

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF AUSTRALIA'S SUGARCANE INDUSTRY

CANE

AUSTRALIAN

# GROWER



CANEGROWERS

June 2022 Price \$9.95

## TAKING THE REINS

BURDEKIN GROWER OWEN MENKENS ELECTED  
CANEGROWERS CHAIRMAN

FREE CROP INSURANCE FOR  
CANEGROWERS MEMBERS

QLD CANE GETS SUSTAINABILITY  
SEAL OF APPROVAL

INDUSTRY DIVERSIFICATION  
PROJECTS GATHER PACE



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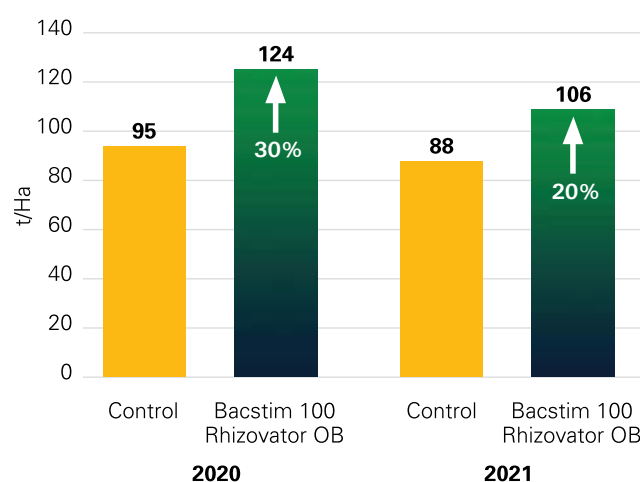
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Contact your district facilitator to find out more.



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**CONTENTS IMAGE:** CANEGROWERS members can rest a little easier knowing their crop is fully covered as part of a new insurance initiative.



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CANEGROWERS

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## CANEGROWERS secures aerial spray permit for growers

CANEGROWERS has secured a permit for all sugarcane growers to apply MCPA products for vine control.

"This emergency permit for aerial application of MCPA has been welcomed by many growers, enabling them to manage troublesome infestations of vine weeds before harvest," CANEGROWERS Environment Policy Manager **Mick Quirk** said.

"These weeds are difficult to control once the crop is advanced and especially when soils have remained wet for so long. The successful permit application was prepared and submitted to the APVMA by CANEGROWERS, with information sourced from several organisations."

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority issued CANEGROWERS with the emergency permit for aerial

**"This emergency permit has been welcomed by many growers ... these weeds are difficult to control once the crop is advanced."**



application to sugarcane crops in the central, north and far north cane growing regions of Queensland.

"CANEGROWERS worked closely with staff from both ADAMA and the APVMA to prepare the successful application," Mr Quirk said. "Useful data on residue testing of raw sugar, supplied by QSL, was also helpful."

The permit is in force for all growers and spray contractors in those regions from 28 April to 31 August.

For more information on the conditions of use, download the permit at <https://bit.ly/3KBa51t> ■

## India announces limit on sugar exports

The Indian Government will set a 10 million tonne cap on sugar exports for the marketing year running through September in a bid to safeguard its own stockpiles, according to international media reports.

Sugar prices jumped on the back of the news.

"Some in the market were expecting as much as 11 million tonnes, so at least the news puts a cap on expectations," **Michael McDougall**, managing director at Paragon Global Markets LLC, told Bloomberg News.

India, which is expected to produce 35 million tonnes this year, is already sitting on a stockpile of roughly eight million tonnes of sugar.

With domestic consumption expected to reach 27 million tonnes this year, that stockpile will likely increase to more than 16 million tonnes. ■



## We've moved!

The CANEGROWERS Brisbane office has relocated.

The organisation's new headquarters can be found at Suite 701, Level 7, 201 Charlotte Street, Brisbane - just around the corner from the previous address.

"Over recent years, more office space has opened up in the Brisbane CBD, so we took the opportunity to occupy a smaller but more modern office space that better meets the organisation's needs whilst also delivering cost savings," CANEGROWERS CEO **Dan Galligan** said.

