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COVER IMAGE: The Gatteras have spent over 50 years harvesting cane as a family. Read more on page 24.

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Postal Address: GPO Box 1032, Brisbane,
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Telephone: 07 3864 6444

Email: editor@CANEGROWERS.com.au

Website: www.CANEGROWERS.com.au

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Dam lowered

Despite ongoing protests from local farming groups and pending legal action, the State Government's work to lower Paradise Dam was completed in March, slashing the dam's capacity by more than 40%.

Prior to lowering the spillway the dam's holding capacity was a little over 300,000 megalitres. However, following completion of the work the full supply volume sits at 170,400ML.

The lowered dam capacity, coupled with continuing dry conditions are expected to impact water allocations for the coming year.

"Based on current groundwater levels the indicative announced entitlements for the 2021/22 water year may be up to 20% lower than this year," outgoing Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Chairman Allan Dingle said.

"However this indicative estimate is subject to change if groundwater levels decline further or if there is significant recharge causing groundwater levels to rise."

Bundaberg Regional Irrigators spokesman Dale Holliss said it was no surprise that predicted starting allocations were low.



"We have not had decent rain anywhere in the catchment for at least three years and the immediate outlook for rain does not look promising," he said.

"Many irrigators will be prioritising what to do with the limited amount of allocation and some will be looking at scaling back plantings. Hopefully it rains soon." ■

Pictured: Paradise Dam following completion of spillway lowering work in March.

Growers urged to report chemical concerns

Australia's chemical regulator is keen for growers to alert it to any issues they experience in purchasing and using registered products.

This includes problems with packaging faults and instances where the product is not true-to-label or doesn't perform as expected. Reports can be made on the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) website under <https://apvma.gov.au/node/18506>

The request came at a recent meeting between CANEGROWERS and the APVMA Management Team for Regulation.

Record keeping requirements were discussed at the meeting, including sugarcane industry frustration at recent changes to Queensland's regulations for chemical use which include a long list of records needed for each chemical application.

It appears that the APVMA has delegated the responsibility for specifying such requirements to the states, and that new product labels have become silent on record keeping. CANEGROWERS continues to advocate on behalf of growers. ■



Chemical clean-up

Farmers and chemical holders will have an opportunity to safely dispose of their unwanted or obsolete chemicals with a ChemClear collection scheduled for July and August this year.

"With the recent floods through much of the eastern parts of the country there may be chemicals that have become unidentifiable, making this a timely service," a ChemClear spokesperson said.

Agvet chemical that are part of the drumMUSTER program are collected free of charge, with other chemicals (group 2) incurring a fee for service.

Registrations are open until 13 June.

For more information visit www.chemclear.org.au. ■



Growing anxious as harvest looms

With just weeks to go before the 2021 harvest is scheduled to kick off, Maryborough growers are anxiously awaiting the conclusion of toll crushing negotiations between MSF and Isis Central Sugar Mill.

The companies signed a Heads of Agreement late last year, but are yet to finalise the deal that will enable Maryborough cane to be crushed at Isis Mill until 2023, following the closure of MSF's Maryborough Mill at the end of last season.

CANEGROWERS Maryborough Chairman **Jeff Atkinson** said the delay in signing a toll crush agreement was having a knock-on effect on growers' ability to negotiate a Cane Supply Agreement for 2023.

"It is a little bit of a concern that we don't have the toll crush agreement signed and out of the way given that we're so close to the start of the season," Mr Atkinson said.

"But from what we've been told it's only minor details being finalised and the agreement should be in place very soon.

"I suppose what is more frustrating from our point of view is it's holding up our ability to negotiate a Cane Supply Agreement for 2023, when the toll crush arrangement is scheduled to end.

"Having that CSA in place will really give our growers confidence in the new arrangement and the in future of the local industry going forward. But because the mills are still tied up with the toll crush agreement we haven't been able to make a lot of progress with a CSA. I'd like to see that in place sooner rather than later."

Meanwhile, work is progressing well on the transloader station at Childers that will allow Maryborough cane to be transferred from truck to train for the final leg of its journey to the Isis Mill. ■



Pictured: Work is progressing on the transloader that will allow Maryborough cane to be transferred from truck to train for transit to Isis Mill (right).

Electricity Tariff Selection Tool

With an electricity pricing change looming in June, CANEGROWERS has created an Electricity Tariff Selection Tool to help members make informed decisions about their costs for the coming financial year.

Based on the Draft Determination of the Queensland Competition Authority (QCA) for regional electricity prices for the 2021-2022 year, the Tool is a spreadsheet which uses an individual farm's pumping equipment and historic electricity usage to calculate the best option from the range of tariffs available.

CANEGROWERS is making the tool available to CANEGROWERS members ahead of the QCA's final determination on prices, expected before 11 June, to avoid growers needing to make rushed decisions.

"Electricity is one of the biggest input costs for the 60% of Queensland's sugarcane which is irrigated," CANEGROWERS CEO Dan Galligan said.

"While continuing to urge the regulators and network operators to resolve underlying structural issues which keep prices high, we have also been advocating for tariff options and CANEGROWERS hopes this tool can assist growers to assess the options available to them.

"Through CANEGROWERS solutions-focused advocacy, and with the valuable assistance of growers involved in a trial, there is now a new tariff option, T34, for growers able to work with the possibility that supply may be interrupted," Mr Galligan said.

For sugarcane growers using less than 100MWh per year, there can be significant savings to be achieved by reviewing which tariff they are on.

For example, CANEGROWERS analysis shows that depending on usage patterns, irrigators presently using T62, T65 or T66 could make significant cost savings by switching to T20 rather than using the new limited access obsolete tariffs (T62A, T65A and T66A).

Those willing to work with an interruptible supply could secure further savings by switching to T34 despite some costs in upgrading meters.

Fact Sheet

A Fact Sheet with more details on the proposed 2021-22 pricing and the CANEGROWERS Electricity Tariff Selection Tool are available on the Member Resources page of the CANEGROWERS website

<http://www.canegrowers.com.au/page/membership/member-resources>.





What's in store for Electricity prices in 2021-2022?

The Queensland Competition Authority draft retail electricity price determination for regional Queensland for 2021-22 includes

Residential tariff (T11)

The residential electricity price (**T11**) is the bellwether tariff of QCA's annual electricity price determination. Reflecting the lower cost of generating electricity and the record low cost of capital (interest rates are at record low levels), the draft determination foreshadows lower charges:

- Usage: 19.4c/kWh, **down 10.8%**
- Fixed daily charge: 88.317c/day, **down 2.7%**

Small Business tariffs (annual usage <100MWh)

Transitional Farm (now limited access obsolete) tariffs (T62A, T65A and T66A)

The draft provides the first insights into QCA's thinking around the new limited access obsolete tariffs (**T62A, T65A and T66A**) that will replace the now obsolete tariffs **T62, T65** and **T66**, which expire on 30 June 2021. The new tariffs, mirroring the tariffs that they replace, will be available only to customers who accessed the corresponding obsolete tariff in the three years 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2020.

All use tariff (T20)

The small business all use charge is set to fall, but not by as much as for the residential sector. In the draft determination charges for (**T20**) are listed as:

- Usage: 22.135c/kWh, **down 4.8%**
- Fixed charge: 120.957c/day, **down 5.7%**

Load Control (interruptible supply) tariff (T34)

Irrigators who use less than 100MWh of electricity each year and who are willing to work with the possibility of their power being interrupted may be able to save money by switching to the new primary control load tariff (**T34**):

- Usage: 15.9c/kWh, **down 8.1%**
- Fixed charge: 110.907c/day, **down 6.1%**

Large Business tariffs (annual usage >100MWh)

With new limited access obsolete tariffs not available to large businesses, larger irrigation users may consider using the large business tariffs **T44** and **T60A**.

Large businesses tariff (T44)

Large businesses face significantly higher fixed charges than small businesses. They also face demand charges. The QCA draft determination lists charges for **T44** as:

- Usage: 10.005 c/kWh, **down 14.3%**
- Fixed charge: 4042.704c/day, **up 0.5%**
- Demand Charge kW: 24.891 \$/kWh/month, **down 4.8%**
- Demand Charge kVA*: 22.402 \$/kVA/month, **down 4.8%**

***T44** Digital customers have twelve months to opt into kVA Demand Charge (from the kW Demand Charge).

Irrigators with high levels of usage and low levels of demand (especially if they are not pumping for a number of months) may wish to consider **T44**.

Large Business Load Control tariff (interruptible supply) tariff (T60A)

T60A operates with the same supply availability as **T34**. Large businesses willing to work with the possibility of their power being interrupted, may be able to save money by switching to the new primary control load tariff (**T60A**):

- Usage: 17.231 c/kWh, **down 9.5%**
- Fixed charge: 4042.704c/day, **up 0.5%** ■



Bundy becomes sugar science central

Sugar science took centre stage in Bundaberg recently, with the city playing host to the 41st annual Australian Society of Sugarcane Cane Technologists (ASSCT) conference.

Around 230 delegates from the research, farming, milling and harvesting sectors attended the three-day event to receive updates on the latest sugar industry research.

The theme of this year's conference was Smart Science and Innovation, with the topics covered including nutrient management, variety development, and research into the control of pest and disease such as nematodes, soldier fly, smut, and RSD. There were also a number of presentations on harvesting trials.

Australian Farming Institute Executive Director **Richard Heath** kicked off the conference with the keynote address on the risks currently facing agriculture, particularly the growing economic risks associated with climate change.

"The risk that we believe is associated with climate change is not just the biophysical risk – not just the impact of climate change on production. There are far, far more risks involved in the whole climate change environment."

Studies have shown Australia to be one of the riskiest countries in the world to run an agricultural business, due to the volatility of the climate and low levels of government assistance, Mr Heath said.

However, with these risks also comes opportunity for agriculture to capitalise on its natural assets, he said.

"If financial incentives and market mechanisms are going to be a part of what helps to move us all forward in a climate change environment, then we need to have mechanisms that do value natural capital, that do provide financial incentives to manage the natural capital and be rewarded for doing so. Not just because it feels good.

"We would all like to do it because it feels good, and most farmers do it because it feels good, but there's always an economic compromise at the end of the day, because there is not a big enough economic incentive in managing that natural capital."

Check out the upcoming June issue of *Australian Canegrower* for an article from Richard Heath on the risks and opportunities facing Australian agriculture.

CANEGROWERS Membership Engagement and Innovation Manager **Matt Kealley** presented a paper on the work CANEGROWERS is doing with KPMG on using blockchain technology to boost the sustainability credentials of Australian sugar with a view to improving returns for growers.

Mr Kealley was presented the President's Medal for Best Presentation at the association's AGM on the final day of the conference.

"I was totally surprised to receive the award and feel honoured by the recognition from my peers," Mr Kealley said.

"I feel very proud of the work CANEGROWERS has done on sustainable sugar.

"Hopefully, we can create the opportunity to use blockchain technology and the Smartcane BMP program to get additional value back to growers for the excellent work they do."

CANEGROWERS Isis manager **Angela Williams** and project officer **Joanne Hall** also presented, highlighting the district's unique grower engagement and extension model, Isis 20:20.

It wasn't all PowerPoint presentations, however, with concurrent agriculture and manufacturing field trips on the final day giving attendees a chance to get their hands dirty with some in-field demonstrations.

ASSCT President **Neil Halpin** said a key focus of the ASSCT is ensuring the industry is viable into the future. ►



"By sharing the latest ideas and findings we are ensuring a united approach to the advancement of the Australian Sugar Industry," Mr Halpin said.

The ASSCT conference will be hosted in Mackay in 2022. ■



Pictured: (top) CANEGROWERS Matt Kealley was awarded the President's Medal for his presentation on blockchain technology; (above) CANEGROWERS Isis Angela Williams and Joanne Hall presented on the Isis 20:20 project; (left) attendees had a chance to see some innovative practices in action with in-field demonstrations.

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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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CEO COMMENT

By Dan Galligan, CEO CANEGROWERS

THE POWER OF COMMUNITY TO SHAPE THE FUTURE

Travelling through Queensland's sugarcane regions, there's little doubt a sense of community spirit exists across our great industry.

This year alone, CANEGROWERS Chairman **Paul Schembri** and I have hosted grower engagement meetings in Mareeba, Mossman, Cairns, Babinda, Mulgrave, Innisfail, Tully, Sarina and Proserpine. These sessions back-up the interactions growers have with district offices on a daily basis and they provide a valuable opportunity to listen, share and learn from each other.

They are a chance for CANEGROWERS to demonstrate our most important values - these being accountability and a desire to work on the issues affecting growers.

The sense of community within our CANEGROWERS districts is profound. It is clearly what has made us a resilient organisation. Often it is not just growers, but also their families attending these meetings to listen and have a say on the future of their industry. They share personal insights and priorities and, most importantly, give us the valuable guidance we need to ensure we are heading in the right direction.

These regional meetings back up the work done through the course of last year when we had similar discussions, albeit virtually through video and tele conferencing. The COVID-enforced switch to virtual interaction allowed us to talk to more people, more often and in a more efficient way than ever before. But there is no substitute for a face-to-face discussion.

These recent grower sessions have demonstrated the rich engagement CANEGROWERS can deliver through our strong districts. The feedback is clear – we need to continue our work to deliver services and policy advocacy designed to put downward pressure on the costs of farming inputs such as water and electricity prices, insurance, rates, and pest control.

Equally we must continue to expand our portfolio of work that strives to expand the revenue opportunities for farmers. This includes our work to provide market information and cost of production training; supply chain recognition for sustainably sourced sugar; and collaborations around industry revitalisation - to name just a few.

These district meetings will continue, with growers in the southern regions invited to attend meetings through late May and June. Also, all CANEGROWERS Directors have been invited to attend our leadership forum in Cairns on 24-25 May.

During the forum we will discuss the future of the industry and how this future is intrinsically linked to the future of CANEGROWERS. We will provide an opportunity to discuss how we as a community can influence and deliver a prosperous future for growers and their families.

