing all growers on the local CANEGROWERS board.

Sugar pricing is a topic high on our agenda for 2021. Our miller is only allowing us to price 25% of the crop for 2021 at this point due to the uncertainty surrounding the ability of the cogeneration plant to run consistently to process the crop.

The board will be in constant communication with the mill with a view to expanding the pricing parameters as soon as practical, as it is crucially important that we can capture those high prices when they are available.

BUNDABERG

The Bundaberg Regional Council is so far refusing to budge on its unwarranted and unfair money grab which has seen rates rise by up to 235%.

The coalition of BFVG, AgForce, CANEGROWERS Isis and CANEGROWERS Bundaberg will continue with the fight and it may be that we escalate it to the state level.

We have had many positive comments from growers and the Bundaberg community who see this for what it is.

Nina Higgins, OAM, has spoken out in support of Bundy farmers battling the council rates rises. Mrs Higgins heads the Bundaberg Seniors' Network and is renowned for her years of dedication to building the region,

"I am a fourth-generation Bundaberg citizen, and to see our third and fourth-generation farmer families being driven to the wall by our own council is

unacceptable," she said.

Bundaberg CANEGROWERS library has copies of **Peter Ridd's** new book on the Great Barrier Reef. Please call the office if you wish to borrow a copy.

Bundaberg CANEGROWERS is assisting growers to meeting their Workplace Health and Safety requirements around chemical storage.

During a recent WHS inspection of his farm, a CANEGROWERS member avoided a \$3,000 fine because he had a chemical register, records of all the chemicals on the farm and Safety Data Sheets (also known as Material Safety Data Sheets) - all of which had been developed and provided by our extension services officer **Matt Leighton**.

We are currently in the process of finalising a service focusing on the upcoming (and unwarranted) reef regulations.



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Is my worker an employee or a contractor?

This is a fundamental question that every grower who has people working on their farm needs to answer. Similarly, anyone employed by a business should be aware of their employment status.

EMPLOYEE

- Employees are individuals who work for someone else's business.
- Employees may be employed full time, part time or casually.
- Employees are entitled to be paid wages and other employment benefits and entitlements such as annual leave, personal and careers leave.

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

- Contractors are individuals or entities that work for themselves, in their own business, and provide services to other businesses.
- Contractors are paid fees for services without any leave or wage or other entitlements.

WHO CARES?

Very different obligations, including legal and financial, apply depending on whether the worker is an employee or independent contractor.

EMPLOYER'S OBLIGATION TO EMPLOYEES

- Pay wages and all other entitlements under the Fair Work regime.
- Pay amounts to Australian Taxation Office.
- Pay superannuation entitlements.
- Pay workers' compensation premium.



By Chris Cooper,
CANEGROWERS
Legal Advisor



- Generally, businesses that are employers are legally responsible or liable for acts of employees caused or performed in course of employment.
- Work health and safety obligations.

EMPLOYER'S OBLIGATIONS TO CONTRACTORS

- Pay fee for service.
- Generally, businesses are not legally liable for the acts of independent contractors.
- Reduced work health and safety obligations.

CONSEQUENCES

If any employer makes a mistake in the proper categorisation of a worker as an employee or contractor, there are substantial penalties and liabilities that can be imposed.

There have been many prominent media reports recently about wage theft. Many of these cases arise because the employer thought the worker was a contractor and not an employee, so the employer wasn't paying employee entitlements or superannuation payments.

STEPS TO TAKE

1. If you want to engage a contractor and not an employee, the safest way is to engage a company because a company entity cannot be employed.
2. Look at the whole relationship and how much control you want over the worker's day-to-day tasks. The more control you have, the more it looks like the worker is working in

your business and not their own and therefore more likely an employee.

3. Discuss and document the arrangement with the worker. Remember, just because you and the worker might both agree that the worker is a contractor and not an employee, that self-assessment is not binding on Fair Work, the Australia Taxation Office or other authorities.
4. Some workers might strongly prefer to be contractors, but sometimes there is a falling out in the relationship and workers have been known to change their minds and seek back payment for employment benefits when they preferred to be contractors initially.
5. Ensure all relevant insurances are held by the employer business. Depending on the circumstances it may be wise to have public liability and WorkCover insurance.
6. Take advice and look at the information available from Fair Work, Australian Taxation Office and your own professional advisers.