"I would like to thank all staff involved that helped to make the move a smooth transition." ■



## Ready to take on the challenge

Burdekin grower **Owen Menkens** is the new CANEGROWERS Chairman, following his election to the position during the first meeting of the newly appointed Policy Council last month.

The 20-person CANEGROWERS Policy Council, which is made up of representatives from every sugarcane district in Queensland, met in Brisbane on 24 May to elect a new Board for a three-year term.

Mr Menkens is a cane grower at Home Hill and, prior to taking over the family farming business, worked in accounting and banking. He succeeds Mackay grower **Paul Schembri** who retired after serving as Chairman since 2013.

Mr Menkens said it was an honour to be elected and he looks forward to working with and for growers.

"I'm focussed on a bright future for growers in a profitable, stable and diversified industry," he said.

"This is an exciting and interesting time for us with new opportunities for our crop which can contribute to efforts on climate change as a renewable resource and we have an established sustainability certification system that sets us up to be a premium brand of sugar worldwide.

"I also look forward to working on some of our challenges, like rising input costs, as well as representing growers in discussions with the new Federal Government," he said.

Mr Menkens' farming business is accredited in Smartcane BMP, the industry's best management practices program. He and his wife Sarah are raising four children on their farm.

Turn to page 12 for a full list of CANEGROWERS Queensland Board and Policy Council members. ■



"I'm focussed on a bright future for growers in a profitable, stable and diversified industry."

*Pictured: Paul Schembri with new CANEGROWERS Chairman Owen Menkens.*





# WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED

## Free crop insurance for CANEGROWERS members

All CANEGROWERS members will receive free basic crop insurance cover in 2022, as part of a major new initiative being undertaken by the grower organisation.

The initiative, which will see every member covered against fire, hail or transport losses to the value of \$35 per tonne, is aimed at lowering costs for growers.

"This member benefit ensures that growers are covered against losses via a basic crop insurance cover with an indemnity level of \$35 per tonne with nil excess," CANEGROWERS CEO Dan Galligan said.

"CANEGROWERS has used our strong membership base and experience in the insurance market to develop this competitive product and the premium is being paid by the CANEGROWERS organisation.

"CANEGROWERS paying this season crop insurance premium is just one more of the many benefits that growers receive as part of their CANEGROWERS membership.

"Local district offices may offer a top-up facility or district-wide adjustment, as has been made available in previous years should growers need higher coverage," Mr Galligan said.

A letter included with this issue of *Australian Canegrower* outlines the new crop insurance initiative, while also highlighting

some of the other benefits growers receive from their CANEGROWERS membership.

These include, the negotiation of cane supply agreements, legal advice, support from local CANEGROWERS district staff, marketing information services, and the monthly *Australian Canegrower* magazine, amongst others.

"There are many ways CANEGROWERS membership helps growers, including strong advocacy and representation at local, state, national and international levels," Mr Galligan said.

"Growers also have access to influential organisations and decision makers, as well as access to industry programs and incentives, and tailored services to help support and grow their business."

Growers don't need to do anything to avail of the free crop insurance offer through CANEGROWERS. It will be automatically applied to all members.

If you would like further information about the product, please contact your district office.





"This member benefit ensures that growers are covered against fire, hail or transport losses via a basic crop insurance cover with an indemnity level of \$35 per tonne with nil excess."

## Making growers heard where it matters most

In every sphere in which CANEGROWERS exerts influence - state, national and international - it does so with the strong backing of all its grower members and with the aim of amplifying their voices to ensure they are heard.

As your peak industry body, we will continue to support you as we advocate on behalf of growers and strive for a strong, profitable and innovative sugarcane industry.

With strong membership comes both opportunity and responsibility to utilise our resources to ensure our best efforts are applied to the highest priorities as determined by our grower representatives on the state policy council.

The CANEGROWERS State Board has determined the 2022 state membership fee will be increased by CPI to 19.66 cents per tonne (21.63c/t inclusive of GST) on all cane delivered to the mills by all members.