I hope to meet all our district leaders there. ■





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Updated manual helps industry tackle **PERPETUAL PROBLEM**

Sugarcane growers now have access to a tool providing the latest information on effective weed control in crops thanks to an updated manual just created by Sugar Research Australia (SRA).

SRA has just completed a major update of the *Weed Management in Sugarcane* manual for 2021, providing comprehensive information on weed control for the Australian sugarcane industry.

SRA Weeds Scientist, **Emilie Fillols**, said the manual covered updated information on preventing weed spread, herbicide resistance, control options, environmental considerations, a detailed selection guide, and herbicide suitability.

"Yield losses from weeds, along with the costs of weed control, is a significant cost to the Australian industry each year," Ms Fillols said.

"This manual will help growers to combat weeds and to ensure that every dollar spent on weed control is efficient.

"Weed competition is particularly serious in the early stage of crop establishment. Delaying weed control in plant cane can result in cane yield loss valued at \$85/hectare per week of delayed weed control.

"Cane yield loss due to herbicide phytotoxicity to cane is also a common issue for sugarcane growers. The updated manual includes information relative to cane variety susceptibility to particular herbicides."

The manual covers all stages of the sugarcane crop cycle, as well as looking at the suitability of various herbicides for various weeds, and the best application of herbicides. It also provides the latest information on record keeping, environmental considerations, and herbicide resistance. It also provides indicative cost estimates of various weed control measures.

"Targeted and effective weed control is a foundation of growing a profitable and productive crop," Ms Fillols said.

"More efficient and targeted weed control also results in positive environmental outcomes, which sugarcane farmers are already



demonstrating across the industry through improved practice.

"This is an area where SRA and a range of industry providers continue to provide the industry with improved information in recent years, through research and demonstrations trials. Different chemicals are regularly entering the market and we are learning new information about their performance in the sugarcane farming system, making this update to the manual a valuable tool for the industry.

"Weeds are an ever-present battle for farmers, but this manual helps bring together useful information to reduce their impact at a farm level."

- To receive a free copy of the manual contact **Allyson Starky** on astarky@sugarresearch.com.au or call **0408 185 138** or visit your nearest SRA regional office.
- For more information on weeds in sugarcane, visit the SRA website www.sugarresearch.com.au. ■

Pictured: The new and updated SRA Weed Management manual is now available.

Pest control costs farms thousands each year

A recent report has confirmed that Australia's farmers are spending significant amounts of time and money on battling pests and weeds.

ABARES has tallied up the cost of pest plants and animal management to Australian farms at around \$11,000 per property per year and found that the damage they cause to production has increased.

Thousands of farmers around Australia were surveyed in 2016 and in 2019 for the report, revealing the vital role of land managers in combatting pests.

In 2019, 74% of land managers indicated they had been actively managing a pest animal on their property in the previous 12 months which was a small but statistically significant decrease from 76% of land managers actively managing a pest in 2016.

81% percent of agricultural land managers indicated they were undertaking weed management activities in 2019, down from 85% in 2016.

"The biggest change we saw was a 41% increase between 2016 and 2019 in farmers reporting crop loss, degradation or loss of value from pests, particularly insects," ABARES acting Executive Director, Dr Jared Greenville, said.

"The impact of pest animals, particularly invertebrates, has increased between surveys, even considering the vastly different weather patterns between 2016 and 2019.

"However, the proportion of land managers reporting expenditure on managing pests and weeds went down between 2016 and 2019, and the average amount farmers spent on pest and weed management nearly halved from \$20,405 in 2016 to \$11,576 in 2019.

"This is mostly accounted for by the change in average weed expenditure which dropped from \$18,633 in 2016 to \$10,551 in 2019.

"We do have to take into account the fact that 2016 had substantially high rainfall, while 2019 was a drought year. These factors affect the impact, numbers and distribution of pest animals and weeds."

Nationally, there were increases in the proportion of land managers reporting major or minor problems with native animals and birds (4.5

percentage point increase), feral deer (1.9 percentage point increase) and feral pigs (1.7 percentage point increase) on their properties between surveys.

In both surveys, the most important action that land managers thought could improve pest animal and weed management was having new or improved control methods or tools - 63% in 2016 and 59% in 2019 rated this as important or very important.

In 2019, 38% of land managers were very interested in using new biological control tools for pest animal or weed management on their property if they become available in the future. ■



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FROM THE CHAIR

By Paul Schembri, Chairman CANEGROWERS

The challenge of demonstrating our environmental credentials is ongoing

CANEGROWERS has always believed that our environmental credentials – our modern farming systems, our technologies, our keenness for innovation and our adaptiveness – ensure that we as sugarcane growers have an impressive story to tell to the community and key decision makers.

In that light, the CANEGROWERS Board recently met in Townsville and for a large part, the meeting was all about engagement with two key environmental agencies – the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA).

AIMS is a world class facility just south of Townsville that plays a pivotal role in the research that informs government, industry and the wider community about the condition of Australia's marine estate.

The purpose of our visit was to develop a conversation about AIMS' understanding of the sugarcane industry and explain where the industry sees itself, both in terms of our own sustainability and our input into the Reef health debate.

Often, exchanging information between parties can lead to more informed advocacy. This was the case in Townsville, with AIMS offering to engage in more formal opportunities to gain a greater understanding of our industry.

Whilst in Townsville, we also had

discussions with **Dr David Wachenfeld**, the Chief Scientist of GBRMPA.

We all accepted that some media reporting on the Great Barrier Reef, its health and the impact of farming is sadly erroneous and misleading.

Our discussion with GBRMPA yielded a willingness for further engagement between CANEGROWERS and this important organisation.

Obviously, a few meetings with key environmental agencies does not in itself resolve many of our own environmental difficulties but starting a conversation can be an important step.

We are determined to bring about a more accurate understanding of where our cane growers rate in sustainable farming practices.

The current Reef Report Card process is seriously flawed and seems calibrated to mark down the true credentials of the sugar industry. The most recent Report Card, whilst recording favourable reductions in nutrient and sediment loads emanating from cane catchments, still only rated the sugar industry as an E on overall environmental performance.

Little wonder that farmers tend to disengage from the whole debate!

As a result of agitation by CANEGROWERS and other organisations, the State and Federal governments are currently reviewing the

Paddock to Reef reporting process and the land management targets imposed on industry.

CANEGROWERS is closely involved in the setting of the terms of reference for this review and, in discussions, has succeeded in gaining an agreement from the two government departments involved that economics should be a central consideration to the setting of targets.

We also have agreement that a stakeholder committee, including a representative from each affected agricultural industry, will overview the conduct of the reviews.

Let's hope the reviews lead to real changes being made. Only time will tell.

In the meantime, discussions with organisations such as AIMS and GBRMPA are also critical to ensuring that we as cane growers are seen, heard and have our true environmental credentials recognised. ■

Pictured: Members of the CANEGROWERS Board, Chairman, CEO and CFO with Dr Neal Cantin, an AIMS coral ecologist, Dr Britta Schaffelke, Research Program Director of AIMS' Healthy and Resilient Great Barrier Reef program and Dr Richard Brinkman Research Program Director of AIMS' Marine and Coastal Industries program

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Remembering Neville Toft

Neville Harold Toft was known as a good Aussie bloke and a man of few words, unless he was talking about his beloved sugarcane harvesters.

Sadly, Neville passed away on 7 April 2021 aged 73 years at his home in the United States. Born in Bundaberg, he hailed from the well-known Toft family (Toft, Toft Bros & AusToft) and went on to be an influence within the sugarcane industry.

"He followed in his father's footsteps travelling on his own to different continents while still in his teens, to demonstrate farm equipment, including sugarcane harvesters, that his father developed," his son **Adrian Toft** said. "He also purchased his own sugarcane farm before turning 20.

"After his father sold the business, and prior to starting another career with Cameco (later purchased by John Deere), Neville started developing his own designs based on the needs of the nearby farmers. He built various machines (tomato, orange, and other vegetable picker/harvesters), and sold them directly to the farmers. During his early years he operated and improved multiple machine forms for the Toft and AusToft portfolio. Neville was already known by the world over for his expertise with mechanised cane harvesting."

At the Neville Toft Sugar industry Memorial Service held in Clare, on 16 April (<https://youtu.be/cpeejU4npcE>), guest speakers paid tribute to Neville's inspiration and his ability to mentor and advise.

There was acknowledgement of his capacity to listen to growers' and contractors' needs and provide innovative solutions that lead to improvements with machinery design.

Prior to recently retiring from Cameco/ John Deere in 2020, Neville was instrumental in the design of 2500, 2600, 3510, 3520, 3522, CH330, CH570, CH670, and most recently the CH950/60.

Having a significant influence in the harvesting world, Neville remained connected and knew not only the service technicians and salespeople, but the contractors and growers. His huge network helped to fine-tune efficiency and assist with effective products.

"Neville was committed to lifelong cane harvesting learning and he hosted his famous 'NT Tours' in Australia, Brazil, and the U.S. For many, these in-depth tours

were truly a window into another world that proved invaluable for changing paradigms and challenging the status quo," Adrian said.

Neville was definitely a family man with a big community heart, and many reminisce of his love of the phone and sharing lengthy chats about harvesters, on any given day and at any time.

His sudden passing has been felt throughout the international sugar industry, leaving a void in the research and development area of the cane harvesting sector. ■

"Neville was committed to lifelong cane harvesting learning"

Planning for the future

After 14 years at the helm in Bundaberg, **Allan Dingle** has stepped down as chairman of the district's CANEGROWERS Board.

Mr Dingle, who is also currently the President of the Queensland's Farmers Federation, handed over the reins to fellow board member **Mark Pressler** in April as part of a longer term succession plan.

Allan will remain on the Bundaberg CANEGROWERS board to serve out the remainder of his term as a director.

"I've enjoyed my time with CANEGROWERS but it is important to have a succession plan.

"I felt the time was right to take a step back while still being there to assist," he said.

"Looking back, I think one of the things I'm most proud of is the good relationship we have with the mill, which is much better today than it was 15 years ago.

"It took a lot of work, but I'd say it's one of the better grower-mill relationships in the industry. We've also fought hard and had quite a few wins on the electricity side of things over the years, which is pleasing," Mr Dingle said.

Mr Pressler thanked the outgoing Chairman on behalf of the local industry.

"On behalf of all Bundaberg CANEGROWERS' members, Directors and staff, I would like to acknowledge the contribution and representation Allan Dingle has made to the Bundaberg sugar industry in his role as Chairman. His experience will be missed," Mr Pressler said.

"I look forward to working with Allan, and to representing both Bundaberg CANEGROWERS and the Bundaberg sugar industry."



Pictured top: Allan Dingle has stepped down as chairman while Mark Pressler, pictured above, will take up the reins as part of Bundaberg district's succession plan.

Thinking about planting?

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QSL MARKET UPDATE

Current as of 23 April 2021.

Sugar



- Bullish sentiment returned to the ICE #11 sugar market in April, with the prompt May 2021 contract rallying a massive 221 points from the beginning of the month, climbing from 14.71 USc/lb up to 16.92 USc/lb at time of writing.
- The major driver behind the rally was speculators buying into the positive macroeconomic picture as the US dollar weakened and inflationary fears rose. These factors make commodities attractive for investors and saw the entire commodities complex rise, with corn, raw sugar and oil receiving the largest gains.
- After 7 weeks of selling, speculators turned the corner and started buying, increasing their net-long position to 170,000 lots as of the 13 April Commitment of Traders report. They are likely to be far further ahead of that on a live basis and possibly above the 200,000 net-long mark.
- In Brazil, the Brazilian Sugarcane Industry Association estimated that only 54 mills had begun crushing cane by 1 April 2021. This figure was down from 87 mills at the same time last year, indicating the industry may be delaying the harvest in the hope of last-minute rain to offset an extended period of dry weather.
- **Closely watching:** May21 contract expiry, Brazilian harvest statistics, macroeconomic influences, speculative activity and overall technical indicators.

Currency



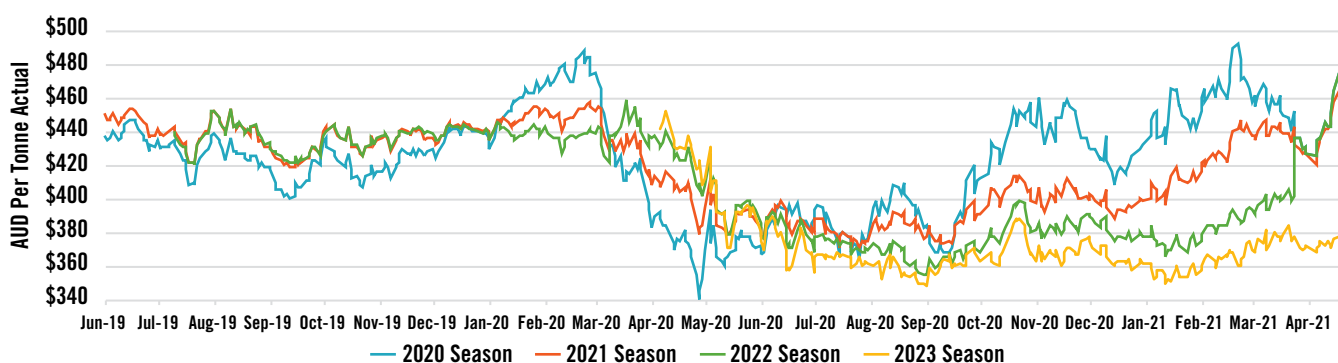
- The Australian Dollar (AUD) traded sideways for another month, trading in the broader 75-78 US cents range with no key signs of breaking away in either direction.
- Inflation continued to creep up in the US as the March Consumer Price Index (CPI) printed a 0.6% month-on-month change and a 2.6% year-on-year change. Although this was expected, inflationary fears are likely to be reignited and could provide another boost for commodities.
- The April Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) meeting provided little significant news to influence the market. It was reiterated that the RBA is prepared to implement further Quantitative Easing measures after the second \$100 billion round ends in September if necessary.
- Positive news on the COVID-19 vaccination front in the US boosted risk sentiment. The United States has reportedly given 1 dose of the COVID-19 vaccine to 50% of its adult population and 33% are now fully vaccinated.
- **AUD/USD trading range going forward:** 75-78 US cents in the short term, stretching out to 82 US cents by the end of 2021.
- **Risks Ahead:** COVID-19 vaccine news and economic recovery, US politics, Australia-China relationships and RBA commentary.