(This article contains general advice only. The particular facts and circumstances of each case always need to be taken into account).

FURTHER INFORMATION

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



WE'RE WORKING FOR MEMBERS

CANEGROWERS POLICY UPDATE



Mick Quirk

Environment and Sustainability Manager
CANEGROWERS

Industry needs its own plan for water quality

There are obvious problems with the Federal and Queensland governments plans for reef water quality, including:

- Unreasonable targets for farm management, especially in relation to nitrogen
- Unachievable targets for water quality, especially in relation to catchment loads of Dissolved Inorganic Nitrogen.

While we retain some hope that the two layers of government may eventually act to fix these problems, our industry cannot rely on this.

What we need is our own plan for managing catchment water quality - a plan that is based on reasonable and realistic targets for farm practices, informed by sound agronomic science.

For example, the target for nutrient management might be something like: '80% of the sugarcane area managed in accordance with SIX EASY STEPS'.

Such targets will allow industry to achieve a number of things:

1. Have targets that are consistent with the Smartcane BMP program
2. Use the Smartcane BMP program to regularly report on progress towards the targets
3. Signal to the Federal and Queensland governments the contribution that industry can reasonably make to improving water quality.

Importantly, industry can move on from simply reacting to policies and programs set by others. Rather, it will be able to articulate its own concerns for water quality, its own targets and actions and the results it has achieved.

Getting the plan right and committing to its implementation will require input and support from across industry.

It will not be easy but this is the only way that industry can take a lead in water quality issues and ensure that government policies and programs are held to account.

More regulations on the way – for 'new' cropping land

Additional regulations are due to take effect from 1 June 2021, again as a result of the Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures approved by the Queensland Parliament in September 2019.

These regulations will require a permit for new or expanded commercial cropping and horticulture activities greater than 5ha in the Great Barrier Reef catchments before the activity or any work takes place.

The rule covers land where cropping or horticulture has not been undertaken for at least three out of the last 10 years (with at least one of the years being in the last five years).

The regulations relate mainly to soil and erosion control measures and irrigation requirements. The draft regulations are out for public comment until 17 February, and can be found at <https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/agriculture/sustainable-farming/reef/reef-regulations/producers/cropping>

CANEGROWERS will make a submission, arguing that sugarcane should be exempt from these new rules because cane crops are already subject to a raft of regulations governing farm practices which would automatically apply to any new plantings.

What we want is a reduction in regulations, not additional layers of bureaucracy! ■

“CANEGROWERS will argue that sugarcane should be exempt from these new rules. What we want is a reduction in regulations, not additional layers of bureaucracy.”



Warren Males

Head - Economics
CANEGROWERS

Who can see tomorrow?

In mid-February last year, sugar prices were firm and Aussie dollar prices available for the 2020 season reached A\$500/t. At that time, growers could also lock in prices for the 2021 and 2022 seasons at A\$450/t or better.

Then along came COVID-19, triggering a huge turn around. By the end of March, sugar prices were barely above AUD400/t.

Growers who took advantage of the prices on offer (and there were many who did) will receive a very attractive weighted average sugar price for 2020 season.

Most will beat the average pool prices achieved by their preferred marketer.

Marketers openly acknowledge that of the growers marketing with them, those who actively manage their own sugar price achieve a higher price than those who do not.

This translates into real dollars and the dollars are significant.

In one mill area, growers who actively engaged in forward pricing for the 2020 season will receive A\$7 per tonne of cane more than those who did not. On a 10,000 tonne cane farm, that's a lot of money!

The reason for this is straightforward.

Most pool management systems have their performances benchmarked against the average sugar price over the year, not against individual production costs.

This means most pools do routine pricing each week. Pricing is constrained by factors such as the length of the pricing window, storage limitations and the risk profile of the pool.

Generally, the longer the pricing window the more opportunity there is to secure attractive prices.

When prices are attractive, pricing is generally accelerated. But the extent to which pool managers can do this is limited.