## We will continue to support you as we advocate on behalf of growers and strive for a strong, profitable and innovative sugarcane industry.

This is an increase of just over half a cent per tonne, or \$66 for a 10,000 tonne member.

The fee is deducted progressively through the crushing season from cane payments.

CANEGROWERS values all members and will continue with its levy cap policy at the state level, offering a rebate to all members when more than 55,000 tonnes of cane are delivered to the mill.

The rebate is paid to those members who qualify at the end of the season and is based on crushing statistics provided by the mill.

Disclosure of membership levies per district has been included in this month's magazine under the Regional Round-Up section on pages 28-35.

Thank you for the contribution you make. We remain firm in our commitment to support and guide members as they continue to strive to build strong, profitable and sustainable cane growing businesses. ■

# Seal of approval for Smartcane BMP growers

Smartcane BMP growers are being recognised on the world stage for their commitment to sustainability, with global sustainability gatekeeper VIVE giving the industry-led program its seal of approval.

Following benchmarking and alignment exercises, the VIVE Sustainable Supply Programme will recognise sugarcane produced by growers accredited through the Queensland industry's Smartcane BMP program as equivalent to its Farm Module level.

"Sugar buyers, commodity marketers and food manufacturers are under increasing pressure from consumers to source products that meet verified sustainability criteria," CANEGROWERS CEO Dan Galligan said.

"This collaboration with VIVE is part of CANEGROWERS' focus on building the industry's reputation for environmental stewardship and demonstrating the sustainability of Queensland sugar to domestic and export supply chains."

VIVE consists of five modules that cover all the operations and activities of sugar production and supply from the farm to the end user.

Smartcane BMP is a farm-focused continuous improvement program developed by the Queensland sugarcane industry.

Managed by CANEGROWERS, it has so far accredited almost 40% of the sugarcane area in Queensland.

"This alignment has been a few years in the making and is very significant for the Queensland sugarcane industry," Mr Galligan said.

"It creates an opportunity for CANEGROWERS to explore more ways in which the sustainable farming practices of growers in Queensland can be recognised."

Benjamin French (pictured), Senior Trader at Czarnikow and Head of VIVE development in the Asia-Pacific Region, says one of VIVE's core objectives was to collaborate with other well-established programs and build on their success.

"In this instance, Smartcane BMP has done fantastic work in progressing sustainable sugarcane farming in Australia," he said.

"To build on Smartcane BMP's achievements, we want to develop sustainable verification from when their accredited product is delivered to the mill all the way through to the end-users in the export markets."

"We now look forward to inviting Australian mills and exporters onto the VIVE Programme, enabling us to develop fully verified sustainable supply chains from sugarcane farms to the participating VIVE refineries in Vietnam, Malaysia, and Indonesia."

"VIVE has exceptional support from industrial buyers in these markets. We look forward to supporting them with sustainable sugar from Australia and, in turn, rewarding those in the supply chain who have invested in continuously improving their sustainability credentials." ■





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# CEO COMMENT

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By Dan Galligan, CEO CANEGROWERS



## POLITICAL WINDS OF CHANGE MUST CREATE OPPORTUNITIES

No doubt the fascinating federal election result has sent shockwaves through the major political parties.

While the story of this year's campaign is yet to be fully understood, the early message is clear - voters want options and sometimes they will choose something different even if that means uncertainty.

There will be time for much-needed reflection by the two major political brands in Australia, as neither has been able to retain, let alone increase, their traditional political base.

Conversely the vote in regional Australia, and regional Queensland in particular, has remained loyal in the main.

I'm certainly no expert, but to me, much of the political commentary can be overly complicated when the simple truths are in fact the biggest drivers.

One such truth is that all politics is local. It appears to me that many voters have voted for the candidates that they feel are connected to their communities, understand their issues, and are prepared to stand up for them.

I do think that candidates from within the mainstream parties can and do deliver on these objectives, but sometimes the mood for change is just too great.