KEY INDICATORS

	23/04/2021	Monthly change
ICE11 Prompt (MAY21)	16.92 USc/lb	+0.03 USc/lb
Brazilian Real/\$US exchange rate	5.57 BRL	+0.19 BRL
Brent Crude Oil	\$US66.57/barrel	+\$US3.12
Ethanol/Raw Sugar Parity	14.386 USc/lb	-0.05 USc/lb
Net Spec Position	170,000 (net long)	-42,000

	23/04/2021	Monthly change
\$AUS/\$US exchange rate	\$US0.7705	-\$US0.0187
\$US Index	91.24	+0.97
Chinese Yen/\$US exchange rate	6.50 CNY	+0.05 CNY
S+P 500 Index	4,134.94	+228.94
RBA Overnight Cash Rate	0.10%	0.00%

RAW SUGAR PRICES



This is a whole-of-season ICE 11 price chart current as of 23.04.21, 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

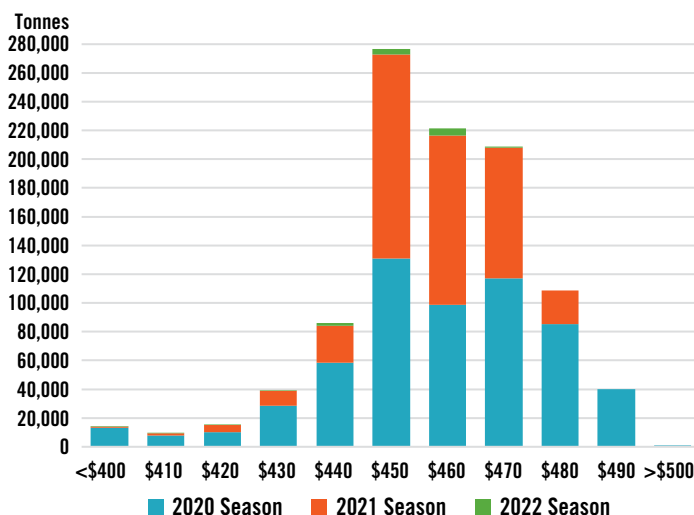


Grower Pricing



- > The market rally experienced in April prompted a huge increase in grower pricing activity, with QSL filling over 200,000 tonnes of 2021-Season orders in the two weeks from 12 April.
- > At the time of writing, the highest price achieved in the 2021 QSL Target Price Contract was \$475/tonne actual gross. The highest Individual Futures Contract order filled was \$480/tonne actual gross for the July 2021 and March 2022 ICE 11 contracts, and \$475/t actual gross for October 2021 contract.
- > Growers using QSL's Individual Futures Contract and/or Self-Managed Harvest Contract pricing options are reminded that from this season they have the option to extend their pricing windows by rolling unpriced tonnage to the next ICE 11 contract. Costs may apply. See your local QSL team for details.
- > The Defaulting Target Price and Grower Floor Price Contracts for the 2021 Season are now closed, with any unfilled orders automatically cancelled after 15 April and associated tonnage defaulted to the QSL Harvest Pool.

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



This chart captures all pricing achieved as of 23.04.21 using QSL's Target Price Contract, Individual Futures Contract and Self-Managed Harvest products. Prices quoted at AUD/tonnes actual gross.

Who are the speculators in the ICE 11 raw sugar market?



Speculators, also known as 'specs' or 'the funds', are participants in the futures market who are not producers or users of raw sugar and so do not have a physical position in the sugar trade. Instead, they are any individual or firm willing to accept market risk in order to make a profit by buying sugar futures at low prices and selling them at high prices. Examples of speculators include hedge funds, investment managers, portfolio managers or proprietary trading firms.

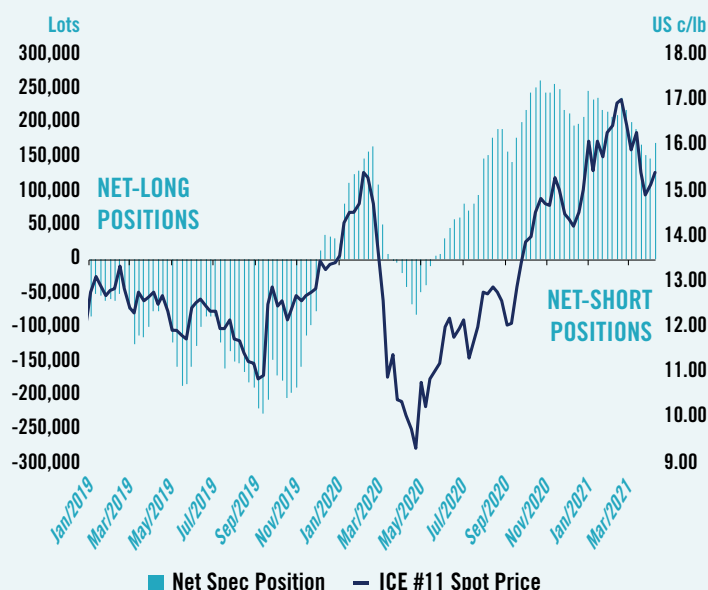
While commercial buyers, such as trade houses or sugar refineries, and commercial sellers, such as QSL, use ICE 11 futures contracts to value the physical sugar they receive or deliver, speculators do not. Instead, they will close out their position by either buying or selling their futures to ultimately net their position to zero and take either a profit or loss.

Without speculators in the market, commercial buyers and sellers would be the only market participants as they try to hedge their position. This would mean very low volumes of trades being placed onto the market and could result in difficulty entering or exiting the market. In other words, there may not be a buyer willing to buy at the price a seller is willing to sell and vice versa. Allowing speculators into the market brings thousands of extra participants willing to trade, providing what is known as liquidity to the market.

The position held by speculators is measured in numbers of futures contracts. It is either a net-long position if there are more buyers than sellers, or a net-short position if there are more sellers than buyers. This position is published in a Commitment of Traders Report on a Sunday and is measured as at the previous Tuesday.

The graph below shows the strong correlation between speculators holding a net-long position and rising sugar prices, and specs going net short and falling sugar prices.

NET SPEC POSITION VS. ICE 11 SPOT PRICE



SHARING THE PASSION

CREATING SUGARCANE GROWING RESOURCES

CANEGROWERS and the Primary Industries Education Foundation Australia (PIEFA) are creating a pinnacle resource for primary and secondary teachers about the sugar industry.

PIEFA provides a credible and authoritative one stop source for primary industries educational information and resources for teachers to use with their classes to help build knowledge and understanding of Australia's agricultural industries.

The lesson plans are designed to teach about farming and food and fibre production as well as bolster interest in primary industries-related careers. Resources for each stage of schooling from kindergarten to year 12 are available on the Primezone website.

In jointly building a sugarcane industry resource, CANEGROWERS has taken the opportunity to showcase what happens on a cane farm with **Lindsay Mischke** and **Ben Spann**, from Rocky Point district, providing an insight into the life of a sugarcane grower.

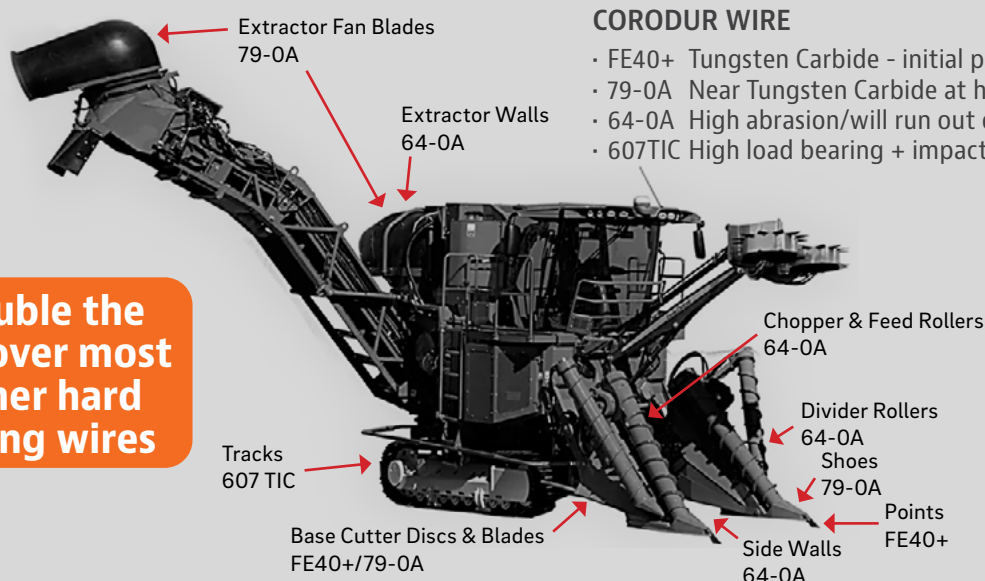
Lindsay walked through the processes involved with sugarcane growing in a video interview.



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He encouraged young people to think about the industry and explained the differences between when his grandfather and father cut cane.

Demonstrating how to cut cane by hand with an explanation about tonnage cut then versus now using GPS controlled harvesters, the visual differences will not be lost on the students.

Lindsay's passion came shining through and reiterated that research and development are an integral part of the sugarcane farmers' world.

"We would like to pass the soil on to the next generation in a better condition that what we found it," Lindsay said. "That means we haven't vandalised the soil, we've kept it healthy for the next generation."

Ben was asked about life growing up on a farm and he explained the space he had to roam as a child and the chance to participate in working the farm encouraged his love of machinery to grow.

"I grew up in the sugar industry, being a third generation, my grandfather and father were cane farmers so its probably in my blood," Ben said.

"It's something I feel strongly about, and I would like a lot of people to feel strongly about."

Both growers provided an astute look into their world for students and thanks to PIEFA sugarcane growers' passion will now be shared.

The opportunity to educate about sugarcane growing is always going to be favourable to CANEGROWERS, and if there is a chance to encourage an uptake in future careers, then that's a got to be a great return! ■



Pictured opposite page: Lindsay Mischke walks Matt Kealley through 'a day in the life of a grower', during the filming of the PIEFA resource to educate students.

Pictured above Lindsay demonstrates how his grandfather used to cut cane while Ben Spann, pictured left, wants to share his passion about sugarcane with future growers.



"We would like to pass the soil on to the next generation in a better condition that what we found it..."

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PROPOSED WATER REBATES “LAUGHABLE”

Mackay irrigators are among those up in arms over the State Government's bulk water charge rebate scheme, calling the proposed rebates "a tiny drop in the bucket".

Announcing the scheme recently, Minister for Water, **Glenn Butcher** claimed the rebates would deliver savings to the cane industry.

However, CANEGROWERS Mackay Area Committee Chairman **Joseph Borg** said the pitiful rebate, coupled with ever-rising water and electricity charges, would drag down productivity across the industry.

"The proposed rebate of 15% is laughable when you look at the 230% increase in water charges (6% compound year-on-year) since 2008," he said.

"On top of that, the cost of electricity has increased over the same period by about 300% (9% annum compounding).

"Cane growers are not fully utilising their water allocations because of the cost of both the water and the electricity to pump it.

"The resulting decrease in irrigated sugarcane production will drag down productivity for the whole industry with flow on effects on the Mackay economy as a whole."

Regardless of whether or not growers use the water they are allocated, their fixed water charges must be paid, Mr Borg said.

"My bill before I pump a drop of water is \$20,000 a year. Farmers are paying for an asset they cannot afford to use.

"In these years of low sugar prices, the returns on the crop go nowhere towards covering the cost of this impost."

Cane growers have described as "cynical and unfair" the fact that different rebates are being applied to different types of farmers.

"If you are a fruit and vegetable grower you receive a 50% rebate, but if you are a broadacre farmer, including a cane farmer, you only receive 15%," Mr Borg said.

"Why is that? Could it be because the bulk of the horticulture industry is located in the south east corner of the state where the electorates are more important to the State Government than further north?"

Mr Borg is calling for a 50% reduction in the price of bulk water charges across the board to make a level playing field. ■

The Future of Farming and the Great Barrier Reef

NCEconomics and Alluvium Consulting have been engaged by the Great Barrier Reef Foundation on a project to investigate innovative policy, financing and funding initiatives for land management practices and land use transitions which both improve water quality and consider the economic circumstances of farmers. Initiatives which result in positive water quality and economic outcomes are more likely to be sustainable and help to provide lasting reductions in the impacts of poor water quality on the Reef.

To understand your views, we ask that you complete the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/future-of-farming>. This survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. If you do wish to provide contact details, you will automatically enter the draw to win a \$100 gift card.

Any information provided by you for this survey will remain confidential. Information will only be reported at an aggregated and anonymous format.

If you would like to learn more about this project, please visit <https://consultnce.engagementhub.com.au/farmingfuture>, where you can register to receive updates. If you have further questions, please contact us at consult@nceconomics.com.

Image credit: Josh Withers on Unsplash



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FUTURE-PROOF YOUR HARVEST WITH YIELD MONITORING

Supplied by Vantage BMS

In a time of growing technology, faster access to precise data is at the forefront of every farmer's mind. Real-time information ensures better, data-driven decisions can be made to ensure a successful harvest.

Multi-generational farmer and contract cane harvester, **Craig Emerson** from Proserpine Harvesting, has recognised the increasing interest in production data and has taken steps to evolve his business to meet these customer demands.

No stranger to a seasonal turnover of 150,000 to 200,000 tonnes of sugarcane, Mr Emerson set his sights on offering his customers access to Yield Monitoring data to help customers better understand their harvest details at an intra-block level.

"In order to keep up with evolving technology, Yield Monitoring has become essential to what we do to meet our customers' needs."