When prices are unattractive, pool managers generally slow their rate of pricing. Again, the extent to which they do this is limited.

Of course other more sophisticated pricing strategies and tools are used, but by year's end, the pool return is close to the season average price.

Individual growers, knowing their production costs and the range of production and other risks they face, can take a different approach.

They can lock in a profit when market circumstances permit, up to three years ahead. Taking a long view opens more price opportunities than available to those who limit their horizon to in-season pricing.

Identifying risks and assessing their impact are important foundations on which risk management plans can be created.

These plans help prioritise both production and price risks, identify critical success factors and establish the controls required to mitigate or eliminate the priority risks.

The CANEGROWERS, TAFE Queensland and Rural Jobs Skills Alliance course that starts this month will provide growers with a framework to capture their production costs, understand the production and price risks they face, and develop strategies to manage these risks and boost farm profitability.

In reality, very few people can see tomorrow. But most growers know a good sugar price when they see it.

Those prepared to act are reducing their price risk, enhancing revenue and making good profits from sugarcane production, even in uncertain times. ■

Growers who took advantage of the prices on offer (and there were many who did) will receive a very attractive weighted average sugar price for 2020 season.

Burn Ashburner
Senior Manager - Industry
CANEGROWERS



Business Management and Pricing Essentials

Growers need a range of skills and knowledge to run a farming business. Good business decision making will ultimately determine whether or not the farm is profitable and sustainable.

This does not mean the grower has to know or do everything themselves, but they are accountable. This includes taking advice from or employing a professional e.g. an accountant.

Sometimes it is easier for growers to make no decision because they do not have enough understanding or knowledge or they are a bit complacent and let things roll on from year to year for example insurance cover.

Not making a decision is, by its very nature, a decision. They're simply deciding to maintain the status quo.

In some cases, this can be a very costly decision.

Forward Pricing GEI Sugar

The marketing of a cane farmer's Grower Economic Interest (GEI) sugar is one example of how making no decision can negatively impact a farm's bottom line.

Despite having the freedom to choose a marketer and forward price their GEI sugar, many growers still opt to make no decision on forward pricing.

So they have, by default, decided to price all their GEI sugar in their marketer's harvest pool.

If you are not confident and knowledgeable about how sugar marketing works it can be daunting to make any other pricing decision.

But we know that forward pricing can reduce risk, as well as enhance profitability and sustainability. So, it does make good business sense.

The more knowledgeable you are in sugar marketing, the better you will be able to make appropriate decisions for your business.

To help in this area, CANEGROWERS has teamed up with TAFE Queensland to deliver a new course designed specifically for cane growers.

The Pricing Essentials for Cane Growers course will give the necessary knowledge and understanding to make pricing decisions, whether through an advisor or not.

The first part of the course is *Manage finances for new business ventures* which will cover implementing a financial strategy and monitoring and reviewing financial performance to not only help with forward pricing decisions but improve overall financial management.

The overall financial position of the business can determine the level of risk that is acceptable.

Forward pricing is essentially a risk management tool and to this end the second part of the course is *Manage business risk*, which covers how to create a risk management plan for the whole farm, analyse these for priority issues and develop plans to reduce them.

An enhanced version of the CANEGROWERS Cost of Production Tool will allow participating growers to gain a better understanding of their business overall.

This will not just be a sit and listen course. There will be pre-course work, with a learner's guide and growers will start completing the enhanced Cost of Production Tool.

There will be an assessment to complete the course, with successful students gaining a TAFE Queensland competency.

I think this is an opportunity for growers to have a good look at their business. ■

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Burn Ashburner'.

Despite having the freedom to choose a marketer and forward price their GEI sugar, many growers still opt to make no decision on forward pricing and this approach can be very costly.

CANEGROWERS is coming to a shed near you!

CANEGROWERS is organising member meetings across all districts between February and July 2021.

These gatherings will give you an update on the work being done to support your business, prospects for the 2021 season, information on products and services for members, and a chance to catch up with fellow growers.

CANEGROWERS Chairman Paul Schembri, CEO Dan Galligan, and I will be at the meetings and we are keen to hear your views and ideas on CANEGROWERS, the future of the industry and your district.