Real world of politics aside, industry organisations such as CANEGROWERS can learn lessons from this election outcome.

We too have completed our election process and I am very pleased to see a new leadership group take the reins on the Board and Policy Council.

Our 20 local grower representatives have hit the ground running and with just one formal meeting under their belt, it is very clear to me that the future for CANEGROWERS is exciting.

Enthusiasm, passion, positivity, and commitment is abundant amongst our district representatives and now, under the leadership of their new Chairman **Owen Menkens**, I can sense renewed optimism and drive to make a difference to everyday profitability and sustainability for growers across the state.

Our strength resides in this very local, district-based representative model, that via a very democratic process, elects a leadership group who can express their plans for the future.

Paul Schembri and the previous board leave behind a strong legacy which the staff and new grower leadership group will do our best to honour as we tackle the ongoing challenges and opportunities facing the industry.

Exciting times lie ahead, and we look forward to working with the entire team over the next three years. ■





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## New board ready to roll

Electing a new Board was the first order of business when the CANEGROWERS Policy Council gathered in Brisbane last month for the first meeting of their new term.

Burdekin grower Owen Menkens was elected to the Chairman position, with Mark Mammino (Isis) elected as Senior Vice Chairman and Joseph Marano (Innisfail) appointed Vice Chairman. Kevin Borg (Plane Creek), Stephen Calcagno (Cairns Region), Chris Bosworth (Herbert River), Michelle Fischer (Rocky Point) and Joseph Borg (Mackay) were elected to Director positions.

The Council also appoint members to CANEGROWERS' three policy committees.

### Membership Reference Group

Stephen Calcagno (Chair).

### Farm Inputs and Research Committee

Kevin Borg (Chair), Bryce Macdonald, Steve Marbelli, Glen Betteridge, Michelle Fischer and Matthew Watson.

### Environment and Sustainability Committee

Joseph Marano (Chair), Chris Bosworth, Steve Pilla, Bill MacDonald, Glenn Clarke, Greg Plath and Mark Pressler.

### Economics and Trade Committee

Joseph Borg (Chair), Mark Mammino, Greg Rossato, Roger Bambling, Claude Santucci

### POLICY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

<b>Mossman ▶</b>	Matthew Watson
<b>Tableland ▶</b>	Claude Santucci
<b>Cairns Region ▶</b>	Stephen Calcagno
<b>Innisfail ▶</b>	Joe Marano
<b>Tully ▶</b>	Bryce Macdonald
<b>Herbert River ▶</b>	Chris Bosworth and Steve Marbelli
<b>Burdekin ▶</b>	Owen Menkens, Greg Rossato, Steve Pilla and Glenn Betteridge

<b>Proserpine ▶</b>	Glenn Clarke
<b>Mackay ▶</b>	Kevin Borg, Greg Plath, Joseph Borg and Bill MacDonald.
<b>Bundaberg ▶</b>	Mark Pressler
<b>Isis ▶</b>	Mark Mammino
<b>Maryborough ▶</b>	Roger Bambling
<b>Rocky Point ▶</b>	Michelle Fischer



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# FROM THE CHAIR

*By Owen Menkens, Chairman CANEGROWERS*

## EXCITED AND HONOURED TO TAKE UP THE CHALLENGE

This is my first column as the CANEGROWERS Chairman. Having worked closely with Paul Schembri over many years, I know I have a strong foundation on which to continue the CANEGROWERS work to advance the interests of growers.

I know that while many of you know me, many of you may not. I started working on our family farm in 1997 alongside my father and brother.

We were a cattle and cane business at that point but later we separated the two arms and I stayed with sugarcane while my brother focused on cattle.

Sugarcane let me continue with the coastal lifestyle and community that I love and, after studies in accountancy and a stint working in the city, the crop made a good business choice.

Since 2002 we've expanded the original family cane holdings in the Burdekin which has great agricultural potential.

The whole time I've been a member of CANEGROWERS, my whole life really. My grandfather was a grower representative.