Using BMS LaserSat's Yield Monitoring technology, Mr Emerson allows his customers to view, map and record field data instantly to help make better-informed decisions about fertiliser and water levels while recording the amount of sugarcane harvested.

By adding Yield Monitoring to his list of capabilities as a contract harvester, Mr Emerson has opened up a whole new client list and helped educate customers

on how to better their next harvest.

"We researched and compared a few products first but quickly realised Trimble's Yield Monitoring solution offered a number of benefits and features competing products didn't."

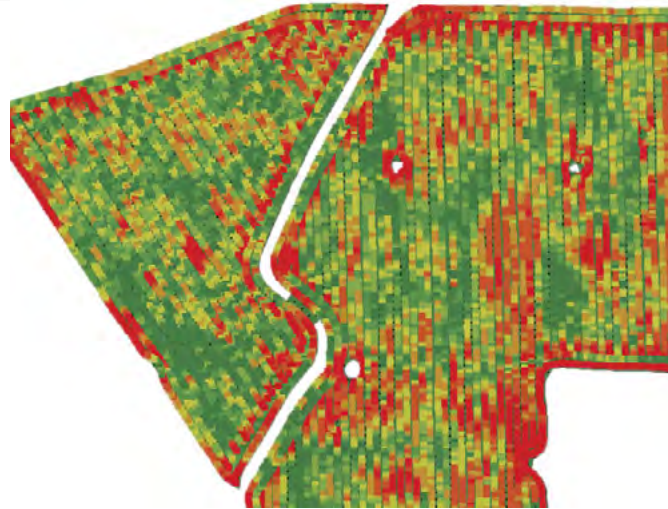
Trimble's ability to offer both brand agnostic equipment and real-time data processing without needing to send it away to external parties were the key deciding factors for Mr Emerson choice in Yield Monitoring equipment.

"We use a variety of different equipment brands so it was essential the gear we chose could be retrofitted to any machinery."

Mr Emerson purchased his Trimble gear through his Vantage BMS representative after also working with them to add Auto-Steering to their equipment.

"Michael at Vantage BMS has been incredibly knowledgeable about their products while providing reliable and responsive support day and night - whenever we need it.

"Being a seasonal crop, we needed the advantage of support that could be provided straight away and Vantage BMS were able to provide that."



To learn more about Trimble's Yield Monitoring capabilities or to speak to a representative, reach out to our team on **1300 TRIMBLE** to speak to your local expert.

"We use a variety of different equipment brands so it was essential the gear we chose could be retrofitted to any machinery."





HALF CENTURY OF HARVESTING

Nerada grower and contract harvester Alex Gattera has seen many changes in the harvesting sector during his five decades of cutting cane. A firm believer in best practice farming and an early adopter of new technologies, Alex also has sympathy for younger contractors being told to cut slower while facing ever-increasing operating costs.

BY WAYNE GRIFFIN

Like many growers of his generation, Alex's earliest memories of cane harvesting are of men like his father, Rico, cutting sugarcane by hand.

Rico was one of the countless European migrants who made the long voyage south to Australia following WWI.

Once here, he journeyed north to Queensland's cane fields, where he earned a living hand-cutting sugarcane, eventually saving enough to buy his own small farm at Coorumba, west of Innisfail.

"Dad served in the Italian army in WWI, fighting the Germans and the Austrians. When the war was over he decided, like many others, to leave Italy and try to make a better life in Australia," Alex said.

"A good cane-cutter could cut and load upwards of 1000 tonnes in a season."

"He cut cane in Bundaberg and different areas down south. Then he finally got an assignment in Coorumba in 1952. It was just 990 tonnes. He planted his first cane that year and cut it by himself.

"It was hard work, but it wasn't anything out of the ordinary for the time. A good cane-cutter could cut and load upwards of 1000 tonnes in a season."

In 1964, aged just 19, Alex struck out on his own, buying a cane farm in the Nerada Valley, 20 minutes west of Innisfail, birthplace of the famous Nerada Tea.

"From memory there were 51 new assignments granted around that time in the South Johnstone area. The allocation was 1290 tonnes each," he said.

"It was a nightmare that machine. People used to call them the 'Don-Misery,'"

"It doesn't sound like a lot now, but in those days growers could make a living out of it. The costs were a lot less but you were getting paid pretty much the same as you get now.

"That's why a 2000 tonne farmer back then could make a living, but now there's not much chance of that. They'd need a second job off-farm."

Over the past six decades Alex has built up a large cane-growing enterprise, which he operates with wife Teresa and son Wayne.

Today the family grows 300 hectares of sugarcane at the Nerada farm, with another 400 hectares in Innisfail in partnership with long-time family friend, Bernie Devaney. They also run around 700 head of cattle.

HARVESTING INNOVATION

Luckily, by the time Alex began farming for himself, hand-cutting cane was almost a thing of the past.

The mechanisation of cane harvesting began as early as the 1930s, with various adaptations of cane loaders introduced to the industry.

However, it was the arrival of the first commercial cane harvester in 1944, designed and built by Bundaberg's Toft Brothers, followed by the first front end loader in the 1950s, that heralded the beginning of the end for Queensland's cane-cutters.

"The Toft loaders were absolutely marvellous machines and were the first real mechanisation to come into the industry in terms of harvesting cane," Alex said.

Inspired by the rapidly advancing technology, Alex decided to start a contract harvesting business, buying his first harvester in 1970.

"I started out with a Don-Mizzi in 1970. It was a nightmare that machine. They were good at harvesting, but they had no cabs. They were a side mounted machine that went onto the side of a tractor," Alex said.

"The harvester was driven by an auxiliary motor which had all these chains and shear pins, and they were a nightmare because the shear pins used to break, the chains would break – it was just painful."

"People used to call them the 'Don-Misery,' Wayne added.

Luckily Alex's first harvester driver, Billy Devaney, was something of a handyman, able to fix pretty much anything he put his mind to.

"Billy was just a champion. He would drive the harvester all day and then at night we'd have to stay there and fix it to get ready for the next day. Neither of us were mechanics, but he was very handy. He could fix anything as long as the beer kept flowing," Alex joked.

"That's the way you had to be with those Don-Mizzis.

Continues next page ►

Pictured: (below) Driver Bill Kelly and bin crew check out the brand new Austoft 6000; (right) The old guard - Bernie and Bill Davaney



"Without those guys we wouldn't be where we are today."



"Billy was the only person I know of to cut nearly 30,000 tonnes of cane in one year with that Don-Mizzi. It was unheard of, but that's how he was."

In 1981 the family invested in an Austoft 6000. Even now, 40 years and two harvesters later, Alex is full of praise for the Aussie workhorse.

"It was probably the best machine we've had over the years. We had it for 15 years. They were a burnt cane machine so when the industry went to cutting green, we had to modify it.

"The modifications worked, but when it came time to upgrade in 1996 we decided to go with something that was designed to handle cutting green better — a 1994 Austoft.

"We only had that machine for a couple of years before upgrading to the current harvester, bought in 1999. It's a 96 model Austoft, which was the last of the yellow and green Austofts.

"It's very similar to most of the modern harvesters you see today, although we've made a few modifications over the years. It's getting up in age, but it's still doing the business."

Today, the Gatteras harvest around 65,000 tonnes of sugarcane per season - 20,000 tonnes from the Nerada farm, with another 30,000 tonnes from the partnership with the Devaneys. They also contract harvest around 15,000 tonnes for local growers.

While technological advances have been vital to the success of the harvesting business, people have proven to be the most important factor, Wayne says.

"We've only ever had four harvester drivers over the 50 years we've been harvesting cane and without those guys we wouldn't be where we are today.

"Billy Devaney was our very first driver. He was with us for about 11 years and we probably wouldn't have come through those first years without him.

"Then his brother Bernie took over and was here for 11 years, then Bill Kelly for six years, and now Peter Marozzi who has been with us for the past 25 years."

"They're incredible blokes and were key parts of our business," Alex added.

Ironically, despite having run a cane harvesting business for over half a century, operating four different harvesters over that period, neither Alex or Wayne have ever driven a cane harvester.

"Nope, never ever, which I suppose does seem a bit strange when you think about it. But we've always had great blokes to do that for us and there was plenty of other work to keep us busy," Alex said.

Despite their own success, the father and son agree it would be much harder starting up a harvesting business in today's climate.

And they question the practicality of the research sector's advice to reduce harvester speeds in order to improve the quality of cane going into the bin.

"It's difficult for a lot of contractors today and starting from scratch like we did would be nearly impossible," Wayne said.

"Even a second-hand harvester today can set you back hundreds of thousands of dollars

"I don't claim to be right across all the trial work that's being done, but from what I've seen over the years what they are predominantly talking about is going slower and having a slower fan speed and that gives you a better clean.

"And that's all great, but the fact is if we went out today and bought a new

machine, we'd need to be cutting a minimum of 80,000 tonnes, probably more like 100,000 tonnes to make that work.

"The problem is, in order to get that 100,000 tonnes we'd have to go hard just to get the cane off. We couldn't slow the machine down to get a cleaner cut, not if we wanted to pay the bills.

"Possibly it's different in somewhere like the Burdekin where they have a huge crop and burn a lot of cane still, but here, you'd need chase the cane and keep going hard.

"I think some of the people doing this research, they've obviously got the right intentions, but they don't seem to get the concept that farmers and harvesting operators need to make money.

"They need to increase productivity, but at the same time you can't rob Peter to pay Paul. You can't have the harvester adopting this go slow approach so that the cane is coming out cleaner and the farmer is making more money, but the harvesting contractor is not getting paid any more and is actually losing money.

"If they can show that there's a way of doing it economically, then great, but I haven't seen it.

"And good luck trying to convince farmers to pay more."

Wayne believes the real problem is neither growers or harvesters are earning enough for their product.

"The price we get paid for cane hasn't increased in years, but input and operating costs are rising all the time.

"If growers were getting more for our cane, harvesting contractors could then get paid more for their work and that would help alleviate many of the problems."



Pictured above: The Gattera family farms 300 hectares of sugarcane in the undulating Nerada valley

Pictured on the opposite page: Harvester driver Peter Marozzi assesses the damage following a bank collapse near South Johnstone Mill.

"I know some growers find that distasteful ... but we have to show the community we are doing the right thing."

"But because of the way it is, you're relying on the research sector to boost your productivity so you can earn more money. Unless they're getting big breakthroughs, it's not going to have much impact."

BRIGHT FUTURE

Despite his concerns about the economic situation facing the industry, Wayne is optimistic about the future. He believes a bright future will only be realised if growers maintain their licence to operate through embracing Smartcane BMP.

The Gatteras were early adopters and achieved Smartcane BMP accreditation in 2016. Wayne is also a director on the CANEGROWERS Innisfail board, which became the first district board to be fully accredited.

"I strongly believe that Smartcane BMP accreditation allows us to have a social licence to farm. I think that's where we're heading now, we have to show the community that we actually deserve to be farming," he said.

"I know some growers find that distasteful because they feel that they've built up their farms and they've done everything right so they shouldn't have to justify themselves to anybody, but the reality is we do have to justify ourselves to the community.

"We have to show the community that we are doing the right thing.

"I think our biggest problem in the sugar industry is that we haven't sold ourselves well enough to the community and the politicians – that we are actually doing a lot of good.

"We might have had some mistakes in the past, but over the last 10 or 20 years there has been a lot of stuff done in the industry to improve our environmental credentials."

The Gattera family definitely has sound credentials, with Alex winning a Landcare award almost 20 years ago for contouring work he'd undertaken across the farm to prevent erosion.

They've also done a lot of revegetation and riparian work with the local council.

"We've always had the environmental aspect to the business," Wayne said. "When BMP came along we jumped on board pretty early.

"The benefit of the (Smartcane BMP) program as far as we're concerned is that now the government or community can look at a grower and say, 'Yes, that person is BMP accredited, so they must be doing the right thing'.

"Whereas previously a lot of growers were doing great things, but not necessarily getting the credit they deserved for their actions. BMP allows for that recognition.

"Deb Telford has done a fantastic job promoting BMP in the area and getting growers on board.

"The more growers we get on board, the more it will help alleviate the pressure that government and the public are putting on the industry." ■

GROWER WATER QUALITY MONITORING EXPLAINED AT SCIENCE CONFERENCE

The involvement of sugarcane growers in research and monitoring projects related to water quality for the Great Barrier Reef has been on show at a major scientific conference in Cairns.

The NESP Tropical Water Quality Hub Impacts and Achievements Conference has heard from some of the approximately 90 projects it has funded since 2015 ahead of the Hub winding up in June 2021.

It is one of six hubs established under the Australian Government's National Environmental Science Program (NESP) with its purpose being to focus on water quality and ecosystem conditions of the Great Barrier Reef.



Six partner research institutions have been involved, James Cook University, CSIRO, Australian Institute of Marine Science, Griffith University, the University of Queensland and Central Queensland University, with a number of projects relying on collaboration and cooperation with sugarcane growers.

At the conference, CANEGROWERS Cairns Region Chairman Stephen Calcagno gave a presentation with Dr Aaron Davis of James Cook University about the long-running Project 25.

Initiated by cane growers with concerns about the credibility of broad-scale water quality monitoring, it has been a citizen science program of real-time monitoring of small, local sub-catchments in the Russell-Mulgrave region to provide feedback about any impact of farming activities.

Stephen told the audience that having growers as part of the project team, with ownership and control of the monitoring design, was the key to developing trust and ownership of the water quality data.

The project included an extension effort to provide confidence in on-farm decision making as growers helped identify practical options to reduce loss of nitrogen from their farms. ■

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Investment update with Sunsuper's Chief Economist, Brian Parker

March quarter, 2021

Global market overview

World share markets enjoyed another very strong quarter, with shares in the Eurozone and Japan outperforming those in the UK and US. While a resurgence in COVID infections in Europe and elsewhere prompted the reimposition of restrictions in some countries, the ongoing vaccine rollout has essentially allowed markets to "look through" the likely short-term disruption to economic activity. The successful passage of President Biden's \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan provided a meaningful boost to confidence in both US and global growth prospects.