The first meetings will be in Mossman, Tablelands and Cairns in late February. Stay tuned for details and we hope to see you there.

Information, insight and professional development

Interested in checking out what's happening in other cane growing districts, but don't want to leave your airconditioned tractor? Series 8 of the CANEGROWERS Virtual Bus Tour is now available and can be viewed on your phone via the CANEGROWERS YouTube channel.

The first episodes of Series 8 include a story from Ingham on disaster recovery, a visit to a Reef Champion cane farm in the Cairns Region and how soil moisture probes are being used in the Tableland region.



Want to increase your profitability?

Then sign up for Pricing Essentials for Cane Growers.

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

CANEGROWERS has teamed with TAFE Queensland and the Rural Jobs Skills Alliance to create a course to help you better understand and interpret financial reports and costs of production.

This course is part of CANEGROWERS ongoing work to provide professional development opportunities to members.

If you're looking to understand the factors that influence the sugar price, learn strategies to manage the risk of price fluctuations and pick up some knowledge of forward pricing tools and marketing tools to increase your profitability, then this is the course for you.

See the back cover of this issue for more information.

Thinking about representing your fellow growers?

CANEGROWERS members are represented by 87 elected grower directors in every sugarcane region of Queensland.

18% are in their first term, 20% are under 45 and 36% have been looking out for your interests for more than 15 years.

The next election is less than a year away.

If you are interested in taking on a representative role to help grow a sustainable, profitable and productive future for growers, contact your local CANEGROWERS office or call the Brisbane office on 3864 6444 for more information. ■

CANEGROWERS Community News

Introducing CANEGROWERS Community News.

Births, birthdays, engagements, weddings and funerals - this will be the place to share your family and community news in 2021.

To provide an item please email editor@canegrowers.com.au

This green box can grow so space-permitting, *Australian Canegrower* would love to also share a photograph of your event.



STICKER SPOTTER COMPETITION

CANEGROWERS sticker spotters are looking for vehicles proudly displaying their CANEGROWERS Growing Together bumper sticker.

Is this your number plate? If so, you're a winner!

**999 ZCT
029 SWX
349 XCZ
936 VMC**

Can't find your bumper sticker? Need one for another vehicle? Contact your local CANEGROWERS office.

How to enter:

- ✓ Make sure your CANEGROWERS bumper sticker is on your vehicle
- ✓ Check the next *Australian Canegrower* magazine for a list of number plates
- ✓ If yours is listed, contact CANEGROWERS Brisbane office to claim a prize.
Phone 07 3864 6444 or email info@canegrowers.com.au

FIRST 5 LINES FREE* FOR CANEGROWERS MEMBERS!

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

Next deadline is **17 February 2021**

* As a FREE service to CANEGROWERS members, *Australian Canegrower* will print suitable classified advertisements **UP TO 5 LINES FREE, FOR ONE ISSUE ONLY**. A charge of \$5.50 will apply for each extra line or part thereof. A charge will apply for advertising of non-cane growing activities. Advertisements must relate exclusively to cane farming activities, such as farm machinery, etc. Advertisements from non-members are charged at \$11 per line incl GST. Only prepaid ads will be accepted.

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Price \$250,000 + SAV.
Ph: 0415 543 469.

Mossman-Tully

John Deere 6920 with 10 Tonne Double Wing Carta. Can separate. Ph: 0408488521.

GCA-1050 Hooded Sprayer \$20,000; M100 4WD Tractor PAVT 18.438 Rear/14.928 Front Wheels \$20,000; 5 Furrow Hodge Rev Plough \$1,500. (all GST inc) Ph: 0429 652 235.

John Deere 6930 FWA; T7 170 New Holland FWA; TM 155 New Holland FWA; TS 125 New Holland FWA; (all tractors with HBM 6T Tippers). Ph: 0428 453 640

Austoft A8800 Cane Harvester, Ford 7710 2WD Tractor, 1000 gal Fuel Tanker with Pump and Meter. Ph: 0407 630 499.