I've been in roles on committees and then the CANEGROWERS Burdekin board since 2007.

The 2022 CANEGROWERS election was a good time personally to invest more time and I felt I had the passion and energy that the role of Chairman demands.

I want to thank my fellow growers for having the confidence in me to give me this honour.

I'm excited by the changes that the 2022 election has brought, the people who've come into the local Burdekin board and the CANEGROWERS Policy Council from around the state.

Already there've been some fascinating and inspiring conversations - there's a real vibe from people who are dynamic and innovative and we have so many opportunities for the future in front of us.

Having a new Federal Government will bring some challenges and I look forward to meeting and discussing with them our grower perspective on the sugar industry right across the board.

There is also only two years to the next Queensland Election and in Brisbane for the Policy Council I have already started that process. I've told the Agriculture Minister that there a lot of issues we need to talk about.

Within the next few months, I look forward to travelling to meet as many of the CANEGROWERS members in all districts as I can and to understand more about your local issues. Please keep an eye out through your district office for when this is organised. ■



# CANEGROWERS BUSINESS ESSENTIALS

## *professional development for growers*

The CANEGROWERS Business Essentials workshop is designed to help growers think strategically and check their business' resilience gauge.

The workshop provides a chance to learn strategies and better understand risk mitigation including price fluctuations and the factors that influence sugar prices. Learn how to interpret costs of production with tools designed specifically for growers. Participants will also gain more insight and understanding of the global sugar market drivers and get an update on the current market situation.

"We need more workshops like this" one grower at the recent Innisfail workshop said. Another from the Tully event said "Fantastic tools to use to make better decisions". Overall participants have agreed the workshop is useful and informative.



### DON'T MISS OUT ON THE NEXT WORKSHOPS

BUNDABERG TUES 7 and WED 8 JUNE

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- a cane grower, a cane grower family member or work on a cane farm
- a permanent resident of Queensland



*This program is jointly funded through the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund and the Queensland Government's Drought and Climate Adaptation Program.*

# Calling all ag workers

## Campaign to attract harvest workers to Queensland gathers momentum



CANEGROWERS' campaign to boost the sugarcane industry workforce ahead of this year's harvest is paying dividends, with dozens of local and interstate jobseekers putting their hands up for positions in the industry.

The online and social media campaign, launched in April, is particularly focused on luring agricultural workers, recent retirees and people with appropriate experience from interstate to Queensland with the promise of employment and some winter sunshine.

Growers have become increasingly concerned about the shortage of workers in recent years, with 96% of CANEGROWERS members who responded to a recent poll saying that last season they, or their contractors, had experienced disruptions to farming operations because of a lack of workers.

"This year's crop is looking bigger than last year's 30 million tonnes," CANEGROWERS CEO Dan Galligan said.

"But we are facing a challenge across the industry to put crews in the machinery and vehicles needed to cut the cane and take it to the sugar mills.

"The industry has a fleet of around 700 harvesters and each needs a crew of at least three – one harvester driver and two operators of haulout vehicles," Mr Galligan said.

"These jobs are rewarding, and the communities and locations are dynamic. Sugarcane grows in some very iconic landscapes, and we are inviting skilled workers to share our piece of paradise.

"State borders are no longer an impediment, and we know that our harvest period coincides with a quieter time for some other industries, freeing up workers with experience and skills



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For more information, or to speak to your local Regional Area Manager, contact us today on **1800 623 946** or visit **qrda.qld.gov.au**

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in truck and tractor driving, agricultural machinery operation and maintenance.

"This is a perfect opportunity for workers who have finished seasonal jobs elsewhere to keep earning while also exploring our beautiful part of Australia – the rainforest, waterfalls and of course the Great Barrier Reef which is just next door."

CANEGROWERS members as business owners need to comply with all relevant workplace health and safety requirements and there are specific industry awards covering pay rates. For more information, contact your local CANEGROWERS office. ■

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# QSL GROWER PRICING UPDATE

Current as of 19 May 2022.