Emerging markets shares produced positive returns but generally underperformed the developed markets, largely due to negative returns from Chinese shares. A slightly weaker Australian dollar over the quarter resulted in a marginal outperformance by unhedged relative to hedged international shares.

Australian shares performed strongly although underperforming other developed markets. Banks again accounted for the lion's share of the quarter's return, while telecommunications and consumer discretionary shares also produced strong gains. The Australian economy's recovery is well underway. Australia's GDP rose by a very solid 3.1 per cent in the December quarter to be just 1.1 per cent below its level of a year ago. The impending end of JobKeeper is likely to produce a spike in unemployment, which should prove temporary, given the strength of leading indicators such as ANZ job ads and key business surveys. However, those industries and regions most affected by the absence of international tourism are likely to face ongoing challenges.

Both Australian and global fixed income returns were sharply negative over the quarter. Expectations of higher inflation and growing optimism over prospects for the global economy drove sovereign bond yields higher, despite indications from the world's major central banks that official interest rates would remain at their current lows for an extended period of time.

Sunsuper's current position

Sunsuper continues to hold a substantial allocation to alternative asset classes, particularly the key unlisted asset classes – property, infrastructure, private equity and private credit. As a large superannuation fund, we have well-diversified portfolios of these assets that deliver strong, long-term returns, while reducing our members' exposure to share market volatility – particularly in times such as these.



And we can maintain these exposures as a result of our strong liquidity position.

Sunsuper's Balanced option for *Super-savings accounts* produced a return of 3.8 per cent for the March quarter and 21.3 per cent over the year to March 2021, largely reflecting the dramatic recovery in world share markets since March 2020. Longer-term returns remain strong, with the Balanced option posting returns of 8.0 per cent p.a. over the last three years, and 8.3 per cent p.a. over the ten years to the end of March.

Choose your own investments

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.

If you want more information to decide which investment option or group of options best meets your needs, we're here to help.

Contact us on **13 11 84** between 8.00am to 6.30pm (AEST) Monday to Friday or visit [sunsuper.com.au](https://www.sunsuper.com.au)

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

Membership Engagement

Pictured: You never know who you will bump into on the road. CANEGROWERS managers Matt Kealley and Burn Ashburner stopped for a chat with Isis grower Joe Russo during a quick pitstop in Childers.



ASSCT Conference in Bundaberg

Driving through the sugar towns of southern Queensland recently, it was easy to see the legacy and influence of sugarcane in the rich tapestry of buildings, monuments, businesses, and communities.

Bundaberg is no exception, despite the region's cane industry facing significant challenges from land use change and a growing macadamia industry.

I was in Bundaberg to attend the 42nd ASSCT conference - the Australian Society of Sugar Cane Technologists.

I must admit, I was looking forward to catching up with old colleagues, seeing new faces and hearing about the research happening in the industry.

Last year's conference, like a lot of events, was cancelled due to COVID.

The theme for this year's conference was smart science and innovation and the keynote address was from Richard Heath, executive director of the Australian Farm Institute.

Richard outlined how the impacts of climate change were exacerbating the complexity of risk management throughout supply chains.

Managing environment, social and governance criteria, such as greenhouse gas emissions, is becoming increasingly important for businesses, especially for banks.

Opportunities for agriculture in the areas of natural capital and carbon trading are available if we can learn how to leverage the supply chain.

I had the opportunity to present about CANEGROWERS' ongoing work to use blockchain technology to trace sustainable sugar.

My ASSCT paper – *Creating a blockchain platform to show sustainability credentials and provenance of Queensland sugar* – discussed how CANEGROWERS is using Smartcane BMP and blockchain technology to provide provenance for sugar, therefore increasing market access with the aim of providing greater value to growers.

The paper was well received and seemed to resonate with the themes of the keynote as options to investigate carbon credits, natural capital and sustainable financing is part of the ongoing work.

Other papers of interest included one by Margarete Renouf on how the Australian sugar industry can be a positive force for reducing greenhouse gas emissions for climate stabilisation.

Sam Moore from the Cane Changer crew presented a paper on using behavioural science to create practice change in the Queensland sugarcane industry.

Angela Williams and Jo Hall from CANEGROWERS Isis talked about the Isis 20:20 project, digital farm maps and customised digital record keeping. ■



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

A HEARTFELT MESSAGE ABOUT A LIFESAVING APP

Supplied by Energy Queensland

Powerline safety is a topic close to Mark Biffanti's heart.

The Ergon Energy Area Manager grew up on a cane farm in upriver Home Hill and has family and friends in the sugar industry.

After 18 reported machinery contacts with overhead powerlines during the last crushing season in Queensland, Mark is urging harvester and haul-out operators to plan ahead with Ergon's free Look Up and Live app.

"Powerlines can be lethal and we know the ripple effect workplace accidents have on families, workmates and the community.

"We want everyone to stay focused and stay safe so that at the end of their shift they can go home to their loved ones.

"We all need to take safety personally because lives are on the line when vehicles and machinery contact powerlines and our award-winning Look

Up and Live app can help you reduce the risks," he said.

Mark said anyone who operates machinery would benefit from downloading Ergon's Look Up and Live app, which has lifesaving information on 1.7 million power poles and 178,000 kilometres of overhead powerlines across Queensland.

"It's a handy tool to help you map out the risks, so you know where those power poles and wires are, especially if you're working in unfamiliar territory or the entry and exit points around the paddocks have changed.

"Last year we had 13 incidents involving cane harvesters and 5 involving haul-outs and we'll continue working with the industry to improve safety.

"The Look Up and Live app is a powerful addition to your toolkit that gives you free, comprehensive safety advice wherever you are."

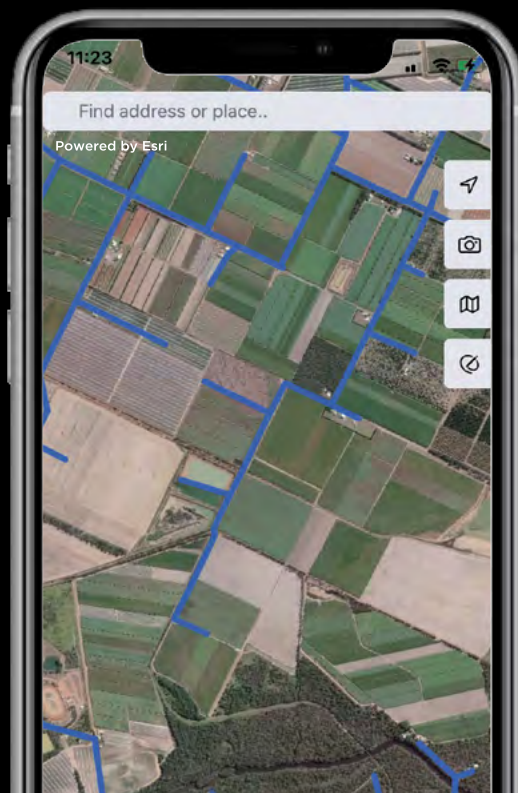


Whatever your line of work,
powerlines are all around.

Download the Look up
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ADVERTISING FEATURE

GET SMARTCANE BMP RESOURCES AT THE CLICK OF BUTTON

By Kate Gowdie
Smartcane BMP Manager



Find resources online

The Smartcane BMP website has recently been updated and is now packed with even more information for growers and industry alike.

Visit Smartcane.com.au/resources to find the latest links to tools and information, including links to relevant legislation.

The resource page contains links to industry organisations and other BMP programs, all providing useful information for growers wanting to participate in a Best Management Practice program.

This page, pictured top right, also provides links to relevant legislation and the associated fact sheets

Latest news online

Check-out the latest news page Smartcane.com.au/latest-news, pictured middle right, to read recent articles about Smartcane BMP.

Find out how Smartcane BMP is being rolled out across the QLD cane growing districts through dedicated magazine articles and updates on technology and resources.

Read about the economic benefits of Smartcane BMP accreditation in one of our feature articles, pictured bottom right, – What's the economic impact of Smartcane BMP?

Find your local facilitator's contact details on our home page, pictured below, or access the growers' only section via the grower home link to register in the Smartcane BMP program.

Keep an eye on the programs' success by visiting the Smartcane BMP home page for latest numbers of accredited growers. ■



Yellow Crazy Ant Survey (between East Trinity and Behana Creek)

Supplied by Wet Tropics Management Authority

The Wet Tropics Management Authority, in partnership with the Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Council's Natural Assets Management Advisory Committee will be holding its week-long yellow crazy ant taskforce from Monday 17 May to Friday 21 May 2021.

The annual event could not take place in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions, resulting in the Authority approaching the 2021 event with heightened anticipation and enthusiasm.

The taskforce consists of workers and participants from a range of state and local governments, Traditional Custodians and non-government workers.

Its goal is to survey sugarcane headlands between East Trinity and

Behana Creek in a coordinated effort to identify and eradicate yellow crazy ants.

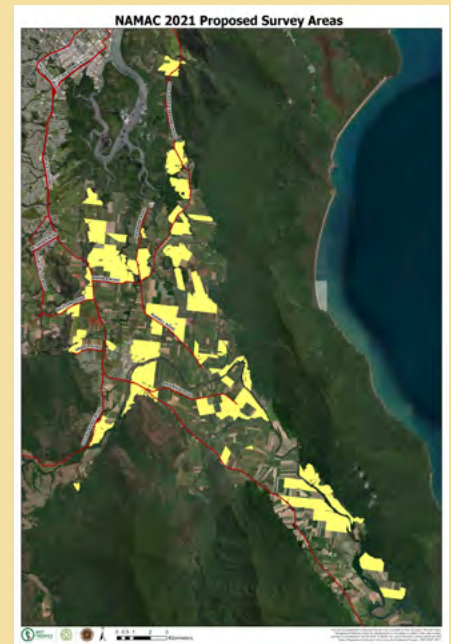
The taskforce not only provides a valuable workforce, it also serves an educational purpose in training workers throughout Far North Queensland in the identification of yellow crazy ants and extending awareness about this invasive ant to the broader community.

Residents in areas to be surveyed will be given advance notice.

To report suspected yellow crazy ants or for enquiries about the taskforce:

Gareth Humphreys - Taskforce Coordinator - 0455 095 690
gareth.humphreys@wtma.qld.gov.au

Wesley Moller - Sugar Industry Liaison Officer - 0436 613 383
wesley.moller@wtma.qld.gov.au



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CANEGROWERS REGIONAL ROUND-UP

Supplied by CANEGROWERS district offices

MOSSMAN

CANEGROWERS Mossman was a sponsor of the Far Northern Milling 2020 Productivity Awards night for Mossman Mill's coastal growers on Thursday 25 March. It was a very successful evening with growers and mill staff at the event. Presentation categories included Best Productivity for 2020 in each of the seven coastal zones, Cane Growing Excellence Award, Best 5 year Average Producer, Best Presented Farm, Grower Long Service Awards and a Women in Agriculture Recognition Award, which was won by Maureen Verri. Our congratulations to all the winners, sponsors and mill staff who worked so hard to make the night a success.

The far north was one of the early participants in the CANEGROWERS-TAFE Pricing Essentials for Cane Growers course held over two days in Cairns in March. A group of Mossman growers participated along with growers from the Tableland and Cairns regions. It was very successful with Mossman participants getting a lot of valuable information from the training.

Mossman Agricultural Services led a three day bus tour of the Wet Tropics region for Mossman growers in late March. The trip was funded by DAF and seven Mossman growers went along to visit various farms, Wet Tropics projects and Sugar Research Australia to chat about variety management, plant breeding and tissue culture, RSD and fallow management, and machinery modifications. It was an informative event.

Mossman Agricultural Services and SRA are looking to provide Mossman growers with an update of the Mossman Cane to Creek project which has been in operation for the last two years. The project involved water sampling on Marrs Creek and a number of demonstration sites to develop sound practical advice that minimises environmental losses. This project is coming to an end so the meeting will hear about outcomes and results of water quality monitoring, harvest and herbicide trials, an overview of project trial results and discuss whether parts of the project should continue.

Meanwhile a new Mossman project, Prod180, has become a reality with GBRF Reef Trust VII funding. The project funding through Terrain NRM and on-ground through Mossman Agricultural Services will turn its focus towards addressing constraints to productivity for the benefits of water quality outcomes in the Mossman basin. The first steering committee meeting was held on 9 April, providing input into project goals and objectives. The Reef Trust VII funding was provided for both the Mossman and Murray basins, both medium priority catchment areas, and is looking at an integrated place-based program delivering the step-change that is needed for the Reef.

Although we have had less rain during summer than a La Nina event might have indicated, growing conditions for the crop going into autumn continued to be favourable with warm and humid conditions. Rainfall in March was also below average and scattered during early April.

However, during the third week of April we experienced very heavy falls with over 400mm recorded around the districts. This substantial rainfall caused more cane to lodge due to the weight in the canopy.

The growers' estimate for the 2021 season has come in at 785,476 tonnes which is considerably lower than the average calculated by the mill.

Mossman Mill's maintenance and capital improvements program continues to be implemented with the maintenance program a few days behind schedule and replacement of the number 8 high grade fugal electrical controls taking up a large chunk of the capital budget.

Final decisions around toll-crushing for the 2021 crushing and Mossman Mill operations for 2022 are due to be made by the end of April 2021.



Pictured above: Far Northern Milling 2020 Productivity Awards proud winners and pictured below some of the winners of the Grower Long Service Awards



CAIRNS

The CANEGROWERS Cairns Region leaf analysis project has been taken up by 65 members. The results of the free tests will now feed into the growers' nutrient management plans.

CANEGROWERS Cairns Region has undertaken the role of Catchment Coordinator, working collaboratively with the RRRRC in the Russell Mulgrave Catchments under the GBRF funding aimed at reducing DIN.

Members supplying South Johnstone Mill have been presented with the CANEGROWERS Cane Supply Agreement

which was jointly negotiated by CANEGROWERS Innisfail and Cairns.