New Holland TVT155 with 14 Tonne Carta Bin VGC, will sell separate. HBM Dual Row Billet planter. Gessner Stool Splitter, 3 S/S Tanks, new condition- 2 years old. Ph: 0407590033.

Harvester CASE IH 8810 track machine – 2600hrs with all the upgrades to hydraulics. Massey 7620 with 14 tonne Carta, John Deere 7630 with 14 tonne Carta, Fiat 100-90 with Newton Bin. Harvester truck with 4000ltr fuel tank with a meter motor CASE

7700 Harvester 2000 model track machine 65 Articulated with 5000ltr water tank. Ph: 0427163748

John Deere 7630 Articulated Tractor with 14t Carta Elevator Tipper. Will separate tractor & tipper. Tipper available with articulated hitch or gooseneck configuration. Ph: 0418181646.

2009 John Deere 7630 Articulated tractor with 14 tonne Carta Elevator Tipper. Tully Area. Ph: 0418181646.

2x Ian Ritchie 6t side tippers. VGC. Ph: 0740562063.

Herbert River-Burdekin

1 telescopic ram for 14t Carta Tipper done up \$3000 plus GST. 1 telescopic ram for 14t Carta Tipper \$500 plus GST. 1 new 30inch rim for JCB Fastrac plus GST. 1 Bonfiglioli hub done up \$3000 plus GST. 2010 John Deere 3520 Track Harvester excellent condition. Ph: 0417077343 or rm.biasi@hotmail.com

2004 McCormick MTX140 tractor with front suspension coupled to an Austoft 10 tonne trail haul elevating bin. Unit is in good condition and ready for work. No further use and taking up shed space. Motivated seller will consider all genuine offers. Ph: 0429181276.

Fordson Major. 1950 belt pulley. Drawbar. Canopy. Good tyres. Starts, runs and drives well. Ideal for collector restoration. Boat towing. Photo available. \$1990.00. Ph: 0417070844.



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2.1m Width other sizes available are: 1.2m & 1.8m



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Ph: 49 522 577

Address: 371 Connors Road Bakers Creek Mackay



Mackay-Proserpine

Moller Sorter Planter, contractors model, own hydraulics, liquid fert, steering, 250lt lorsban tank, 700lt fungicide tank, GC, suit small contractor or medium size farm \$23,000 ONO. 2x 10t Tully welding work bins articulated on Ford 5000 Turbo & 4080B Chamberlain Turbo. Used for planting only. Both registered. \$15,000 each ONO. Ph: 0408733793.

2 x 3T side elevating bins on Vane double trailer with own hydraulics. Ideal for planting. Ph: 0418 983 163.

2008 John Deere 3510 Harvester, 7200 hours on engine, 15200 on frame. 9 litre engine with pump upgrade for separate circuits. Walking gear 1 year old \$180,000 incl. Ph: 0419726140.

CHAMBERLAIN C6100 TRACTOR with heavy duty bag lifter, has dual hydraulic cylinders, adjustable extendable jib for long reach, lifts 5T close-up. \$8,000+gst. Ph: 0417612883.

Refalo 2-tonne fertilizer box on wheels; 3-row trash rakes; 3-row multi-weeder; cutaways; grubbers for rattoons and fallow; cane break pushers; and more. Ph: 0417612883.

Donnelly double 6t side tipper. 2018 model. As new condition. Can be hooked to New Holland Tm 140. Ph: 0408190493.

6 tonne Farview Eng side tipper. Good condition, near new tyres. \$15,000 + GST. Ph: 0407595745.

1995 Cameco Harvester. Swing out radiator, shredder toppe, extended elevator will cut 1.5m to 1.8m row spacing, variable billet length. Machine and tracks in good condition. Elevator needs work. Some spares with sale including new elevator chains. \$55,000 + GST. Ph: 0407595745.

EHS 15in 8 blade chopper drum, 95ml blade. \$6,000 inc GST. Ph: 0407 179 571

Westhill plant cutter with toppe \$1,000 inc. GST. Ph: 0409 264 351

1 Ton Farview Trailing Side Dresser Bin -\$1000.00 ono, 6' Brenda Slasher Refurbished Deck - \$4000.00 ono, Valpadana Interrow Tractor 30HP -\$4500.00 ono. Ph: 0407 161 941.