## Sugar Market & Currency



Influence	Commentary	Outlook
Ethanol	Ethanol parity remains high due to oil supply issues inflating oil and petrol prices. Parity is currently calculated at 20.60 USc/lb equivalent.	
Brazil	The 2022 Season harvest is off to a very slow start and initial cane harvested has been of poor quality. The sugar/ethanol cane split has only been 35.4% to sugar production in the first month, significantly lower than last year's 44.5%.	
India	Forecasts have yet again been revised upwards and are now predicting 35.9 million tonnes of sugar production, of which 9.5-10 million tonnes is expected to be exported to the world market.	
Thailand	92.07 million tonnes of cane was crushed and 10.14 million tonnes of sugar produced for the season, roughly in line with the long-term average. Early monsoon-season rainfall has been above average.	Neutral
Speculators	The speculator net long position fell to 92,000 lots as macro-economic headwinds sparked speculators to exit commodity markets and move their funds towards safer investment options.	
Currency	The Aussie Dollar fell sub-70 US cents in May as global inflation, Chinese lockdowns and the Russia/Ukraine war weakened market sentiment.	

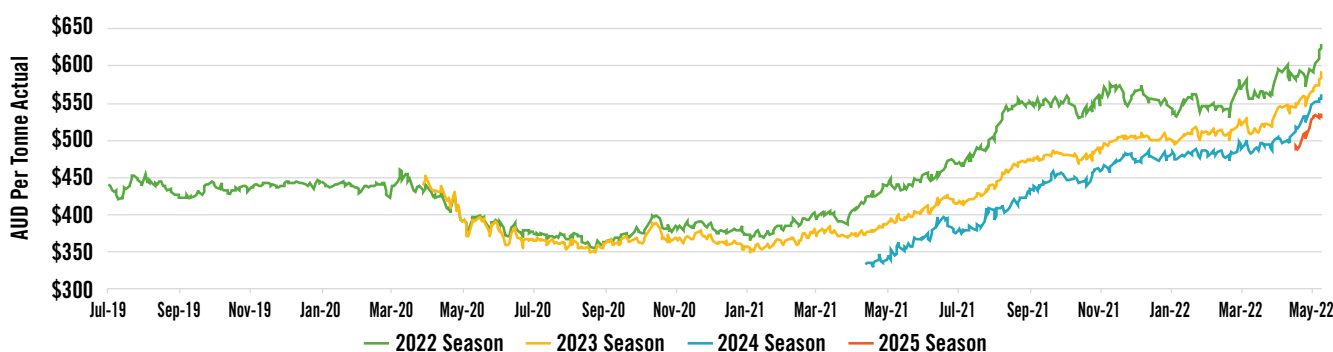
The outlook ratings above are in relation to AUD/tonne sugar prices.  A bullish outlook is considered positive.  A bearish outlook is considered negative.

## KEY INDICATORS

	19/05/2022	Monthly change
ICE11 Prompt (May22)	19.83 USc/lb	+0.84 USc/lb
Brazilian Real/\$US exchange rate	4.97 BRL	-0.03 BRL
Brent Crude Oil	\$US109.11/barrel	+\$US4.12
Ethanol/Raw Sugar Parity	20.60 USc/lb	-2.90 USc/lb
Net Spec Position	92,000 (net long)	-83,000

	19/05/2022	Monthly change
\$AUS/\$US exchange rate	\$US0.6956	-\$US0.0167
\$US Index	103.81	+1.51
Chinese Yen/\$US exchange rate	6.75 CNY	+0.19 CNY
S+P 500 Index	3,923.68	-251.52
RBA Overnight Cash Rate	0.35%	-10%

## RAW SUGAR PRICES



This is a whole-of-season ICE 11 price chart current as of 19.05.22, based on a 1:2:2:1 pricing ratio for the 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 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 or 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.*





Your Trusted Partner

## Grower Pricing



> The highest grower-managed pricing levels achieved to date (all gross price actual/tonne) as of 19 May 2022 were:

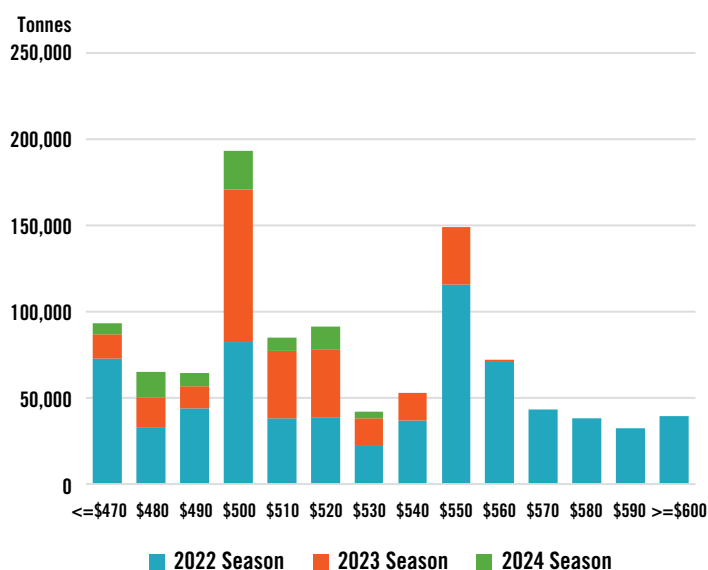
- 2022 Target Price = \$630 / IFC \$630 (Oct22)
- 2023 Target Price = \$585 / IFC \$585 (Mar24)
- 2024 Target Price = \$555 / IFC \$560 (Jul24)

### > NEW: Harvest Pool Opt Out

QSL Direct growers can now leave the QSL Harvest Pool at any time during the season and price their unpriced Harvest Pool allocation themselves using QSL's new Harvest Pool Opt Out. Please refer to the detailed Harvest Pool and Self-Managed Harvest Contract terms & conditions available at [www.qsl.com.au](http://www.qsl.com.au) or from your local QSL team.

> **Roll ahead:** The first contract roll of the 2022 Season will occur on 20 June, automatically extending the pricing window for any 2022-Season Target Price Contract tonnage not priced by this date. Growers using the 2022 Individual Futures Contract and Self-Managed Harvest Contract can also choose to roll their July 2022 contract allocation at any time up until this point via QSL Direct in the QSL App and portal. Note: Adjustments will apply for any rolled tonnage.

## QSL GROWER-MANAGED PRICING FILLS – 2022, 2023 & 2024 SEASONS



This chart captures all pricing achieved as of 19.05.22 using QSL's Target Price Contract, Individual Futures Contract and Self-Managed Harvest products. Prices quoted at AUD/tonnes actual gross.

## Brazilian Crop Expectations

The Centre South of Brazil's harvest kicked off at the end of April, with around 180 mills crushing a total of 29.11 million tonnes of cane to date. The quality of the cane at this stage is reportedly poor.

Once again, this crush will be closely watched, with ethanol parity and the resulting sugar/ethanol mix the hot topic. The market anticipates that Brazil will potentially produce more ethanol this season, resulting in sugar production estimates ranging between 29 to 34 million tonnes.

The main factors contributing to an increase in ethanol production are:

- > Gasoline prices at the pump
- > Political interference
- > Oil prices
- > Weather conditions
- > Sugar price and currency devaluation
- > Increase in domestic demand for ethanol
- > Lower total recoverable sugars (ATR)



**What is Ethanol Parity?** The price at which Brazilian millers will switch between producing either sugar or ethanol is known as the ethanol parity. If ethanol provides a better return, then millers will switch production to ethanol, leaving less sugar supply available for the global market, which should push prices higher. Currently ethanol parity is calculated at around 20.20 US\$/lb, providing support to current ICE 11 prices.

### 2022 Brazilian Forecast

Cane Production	Sugar mix	Sugar production	Ethanol
545 million metric tonnes	42%	32 million metric tonnes	25 billion litres



## SWEET SUCCESS – A TEAM EFFORT

By Kate Gowdie - Smartcane BMP Manager

The Smartcane BMP team gathered in Brisbane in May to celebrate the success of the program to date; acknowledging facilitator contribution and effort.