As a part of the roll out of the agreement, Chairman Stephen Calcagno and manager Sarah Standen, visited some growers who seldom get into the office.

The day was very successful with some interesting stories being shared. The photo shows **Michael Treston**, aged 90, discussing the agreement with Stephen. Mr Treston farms in the Daradgee Area, where in addition to growing cane he also runs cattle.



An interesting gentleman with some great stories to tell.

April saw some heavy rainfall in the region including some localised flooding.

INNISFAIL

20 growers attended the CANEGROWERS-TAFE Pricing Essentials for Cane Growers course in Innisfail with positive feedback received from all who participated. Thanks to **Warren Males** and **Dougall Lodge** for the informative sessions and to **Margret** for taking such good care of us!

The Wet Tropics Major Integrated Project has once again hosted five shed meetings over two days with 40 growers attending to discuss the latest data gathered from their Catchment Repair, Treatment System trials. These meetings were followed with a bus trip to the farms hosting bioreactors, wetlands and high efficiency sediment basins.

South Johnstone Mill Suppliers are currently executing their Cane Supply Agreements commencing this season. If you haven't already done so, please collect your contract from the office.

On 22 and 23 March, Innisfail members welcomed CANEGROWERS Chairman **Paul Schembri** and CEO **Dan Galligan** to the area for an update on organisational matters, while local representatives provided an update on the recent company restructure.



TULLY

April showers have taken on a new meaning for the Wet Tropics with significant rainfall being recorded since 19 April. Falls of over 400 mm were recorded but, the time of writing, Tully remained short of the record 1600 mm for April and the 490 mm for a day recorded in 1941. Still, it has put a stop to paddock work, allowing time to catch up on shed work.

The wet has also provided opportunities for growers to attend the Breakfast Shed meetings run by Tully Cane Productivity Ltd and the Tully Variety Group, and the recent QSL Marketing Update (previously postponed because of COVID-19) was very well attended.

The break in work should see good attendance at the Harvest Forum on 29 April and Walk in the Landscape Workshops focusing on the Murray/ Kennedy areas later in May.

Tully Canegrowers Cooperative Ltd (Mitre 10) and Tully Cane Productivity Services Ltd will hold their AGMs on 14 May.

The countdown for the 2021 season has commenced with groupings almost finalised and the induction process for harvest and shared sidings about to be rolled out. Safety is paramount and needs to be front and centre of our minds.

Continues next page ►

CANEGROWERS REGIONAL ROUND-UP

HERBERT RIVER

The CANEGROWERS Herbert River Annual General Meeting attracted a crowd of more than 70 members including the growers from other regions who sit on the CANEGROWERS Board visiting Ingham ahead of a meeting in Townsville (see page 14).

The Lower Herbert Water Quality Program has been officially launched with an event in Ingham (pictured). A part of the Reef Trust Partnership with the Great Barrier Reef Foundation, this program will include a series of projects to assist growers improve the quality of water flowing from district catchments to the inshore lagoon while improving productivity and profitability in the sugar industry.



BURDEKIN

Wilmar has released its estimated start date and crop expectations for the 2021 season. The Burdekin is looking at a common start date of 8 June 2021 across the four mills with an estimated crop of 7,974,978 tonnes, which is similar to where seasons 2019 and 2020 landed.

Mill	Tonnes Milling 2021 Season
Invicta	3,085,290
Pioneer	1,578,730
Kalamia	1,612,308
Inkerman	1,698,650
TOTAL	7,974,978

The targeted finished date for all four mills is 14 – 15 November. Wilmar has advised that capex and maintenance programs are on track and pre-commissioning trials at all four sites will be undertaken to enhance the prospect of a good start to the season which would be welcome.

Planting had commenced in earnest across the district in April but was disrupted by rain and the discovery of Ratoon Stunting Disease (RSD) in two of the four seed plots in the region. The RSD issue is being appropriately dealt with and reports are that growers should have sufficient access to approved seed cane for planting which is a good outcome.

Whilst the focus is on the upcoming 2021 season, at CANEGROWERS Burdekin we also have an eye on 2022 as this is when board elections are due to be held.

The sugar industry is a great industry to be involved in and contribute to, and any Board functions best with a good cross section of membership being represented.

CANEGROWERS Burdekin represents growers across all four mill areas and for the 2022 election we encourage younger growers and women to consider running for the Board.

The time requirement to fulfil a Board position is not onerous, all you need to make a difference is passion and a vision of where you would like to see the sugar industry in the years ahead.

If you have thought about joining, the opportunity to do so is approaching. Any existing Directors or the manager are available to answer your questions about the role.

In terms of the future and where we want the sugar industry to be, it was pleasing to see Prime Minister Scott Morrison's announcement on positioning Australia towards net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

The sugarcane industry is well placed with biomass to assist in achieving this goal through the replacement of fossil fuel-based products with renewable alternatives such as biofuels and bioplastics.

CANEGROWERS Burdekin is actively working towards pursuing alternative uses for the sugarcane plant, with the end goal being to create more demand so growers receive more money for their cane than just for sugar crystals.

CANEGROWERS Burdekin recently participated in an online forum to learn more about the Paddock to Reef Modelling and Monitoring Program.

It provided a valuable insight into how this program has been constructed and highlighted areas where we need to lobby government to review regulation to achieve a more practical and commonsense outcome for the industry.

Essentially, as an industry we are being judged based on mathematical guesstimates of what DIN and sediment loads are entering the GBR against unrealistic reduction targets with progress predicated on grower surveys about changed farming practices.

We have a lot of work to do to turn this around, but we are up for it as grower livelihoods and regional communities are at stake.

A pendulum sometimes swings too far before coming back into the right range.

PROSERPINE

Despite a dry spring period, the Proserpine district received enough rain in the first quarter of 2021 to invigorate and bolster the crop. While the crop is still below the 10-year average, further rain over the next few months will undoubtedly provide some additional benefit.

At this stage, the pre-season estimate is 1.64 million tonnes – slightly up on the previous year. Current plans are to commence crushing on 29 June, which will hopefully see the harvest completed by mid-November.

The mill's capital and maintenance program remain on-track for the late June start with the mill holding a tour and

information day on 5 May to showcase the significant work undertaken.

CANEGROWERS Proserpine will also be hosting a Member Event on 6 May with CANEGROWERS CEO Dan Galligan in attendance and all members are welcome to attend.

There is still plenty of time for growers to register for the CANEGROWERS-TAFE Pricing Essentials for Cane Growers professional development course. The two-day course has been scheduled for Proserpine on 7-8 June.

MACKAY/PLANE CREEK

The weather has been kind to the Mackay and Plane Creek regions with about 50 mm falling in most parts over the Easter period. This has given the crop a boost with the Mackay Area Productivity Service (MAPS) and Plane Creek Productivity Service (PCPSL) reporting growth rates of about 30 mm per day. Now that the weather has become a little cooler with fewer hours of sunshine, moisture levels should remain ideal for some time.

Some crop lodging has occurred throughout the district and while this may have some negative impact on CCS levels, the benefits of crop growth should outweigh it. Lodging usually leads to a more difficult crop to harvest and process through the mills. Overall though, the crop is shaping up well with tonnages estimated to be in excess of last season.

At the time of writing, discussions are still being held with Mackay Sugar and Wilmar, but the start dates for the mills are expected to be announced soon.

In the lead-up to the start of the crush, members attended a series of informal farm shed meetings held by CANEGROWERS Mackay Area Committee to discuss industry issues. A Wynn's diesel demo, drinks and a sausage sizzle were sponsored on farm by Savcom Automotive & Industrial Solutions.

AgTech focus

The Greater Whitsunday Alliance's Ag Mastermind event in March for young cane farmers, supported by CANEGROWERS Mackay, included a presentation by Dr Sarah Pearson, Queensland's Innovation Lead and Deputy Director-General

for Innovation, who called for greater collaboration across the supply chain in the region to solve problems and work out a roadmap for accessing high growth markets.

Professor Ian O'Hara, Deputy Director of the QUT Centre for Agriculture and the Bioeconomy, followed with a presentation about the opportunities which bio futures and biobased products had to provide new directions for cane growers.

Also on the program was Jason Huggins, AgTech Sector Engagement Officer for the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries who spoke about his role in growing the AgTech community in the region.

Sugar Industry Trade Exhibition

Growers who visit the inaugural Sugar Industry Trade Exhibition at the Mackay Show this year (15-17 June) will be in the running to win a \$250 gift voucher to spend on fishing gear at Tackle World Mackay.

The competition is being run by CANEGROWERS Mackay in support of the Sugar Cane Subcommittee which is running the sugar cane competition. We hope growers display their best cane and entry details are available on the Mackay Show website.

The Sugar Industry Trade Exhibition is a new idea for the Show aiming to display some of the latest machinery, equipment, technology and services. This will be the 142nd Mackay Show, after a break due to COVID last year, and the new Exhibition will be a compelling reason for cane growers to spend more time at the event - See you there



BUNDABERG

TM Dahl and JS Weston were once again announced as District Champions at the Annual Bundaberg Sugar Industry Productivity Awards, held at The Bundaberg Multiplex on Friday 26 March.

TM Dahl and JS Weston's Bingera farm with a three-year average of 16.05 tonnes of sugar per hectare, pipped Hill End Farms Pty Ltd's Millaquin farm with a three-year average of 15.40 tonnes of sugar per hectare, to take out the top award of the night – Formatt Machinery's District Champion.

Chairman of Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited, **Mark Pressler** congratulated the District Champion who won the award for the second year in a row.

Representatives from all sectors of the industry and their business associates gathered to hear the awards announced and to celebrate

some great productivity outcomes in spite of the weather, COVID-19 and other challenges experienced during the 2020 crushing season.

Five growers were recognised for supplying Bundaberg Mills for 50 Years. There were a total of 22 Award winners announced in the 14 categories.

In other news, **Allan Dingle** who has been Chairman of CANEGROWERS Bundaberg since 2007 has stepped down.

He will continue to hold a board position until the end of the current term in March 2022.

Mark Pressler has been appointed as the new Chairman of CANEGROWERS Bundaberg.

Mark has been a director for the past eight years and is well known, respected and a very capable grower representative.

Pictured right (top): Chris Townson with the Best Farm Presentation for Harvesting award and right, Mark and Judith Fritz with their award for Highest Actual CCS Sample - Millaquin



ISIS

ASSCT Conference

Attendance at the ASSCT Conference in Bundaberg in late April was a highlight, with the Isis district again punching above our weight. Two Isis presentations were delivered during the conference. CANEGROWERS Isis Manager **Angela Williams** presented the new cross industry Extension Model/ Framework for Practice highlighting the Isis 20:20 experience and associated practice improvements.

The Isis Productivity Team also shared their experience working and engaging with growers in the Nutrient Management Planning in the Isis Project. **Juliette Greenway** developed two poster papers covering digital innovations and Jotforms.

The first covered how Google Earth smart technology has given growers easy access to farm details in the field, on their phone or tablet, without the need for a physical map.

The second highlighted the use of the web-based platform JotForms and how these have been used to produce customisable record-keeping tools for growers to record everything from herbicide application to irrigation, energy, nutrition, planting and cultivation records.

Both innovations have been well received by growers across the district and have assisted in providing easy access to

useable farm records enabling effective business management and economic decision making.

Advocacy

We have continued to meet regularly with our regional Ag consortium with Marland Law, BFVG, Bundaberg Canegrowers in relation to a number of joint campaigns including Save Paradise and the Class Action, Rates and the formalisation of an Ag Alliance to express the voices of farmers across the region and defend their right to farm.

Recently we met with **Deputy Premier Stephen Miles** and his key staff to request mandating their own Equity Guideline to assist regional councils ensure ratepayers are consulted appropriately and have a level of predictability in rating. Both of which were not followed in Bundaberg.

Maryborough Cane

We have continued to work closely with CANEGROWERS Maryborough to develop a single CSA for growers to come into effect after the Toll Crush Agreement ends.

We are currently in the last stages of planning our 'meet the neighbours' bus trip scheduled for 28 April. Over 110 growers are participating as a great first step to unifying the district.

MARYBOROUGH

We finally enjoyed some decent volumes of rain at the end of March across all the district, although feedback is that runoff to dams was minimal.

At this time of year soybeans are getting close to harvest and the district will have around 1500 hectares being harvested.

The crop is looking fairly healthy, with a lot of bug checking currently underway.

With the cane having had a decent drink, it has also been showing recovery, raising hopes of a decent season ahead. Mill estimate requests are due out soon to help with logistics for this year.

Transloader Update

My regular visits past the site over the school holidays have spotted a constant growth in the construction.

Foundations for the weighbridge and ramps have been poured and blockwork has been delivered and ready for laying. Rail tracks have been laid through the site.

We will be visiting the site as part of the Productivity Services Bus Tour on 28 April.

MCPS Bus Tour- Meet the Neighbours

It's a different format this year with a

BBQ breakfast to start from 7:30am at Nutrien Fertilisers on Saltwater Creek.

We will hear from CANEGROWERS and MSF Sugar from 8am to 9am on the preparations for 2021 season. Then we board the buses for a tour around Childers significant sugar sites.

We have had to postpone the proposed 126 years of Sugar Dinner, as COVID restrictions continue to limit numbers for venues in town. We are now looking to the end of season for improved options to hold this event.



ROCKY POINT

The Rocky Point cane crop is the best-looking crop for many years due to the above-average district rainfall.

From 15 March to 10 April, the district average rainfall was 392 mm. There was moderate flooding across the district with minimal damage to the cane crop. Some late planted and low-lying soybeans were lost due to waterlogging.

The Fire Ant Program has provided registered growers with another year's supply of Fire Ant Bait under the self-management program, which is to be applied in March, June and September. Last year's pilot program was very favourable in suppressing the ants on treated properties.

We are still awaiting an outcome from the Valuer General's office for Valuation Objections we lodged on behalf of growers last year. Hopefully we will have a resolution soon



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CANEGROWERS POLICY UPDATE



Mick Quirk

Environment and Sustainability Manager
CANEGROWERS

Keeping feral pigs at bay

Feral pigs are a frequent cause of damage to sugarcane crops, especially in the Wet Tropics.