Kubota M125X - Aircon cab, Hydraulic quick hitch, Tyres 90%, 1141 hrs, \$ 50,000 + GST. Kubota M9000 - Open cab, Hydraulic quick hitch, Tyres 85%, 1941 hrs, \$ 25,000 + GST. Ph: 0418186525.

Hodge 11 Tyne Ripper with crumble roller, still on 1st of ripper points, \$ 14,000 + GST. Hodge Side Dresser Fertiliser Box, \$

2,200 + GST. All in excellent condition. Ph: 0418186525.

Howard 100 inch Rotary Hoe & Crumble Roller, \$ 8,500 + GST. Ph: 0418186525.

2x 20.8 R42. Tread 10%. Cases good. \$2200 ONO. 2x 480/80 R46 tyres, as new. Clamps, wedges to suit New Holland. \$5500 ONO. Ph: 0408733793.

Case JX90 ROPS Tractor, 82hp, 1020 hrs, 6x45kg Front Weights, Good Rubber, \$38,500 Inc GST. Hodge Inter-row Fertiliser Applicator (tows behind 4-wheeler) \$2,700. Ph: 0428236165.

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

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

8800 Case Harvester (2016), New Tracks, Sprockets and Elevator Chain, worked 3 Seasons to 2019, 4685 Hrs, tidy machine, serviced, work ready, \$250K + GST; Cane Side Tipper (10T), \$18K + GST; Cane Side Tipper (10T) on 2 axle Trailer, \$20K + GST; Multiplier \$1800 + GST; All in very good condition. Ph: 0408755453 or 0438755459.

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.

Rainfall Report

Brought to you by Sunsuper

Location	Recorded rainfall (mm)			Average rainfall (mm)
	Month prior (Dec 2020)	Month to date (1 Jan-22 Jan)	Year to date	January
Whyanbeel Valley (Mossman)	162.2	487.4	487.4	520.7
Mareeba Airport	87	384.2	384.2	209.8
Cairns Aero	202.4	599.6	599.6	400.1
Mt Sophia	223	563	563	545.5
Babinda Post Office	0	925	925	642.2
Innisfail	1	554.8	554.8	512.3
Tully Sugar Mill	306.5	1138.5	1138.5	600.6
Cardwell Marine Pde	208.1	906.8	906.8	438.1
Lucinda Township	0	0	0	376.6
Ingham Composite	301.2	826.3	826.3	380.2
Abergowrie Alert	75	656	656	247.1
Townsville Aero	154.4	92.6	92.6	269.2
Ayr DPI Research Stn	114.8	433.6	433.6	221.6
Proserpine Airport	237.8	393.2	393.2	293.7
Mirani Mary Street	297	242.9	242.9	286
Mackay MO	226.2	319.8	319.8	275.4
Plane Creek Sugar Mill	0	0	0	364.6
Bundaberg Aero	131.4	31.4	31.4	171
Childers South	116.4	23.6	23.6	125.4
Maryborough	113.6	47.8	47.8	162.2
Tewantin RSL Park	239	144.6	144.6	139.6
Eumundi - Crescent Rd	324.8	88.4	88.4	228.3
Nambour DPI - Hillside	354.4	133.4	133.4	238.4
Logan City Water Treatment Plant	258.1	90.3	90.3	128
Murwillumbah Bray Park	638.7	159.2	159.2	205.3
Ballina Airport	382.2	116.8	116.8	167.4
New Italy (Woodburn)	374	102.5	102.5	145.7



sunsuper

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. Weather report sourced from the Bureau of Meteorology Recent Rainfall Tables.

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

Bundaberg-Rocky Point

1 X Southern Cross travelling irrigator in fair condition. No hose or wire rope, used this cane season. Ph: 0427 262 880. Childers area.

LG 6 tonne tipper bin \$5,750, same laser 110 tractor \$28,000, Tralico water winch \$3,750. Ph: 0419 577 110

2012 8000 CASE Harvester approx 7,000 hours, shredder topper, scraper tyres, base cutter and chopper box. Recent overhaul good condition. Ph: 0428 937 164.