However, a coordinated and committed approach to control can significantly reduce their impact, as demonstrated by the Hinchinbrook Community Feral Pig Management Program.

This program began in 2009, catching up to 1,000 pigs a year for eight years. Over that time, the annual yield damage to crops declined from approximately \$1.2m to \$200,000.

Each year, this program made traps available to landholders, coordinated a 1080 baiting program, and conducted aerial shooting from helicopters during the late dry season.

As well as good coordination and collaboration, such programs also require ongoing commitments to funding.

The Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) is currently rethinking how it can best support effective feral pig management.

CANEGROWERS Environment Committee Chairman, Joseph Marano, and I recently met with a DAF representative discuss key issues and the experiences of the sugarcane industry.

We emphasised that growers do not need more awareness workshops or flash brochures, but rather support and resources to make things happen on the ground.

We argued that there are already good examples of effective control measures and successful models of coordination. These need to be encouraged and well-resourced.

We also discussed the apparent lack of control measures in conservation areas. Research published in 2012 clearly demonstrated that feral pigs in the Wet Tropics utilise both sugarcane and forest habitats, and can quickly switch their foraging between them.

More recent research suggests that effective control of a pig population requires reduction in their numbers of at least 50% to 70% every year.

Use of 1080 in fruit baits has been a common practice in the Wet Tropics. Regulatory approval for this originated from a state-based registration program that pre-dated the formation of the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA).

To ensure fruit and meat-based baits remain a legal option, DAF has applied for minor use permits from the APVMA. DAF has yet to hear back on the progress of these applications.

The case for reducing feral pig numbers is now more compelling than ever. Should African Swine Fever, a highly infectious viral disease of pigs, find its way into Australia, then feral pigs have the potential to spread it widely.

In 2019, the National Farmers' Federation asked for a culling program developed across all three levels of government. In response, the Australian Government allocated \$1.4 million over three years to support a National Feral Pig Management Coordinator.

Their role is to develop and deliver feral pig management approaches on national, regional and local scales. However, it remains unclear how the necessary control work at the ground level will be properly resourced. ■

Feral pigs are a frequent cause of damage to sugarcane crops ... growers do not need more awareness workshops or flash brochures, but rather support and resources to make things happen.



Burn Ashburner
Senior Manager - Industry
CANEGROWERS

Agriculture option for a gap year

Although a long-standing issue for many agriculture sectors, attracting casual labour wasn't seen as a widespread problem on cane farms pre-COVID.

However, this year I have heard from a number of sources that finding suitable labour is becoming more difficult.

This is not surprising given that a recent report by Growing in Ag, commissioned through Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance (RJSA), found that only 6% of casual workers in agriculture are Australian citizens or permanent residents.

With COVID essentially shutting down international travel, a shortage of backpackers left a gap in the workforce which had an immediate effect on horticulture but is also filtering through to the sugarcane industry.

The Growing in Ag report conducted a research survey of people who had completed a gap year in agriculture, retail or hospitality, comparing the understanding of working in agriculture and perceived barriers for young people.

The results were interesting and dispelled some of the myths or misunderstandings about working in agriculture.

One perception was that agriculture pays less. This was dispelled by a comparison of relevant award rates and the survey respondents who had worked in agriculture.

The average money earned per hour for agriculture was \$20.79, retail \$17.80 and hospitality \$17.68.

Further to this, the hours worked per week was greater in agriculture with 28.42 compared to retail 20.1 and hospitality 19.42.

The net effect is that those that did a gap year in agriculture earned about \$10,000 more per annum.

95% of respondents who believed that working in agriculture would negatively impact their social life also believed that working in the industry required a move to a more remote locality.

This may be true for Greater Brisbane, although there are a number of agricultural businesses within this region.

Mackay was used as an example where cane farms are concentrated within a relatively short distance (as with much of the sugarcane industry) and agriculture in general did not require unsociable hours of work compared to retail and hospitality, which required long hours into the evening and on weekends.

There were also perceived issues with mistreatment of workers in agriculture and of the physical nature of the work, particularly by female respondents.

This does show the effects of a few rogue operators and a lack of understanding of the diversity of employment available to individuals in agriculture.

There were several recommendations in the report, including targeting men from regional centres, emphasising the proximity of agricultural work close to cities, making the financial case, and highlighting the diversity of jobs.

CANEGROWERS is a member of RJSA, which is run by QFF and provides leadership and advice to government, service providers and other organisations on employment, skills, industry training and workforce planning issues on behalf of Queensland's agriculture industries. ■

One perception was that agriculture pays less, but those that did a gap year in agriculture earned about \$10,000 more per annum.

Warren Males

Head - Economics
CANEGROWERS



Fish where the fish are

The CANEGROWERS-TAFE Pricing Essentials for Cane Growers course has been enthusiastically received by industry, with almost 70 participants completing the first five sessions.

In the sugar market context, the Pricing Essentials course teaches growers how to 'fish where the fish are'.

Over the three years available for pricing 2020 season sugar, the market was above \$450/t for less than 15% of the time. The rest of the time it was well below that level, often trading at less than \$400/t.

While results for the 2020 season are not yet in, preliminary indications are clear; after the addition of the Shared Pool, some growers who have been forward pricing will receive a weighted average net price for their GEI sugar of more than \$500/t.

This will be the third successive year in which some growers will have received sugar prices of more than \$450/t.

Already there have been opportunities to secure prices for 2021 season at more than \$490/t, before the likely extra value of the different marketers' 2021 season Shared Pools is added.

The foundation stone of the Pricing Essentials workshops is a tool that helps growers assess their individual cost of cane production. This enables them to identify the underlying costs that they might choose to cover in making their sugar pricing decisions.

Different market structures are reviewed to help growers understand how sugar prices might behave in different phases of the sugar price cycle.

It is important to understand that the CANEGROWERS-TAFE course does not teach growers how to price at the top of the market, but it does show how to manage price risk and take advantage of opportunities when they arise, to secure

sustainable profits by pricing above the cost of production over the three-year pricing window.

In other words, to 'fish where the fish are'.

Feedback from marketers is consistent. Growers who actively manage their price exposure using forward pricing are, on average, outperforming their marketer's pool results.

The reason is straight forward; individual growers have more time to price at levels above their cost of production and are less constrained in their pricing activities than the in-season products pool managers operate.

An individual grower who understands their cost of production can price a large share of their production up to three years ahead.

Growers have a much longer pricing window and greater pricing discretion to lock in profitable prices as they arise, even if these opportunities are short lived.

In contrast, pool managers are more likely to achieve a result closer to the market average over the pool pricing window.

Unfortunately, not all milling companies are making all the GEI marketer's price offerings available to their growers. CANEGROWERS calls on those mills to take the lead from their milling colleagues and remove the constraints that limit their growers' ability to achieve the best outcome for their business.

The reward is clear – more profitable growers, producing more cane, leads to increased mill throughput and greater mill viability.

Let's take advantage of this industry revitalisation opportunity.■

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Males', written over a light background.

Feedback from marketers is consistent. Growers who actively manage their price exposure using forward pricing are, on average, outperforming their marketer's pool results.



Annual Queensland Land Valuations

On 31 March 2021 the Valuer General issued new land valuations for 25 local government areas in Queensland, some of which are in sugarcane districts such as the Burdekin, Tablelands and Whitsundays. If your property is in a local authority area that was not revalued, then your land valuation will remain unchanged.

WHAT ARE LAND VALUATIONS USED FOR?

Land valuations are used and relied upon by various government authorities for a variety of purposes including the levying of various taxes and charges against land holders. These taxes and charges are calculated at a specified rate in the dollar of land value. Examples include local council rates, state land tax and state land rental on state leasehold lands. An increase in your land valuation may, but does not automatically, lead to an increase in your relevant government rates and charges.

LOCAL COUNCIL RATES

Whilst local Councils use the unimproved valuation as a basis to levy rates, an increase in the unimproved value of land does not automatically mean the Council rates will increase. Councils have a wide range of powers to use when setting rates. Option for Councils include:-

- (a) having various categories of land for various types of land use and applying a different rate in the dollar for each category.
- (b) averaging the valuation over a period of years.
- (c) capping rate increases.



By Chris Cooper,
CANEGROWERS
Legal Advisor



Remember, just because the value of land may have changed, it does not automatically mean rates will change. The amount of rates charged regardless of land valuation is a decision for the local authority to make.

HOW IS THE VALUATION CALCULATED?

Lands that are zoned rural are valued on an unimproved basis by state government department valuers. The unimproved basis is intended to reflect the land in its original, natural and undisturbed condition. The unimproved value is the notional amount the land could be expected to sell for without any physical improvements such as houses and sheds, land clearing, levelling and earth works.

Department valuers usually monitor the local area real estate market and analyse sales of properties within the area. From these sales, they will make calculations about the value of improvements forming part of the sale and deduct them from the gross sale price to come up with a notional unimproved value for the land component involved in that particular sale. Valuers will also consider physical attributes and constraints on use of the land. These items include matters such as the shape, nature and size of land, any adverse effects of natural disasters, limitations on land use, encumbrances such as easements including cane tramway and powerline easements, planning restrictions and environmental and vegetation issues.

The department does not physically inspect every property in the local authority area every year. Quite often the department will simply carry out desk top valuations using maps and aerial

images. Also, in some cases the department will merely apply a factor to adjust the value of all farms by a set percentage. These short cut approaches can lead to anomalies and inconsistent valuations.

OBJECTION PROCESS

A land holder can formally dispute a valuation by lodgement of a "properly made" notice of objection. The notice must follow a set format and be lodged with the department within 60 days of the valuation being issued. As the recent new valuations were issued on 31 March, affected land holders have until 31 May to lodge their objection.

Landholders should do their homework before lodging an objection. Detailed information about the valuation is available from the relevant government offices and business centres. Your CANEGROWERS office can also assist.

Prior to lodging an objection, land holders might also consider contacting the department on 1300 664 217. Try to speak with the relevant valuer and seek further information about how their valuation was arrived at. This further information may assist you in deciding whether to object or not.

Some of the common complaints in objections include that the department: -

- relied on an inflated and abnormal local area sale that did not reflect true area values;
- failed to consider particular characteristics of the property, such as soil type and terrain;
- failed to consider flooding issues and permanent adverse effects from a natural disaster;
- made inconsistent valuations compared to neighbouring properties;
- failed to properly consider the value of making the improvements to the property such as the cost of earthworks and drainage works and the cost of timber treatment in clearing the land.

FURTHER ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

The State Government Department of Natural Resources and Mines and Energy website contains useful information about the valuation process it undertakes.

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

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. ■

To the Canecutters

Along the coastal plains of Queensland, amongst the guinea grass and weeds,
Lie miles of lush green canefields from Mossman to the Tweed.
In early days the horse was king The farmer strong and lean.
Things have changed a lot along the coast since the days men cut 'er green.

A real tough lot the Cutters were who toiled long hours all week.
But on Friday nights at the local pub a well-earned rest they'd seek.
As years passed on, conditions changed cane fires and smoke were seen.
The time of life would soon be gone when men would cut 'er green.

For many years this work remained with the dust, the sweat and heat.
Some came from far across the world they too, were hard to beat.
From the sixties on, the changes came, the machines, huge, red and green.
"They'll never prove the likes" they said "of the men who cut 'er green."

But time wore on, the men wore out, young blokes declined to come
Machines improved to a great extent the day of the cutter was done.
Today the canefields roar with noise when harvest time comes round
But there's still a few of that early breed with clear memories to be found.

They meet at times on a Friday night in that same old country pub
And bemoan the fact that a beer now costs more than they spent a week on grub.
Their thoughts then turn to all their mates and the good times there had been.
To the blokes who'd laboured in the burnt and the ones who'd cut 'er green.

To you who tour our state today. In cool comfort near the sand,
Please spare the time to 'Dip your Lid' to those men who cut by hand.
It wouldn't be just right you know, in this age of the machine,
If we forgot the burnt-cane cutter, or his mates who cut 'er green.

Fred Soper (16/05/1990)



This poem was written by former CANEGROWERS Chairman, Mr Fred Soper.

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

Fred passed away in January this year, aged 86.

His ode to the canecutters of old was found posthumously and is reprinted here with permission from the family.

"Mr Soper served growers with a fierce dedication," current CANEGROWERS Chairman Paul Schembri said. "He gave a 100% commitment to the welfare of growers and was a true gentleman".

STICKER SPOTTER COMPETITION



CANEGROWERS sticker spotters are out and about in all sugarcane regions looking for vehicles proudly displaying their CANEGROWERS Growing Together bumper sticker.

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

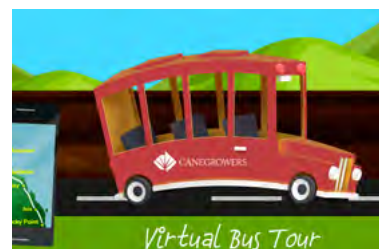
242 MTU 639 WYK

59 MCL 029 SWX

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

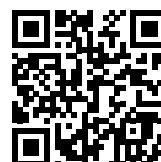
How to enter:

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



HAVE YOU SEEN THE LATEST CANEGROWERS VIRTUAL BUS TOUR VIDEOS?

Hover your phone's camera over the QR code, follow the link to watch and share visits to Queensland cane farms.



FIRST 5 LINES FREE* FOR CANEGROWERS MEMBERS!

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Next deadline is **18 May 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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JOHN DEERE 2013 Model, 3520 Wheel Harvester. 9,075 machine hours, JD 375 HP engine 1,500 hrs from rebuild. 15" x 8 blade standard chopper system, plastic fuel tank, external touch screen on the console. Standard whole topper. Good Condition.

CASE 1999 – 2000 updates Track Harvester, Tilt cabin, Komatsu 325 HP, recent engine work, 15" x 8 blade differential chop. Shredder topper, D5 type tracks. Good Condition.

AUSTOFT 1990 model 7000, Komatsu 240 HP engine. 12" x 4 blade chopper system, standard topper, plastic primary extractor hood, dual transmission has been fitted, Underslung base cutter. Rubber rollers fitted to roller train. Good Plant Cutter.

HBM Single row planter 2014 model. Very Good Condition.

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

JD shredder topper 3510-3520.

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

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

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John Deere 6800 with 10t single wing carter \$57,000 incl. GST Ph: 0427550526.

Caterpillar Elevated Scraper 615C, in good condition. \$90,000.00 incl GST. Ph: 0407590033.

MSW 3 tonne S.S. Fertilizer Bin, Pour on top or side dress, New Coulters, \$5,500 (GST incl). Ph: 0438642195.


Ford 8870 with dual rear tyres, Ford 8340 with front end loader, Ford 7700 2WD, JD3350 open cab with 2 x 600L water tanks for cane planting, Hi-Rise MF168 7 Row Sprayer with 1150L & 600L spray tanks, International 32 Plate Offset, 7 Tyne Ripper, 24 Plate Offsets, Cane Wheel Rake (3 Wheel), Cane Plant Triple Row Press for 3-point linkage, Single Row Cane Billet Planter with 2 chemical tanks, 2 x 5T Dual Side Tippers on hyd remotes, 2.5T Triple Row Stool Splitter Cane Fert Box on Drawbar, Coulter Ripper, Fiat 411. Ph: 0418 972 705 (Silkwood).

Harvester CASE IH 8810 track machine – 2600hrs with all the upgrades to hydraulics John Deere 7630 with 14 tonne Carta, Fiat 100-90 with Newton Elevator 10 tonne Bin.



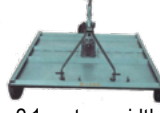
New Hydraulic Heavy Duty OFFSETS

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2.5m, 3m & 3.4metres.



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

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: 0429652235.

7700 Austoft 93' leg basecutter box, standard topper, hyd lift side trim saws, swing out radiator, blade saver differential 12 inch 6 blade, near new grouse plates, 4 ft. ceiling fan, trailbrothers turn table slew, air conditioning, Cummins engine M11 340 hp done 10 hours since reconditioned from Cummins Townsville. Ph: 0412488898.

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

Herbert River-Burdekin

Fold up Rinaudo Confidor applicator, 600lt tank, two pumps, 4 coulters, variable width adjustable depth wheels. Coulter disc 95%. \$20,000 plus GST. Ph 0457 177 269

Don 20 plate drag offset with hydraulic ram, no hoses. 6ft page slasher with adjustable skids in good condition. Ph: 0747776148.

2010 Case 88 Cane Harvester Iveco Engine and all pumps. 2 seasons old. Machine in very good condition with GPS fitted chopper box fully overhauled. Cut 80,000 tonnes. Reasonably priced. Queries to 0418 778 674.

Mackay-Proserpine

Kubota L3800 c/w 4in1 FEL & Backhoe (2 buckets & grab) 330hrs \$32,000 Inc. International 756, 85hp 2wd new Rear Tyres Mechanically Sound \$7,700 Inc. Ph: 0428236165.

Ford 8401 coupled to 6 tonne Ian Richie tipper bin. \$25,000. Good Condition. Price \$25,000. Ph: 0418716043

Howard HR42 120 inch rotary hoe with crumble roller. Always been kept in shed. Good condition. Can be seen running. \$11,000 plus GST. Ph: 0435550737.

10t BSM tipper bin, came off truck, good condition. Price includes blasting and painting in any colour. \$20,000 + GST. Ph: 49453300.

Case Track Harvester 8800 2016 model, new sprockets & track chains, new elevator chain

Classifieds

\$250K + GST; Cane side tipper 10T (on 2 axle trailer) \$20K + GST; Cane Side Tipper 10T \$18K + GST. All in VGC. Ph: 0408755453 or 0438755459 - Proserpine.

Moller Sorter Planter. Contractors model. Own hydraulics, liquid fertilizer, steering, 250lt lersban tank. 700 lts fungicide tank. Suitable for small contractor or medium size farmer. Good condition. Ready to go. \$23,000 ono. Phone 040873 793.

Tyres & Rims. 2 x 20.8 R42. Tread 10%. Cases good. \$2200 ono. Phone James 0408 733 793. 2 x 480/80 R46 tyres, as new. Clamps, wedges to suit New Holland. \$5500 ono. Ph: 0408 733 793.

Howard AH Rotary Hoes fully reconditioned - 1 x 100", 1 x 80". Howard AR Rotary Hoes fully reconditioned - 2 x 80", 1 x 50". Parts available for Howard AR & AH Rotary Hoes from \$50 to \$500. Ph: 49595885 or 0407643441.

Fiat 550, High/low clearance, GC, 3pl, 2 Remotes, good tyres. \$6600 incl. GST ONO or swap for larger tractor. 2 Ellis shielded sprayers, never used, \$600. Hodge Cutaway, GC, \$600 incl. GST ONO. Hodge double row curly tyne grubber, 1.25 inch tynes, very strong, GC. \$1650 incl. GST ONO. 3pl bag lifter, no ram, \$550 incl. GST ONO. Wrecking Deutz 8006, all parts available. Ph: 0427504118.

Gallager 80 inch rotary Hoe, new pto shaft and blades, \$2200 incl. GST. Bonel Plant Cutter with toppler attachment, GC, offers. Don Gough Planter, GC, offers. Hardy 900L spray tank, electric controls, 9m hydraulic boom, newly reconditioned pump, \$6000 incl. GST ONO. 6ft Howard slasher, deck is a bit rusty but still useable, \$2200 incl. GST ONO. Heavy duty 3pl stick rake, GC, \$1100. NH rims and centres, brand new, 380/85R38, \$1100 incl. GST. Ph: 0427504118.

Case JX1090U high rise spray tractor. 6ft clearance, Air Cab, 3 brand new tyres, 2x 600L underbelly tanks with hydraulic boom covering 7 x 1.8m rows. Strongly built with duplex chain on the drive. Willing to sell as a whole or without the tractor, offers. Ph: 0427504118.

Farview eng 6 tonne side tipper, excellent condition, new tyres, \$15000. Ph.0407761364.

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

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

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

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

JCB FASTRAC 185-65 with 12 tonne Tully Welding Works elv bin. Good tyres all round GC. \$39,000 +GST. FM10 VOLVO 8 WHEELER with flotation rear tyres with 2x 6T side tippers. Good tyres all round GC. \$25,000 +GST. Photos available. Ph: 0407347900.

Harvesting contract at end of 20/21 season. Includes JD570 Fulltrack Harvester, 3 x MAN TGA390 trucks w/ Griffcam 10T tippers, 4 x CASE Powerhauls & misc harvesting equip. To be sold w/ 50,000 tonnes + cut. Harvesting 90,000 tonnes this season. Ph: 0410 664 890.

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.

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

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

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

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

Rainfall Report

Brought to you by Sunsuper

Location	Recorded rainfall (mm)			Average rainfall (mm)
	Month prior (Mar 2021)	Month to date (1 Apr-27 Apr)	Year to date	Jan-Apr
Whyanbeel Valley (Mossman)	236	524	1924	2011.1
Mareeba Airport	90.8	152.2	779.2	633.9
Cairns Aero	323.2	830	2051.6	1452.1
Mt Sophia	308	1263	2758	2255.9
Babinda Post Office	338.2	867.7	2756.5	2698.9
Innisfail	274.4	819	2517	2209.8
Tully Sugar Mill	359.3	890	3459.8	2609.9
Cardwell Marine Pde	280	185.6	1933.2	1513.1
Lucinda Township	350.2	614.2	1536.6	1473
Ingham Composite	453	775.2	2807.4	1462.3
Abergowrie Alert	249	72	1404	1018.7
Townsville Aero	165.8	98	853	830.1
Ayr DPI Research Stn	162.6	129.2	857	658.9
Proserpine Airport	116.8	105.4	817.8	979.1
Mirani Mary Street	162	73.6	606.2	969.8
Mackay MO	158.2	154.8	755.6	1017.5
Plane Creek Sugar Mill	273.2	32.2	373.8	1164.7
Bundaberg Aero	111.6	37.2	229.8	490.5
Childers South	133	57.2	239.4	405.6
Maryborough	206	78.8	359.4	577.3
Tewantin RSL Park	366.8	129.6	748.6	737.4
Eumundi - Crescent Rd	309.4	139.4	731.2	869.9
Nambour DPI - Hillside	261	163	646.8	946.4
Logan City Water Treatment Plant	380.8	107.7	702.2	507.7
Murwillumbah Bray Park	361.4	151.7	986.2	804.7
Ballina Airport	432.8	217.4	1097.8	771.3
New Italy (Woodburn)	419.8	130.6	859.9	633.6



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.

Bundaberg–Rocky Point

Ford 8401 tractor, 2x Ford 7000 tractors, 3x LNG 6 ton single axle tipper bins, 3 inch 2 in 1 Avoca double reel water winch, 4 inch Avoca 2 in 1 heavy duty water winch, Massey Ferguson 65 high clearance, 4,500 litre diesel fuel tanker - is a complete trailer. Ph: 0427598333.

3 row fertiliser box 1 tonne inch 1/4 Tyne and rakes \$5000 + GST. 3 row multi weeder \$3000 + GST. Track infielder \$27000 + GST. Diesel tank 2200 Ltrs on legs \$1200 + GST. Cane thrasher \$500 + GST. Ph: 0427432490.

2 x Massey Ferguson 102 cane harvesters VGC shedded - \$5000 + GST each, 1 x 4 tyne Paraplow Ripper - \$4000 + GST, 1 x Croplands ute boom sprayer 1200L - \$5000 + GST, 1 x 4 Row Janke Eliminator mulcher - \$4000 + GST, 2 x linkage breakpushers - \$500 + GST each, 1 x 1200lt fuel tank - \$300 + GST, 1 x grain bin trailer - \$1000 + GST, 1 x side dresser fertiliser box - \$800 + GST, 1 x single row stick planter - \$300 + GST. Ph: 0488662313..

Baldwin GTCR 30 plate, 32 inch disc, excellent condition \$38k + GST neg. Ilgi disc tiller, 3TPL 6 metres, new condition \$35k + GST neg. Hodge multi-cultivator 3 row, excellent condition \$14k+ GST neg. Gessner 3 row stool splitter. 2 tonne bin excellent condition \$26k + GST neg. KUHN EL282 - 400 culttiller excellent condition \$24k + GST neg. Gough Bonnel planter & Moller sorter trailer bin 1.5 tonne \$2k +GST neg. Ph: 0477704134.

Wanted

Second-hand tyres either 380/85R34, 385/85R34 or 14.9R34. Any condition considered. Wanted to buy: 1 front and 1 rear rim to suit MF1085. Ph: 0427504118.

750 x 20in steel rims x 2. Ph: 0438421217.

STL shares wanted. Best price, quick cash payment. Ph: 0408448227.

Positions Vacant

Racecourse Projects has vacancies for haul out drivers and a truck driver for the 2021 season in the Mackay and Sarina areas. Enthusiastic, tidy, honest and reliable workers who are willing to learn, have own transport to and from work and can pass a medical. Haul out - seeking experienced tractor operators (but not essential) for large harvesting group with late model John

Deere equipment. Competitive hourly rates working a rotating roster 6 on 2 off. Truck driver - seeking driver with HR licence to join a large harvesting group operating a FM12 twin steer Volvo with elevating cartabin Duties include operating machinery, servicing, maintaining and housekeeping. For info and to apply contact: Brett 0427 171 320 Brett@raceprojects.com.au or Selwyn 0458 184 031 Selwyn@raceprojects.com.au

Experienced Haulout Operator wanted for 2021 season in Mackay area. Approximately 85000 tonnes operating JCB tractor with elevating bin. Phone Luke 0408712150.

Harvester Operator required for billet planting 2021 season. Hourly rate above award wage, flexible hours if needed, Herbert River area. Ph: 0418784020

Cane Harvester Contractor - Belberrra area - Ph: 0418882342.

2021 Expression of Interest - Plant Sugar Cane at MSF Sugar Silkwood Farms, 51 Spanos Road SILKWOOD. Plant 600ha of sugar cane on a 2m, 600mm dual row control farming system. If interested in doing the planting but not set up for dual row, we may supply a planter, terms to be discussed. Contact Rob Brooks robertbrooks@msfsugar.com.au or Glen Millwood glenmillwood@msfsugar.com.au

Work Wanted

Cane harvester and haul out operator for the 2021 season. Can do farm work, maintenance, case 7700-8800 and other farm machinery. Located in Mauritius. Email: cyrilgilbert1956@yahoo.com Ph: +230-57523057.

Keen to work as haulout driver anywhere in Queensland. Have HR licence and forklift ticket, plenty of driving experience but not in this industry. Very fit 63. Please phone Daniel or leave message 0424949950.

Property

Want to buy farm in the Mackay or Proserpine area. Must have two good condition houses and irrigation. Contact Paul on 0447545550.

WTB: Grazing & Irrigation Property. Grazing to run 300-500 head. 100 - 200 acres irrigation. Located Sarina-Proserpine Regions. Contact James on 0429621145.

Cane Farm, 47 acres. 23 acres Cane Production for 2021, remainder fallow.

40MG Kinchant Dam Allocation. Supplied to Racecourse Mill. 20 mins from Mackay. Phone 0466 241 656.

Wanting to lease - cane farm in the Walkerston/Eton/Pleystowe areas and surrounds. Phone 0421520331.

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.

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

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



BUYERS BEWARE

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

Buyers should check with the seller by phone for accurate account details before making payment.

Spotted anything unusual?

NOTHING WILL PROTECT YOUR CROP BETTER THAN A GOOD HARD LOOK

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

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

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

Visit planthealthaustralia.com.au/sugarcane for further information and a list of the top priority cane pests.



**IF YOU SEE ANYTHING UNUSUAL,
CALL THE EXOTIC PLANT PEST HOTLINE**

☎ 1800 084 881