Early model Toft 7000 parts. Radiator \$550.00. Full track pump box \$550.00. Radiator suit TOFT 4000 series 3. Tandem cane trailer suit 4 tonne bins. Ph: 0413 584 728.

John Deere 6901 \$28,600, Bonel 4F Rvsbl Plough \$6,600, 24 Plate Offset \$3,300, Yoemans 5 Tyne Toolbar \$2,750, 7 Tyne H/D Subsoiler \$3,300, Bonel Mintill Fert Applicator \$3,300, GST incl. Ph: 0408761463.

Wanted

Experienced haulout operator required for the 2021 cane season. Ingham area, approx 120 000 tonnes. Ph: 0417 749 353.

12in 6 blade chopper drum. Ph: 0428 749 167.

3 point linkage tractor mister reasonable to good condition Plane creek, Mackay, Proserpine areas. Ph: 49501162.

Rear tractor tyre 20.8 38in Radial or a 520-85 38in Radial. Ph: 4954 1174

8.25x20 front tractor tyre in reasonably good condition. Innisfail area. Ph: 0405056515.

Positions Vacant

Harvesting contractor for 2021 Season. Hawkins Creek area in the Herbert River District. Approx. 3,000 tonnes (60 acres planted). Call Kevin Melvin on 07 4776 1450 or Pauline Biasi on 07 4776 2242.

Work Wanted

Experienced cane harvester driver for 2021 Ph: 0488799558.

Property

2 Mackay cane farms on 4 lots; one farm 113.62ha with total area 74.67ha CPA and second farm 126.57ha with total area 82.17ha CPA. Farms have common boundary. Ph: 0415 881 092

Young grower wanting to expand. Looking for farms to lease. Mulgrave Area Ph: 0431036229.

Wanted. Cane farm to lease Racecourse mill area Mackay. Young farmer wishing to expand. Ph: 0408011983.

Mulgrave cane farm. 47 ha total. 11.5 ha high flat fertile land. River flat 40 ha prime river silt land. River frontage. Water available for irrigation. Ph: +44427525173.

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. 2x4" 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.

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.

WANT THE LATEST NEWS AND PHOTOS?

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Independent service
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CANEGROWERS
MARKETING INFORMATION SERVICE

PRICING ESSENTIALS FOR CANE GROWERS

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

THE PROGRAM

New sugar marketing and pricing opportunities have given cane growers new opportunities. To make the most of those opportunities, understanding your cost of production and how to reduce risk through forward pricing is essential.

In the 2020 season, growers who actively engaged in forward pricing secured better returns than those that did not. This is your opportunity to learn how to increase your profitability.

CANEGROWERS has teamed with TAFE Queensland, and the Rural Jobs Skills Alliance to create a course for sugarcane growers in this new environment. The course will develop :

- the ability to better understand and interpret financial reports and costs of production
- understanding of factors that influence commodity (sugar) prices
- strategies to manage the risk of price fluctuations
- knowledge of forward pricing tools and other emerging technologies and marketing tools
- understanding and management of business risks

Growers who enrol in this skill set will complete the following units:

Manage small business finances (BSBSMB421)

Manage risk (BSBR501)

HOW TO REGISTER

To register for the program, use the online form (link below) or contact your district CANEGROWERS office. Be sure to tell us your preferred location. Once you register, you will receive a confirmation email. When the program is ready for enrolment, we will contact you.

DELIVERY LOCATIONS

The program will be delivered face-to-face by CANEGROWERS experts over two days at regional locations in most cane-growing districts. Final locations will depend on participation levels.

DELIVERY DATES

The program will be delivered between February 2021 and May 2021.

COST

\$100 per participant.

ELIGIBILITY

You're eligible for this course if you are:

- a cane grower
- a permanent resident of Queensland
- an Australian citizen, or a New Zealand citizen, or hold an eligible visa as identified by the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training at <https://desbt.qld.gov.au/training/providers/inclusive/visa-eligibility>

REGISTER YOUR INTEREST TODAY

HURRY, PLACES ARE LIMITED

VISIT: tafeqld.edu.au/skillsetcanegrowers