The team discussed their individual district strategies, challenges and prospects. They also shared ideas for future demand and opportunities within the program.

Facilitators were presented with the most recent project statistics highlighting the success of the program to date.

Smartcane BMP has been supported through funds from the Queensland Government since 2014. As part of this commitment, targets are proposed for each phase of the program.

Phase 3 commenced in late 2018 and will end this year (2022).

Targets have already been met or exceeded for total area benchmarked, total area accredited as well as the number of growers undertaking practice change.

### SMARTCANE BMP – LATEST PROJECT STATISTICS





A recent report from an external evaluation of the program stated:

**“Smartcane BMP provides measurable evidence of growers embarking on practice change and has over-achieved on benchmarking and accreditation targets.”**

Facilitators were thanked for their efforts in achieving these outstanding results and for the ongoing support they provide to growers across the cane growing districts of Queensland.

Smartcane BMP accreditation is an alternate pathway to compliance under the State Government's reef regulations and this has driven demand amongst some growers to participate.

Interest in the program and obtaining accreditation is however driven by a range of grower motivations. Many growers have commented that Smartcane BMP accreditation is the only formal and widely recognised process to acknowledge the work they do and their adherence to Best Practice and industry standards.

Market access for sustainable sugar has been a motivation for some growers to achieve accreditation, however up until recently there had been little to no demand from end users in sourcing Smartcane BMP sustainable sugar from Australia. This has changed significantly in the past 18 months.

Facilitators heard from **Ben French** from Czarnikow who outlined the VIVE Sustainability Supply Program. “VIVE is a voluntary, continuous improvement sustainability programme for ingredient supply chains, covering all operations and activities for producers through to end users that have a bearing on sustainability.

**VIVE is for businesses that want to do more than just to tick a box for sustainability, they want to participate because they know that it is key to their continued growth and commercial success.”**

Thanks to the ongoing work of **Matt Kealley**, from CANEGROWERS, mapping of the Smartcane BMP standards to

other certification programs is gaining results.

We now have alignment between the VIVE standards and Smartcane BMP. The benchmarking and alignment between Smartcane BMP and the VIVE Sustainable Supply Programme will recognise sugarcane produced by growers accredited through Smartcane BMP program as equivalent to the VIVE Farm Module level.

The advanced alignment will support new market opportunities for sustainable raw sugar, verified and accredited by VIVE and Smartcane BMP.

Following a full day of presentations from CANEGROWERS Policy Team members, the Smartcane BMP team toured the commercial kitchen of a Brisbane French restaurant and patisserie hearing from the chef, Tara, about the companies focus on producing quality, French cuisine.

Providence of ingredients is important to Tara. Sugar is a key ingredient in many of the pastry products as well as the sauces and dressings used within the restaurant.

Using over four tonnes of sugar to supply products to their restaurant, café and bakery each year, sourcing quality local sugar is paramount to the chefs and their discerning customers. Tara was happy to show our team around the kitchen facilities and hear more about Smartcane BMP sustainable sugar. ■



*Pictured: (main) The Smartcane BMP Team joined CANEGROWERS Policy Staff for a tour of a commercial kitchen in Brisbane, hosted by chef Tara. (Left) Ben French from Czarnikow presenting via video link.*

# Four farm-friendly tax time tips from the ATO

With tax time just around the corner it pays to learn what you can and can't claim in your tax return. The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) has shared four tax tips for people working in the agricultural industry to help them get it right this tax time.

## CAR EXPENSES

You can claim the cost of using your car when you drive between separate jobs on the same day, for example driving from your first job as a fruit picker to your second job in the cane fields. You can't however, claim a deduction for the cost of normal trips between your home and work.

## TRAVEL EXPENSES

You can claim a deduction for the cost of travelling overnight, for example carting cattle long distances. This includes the cost of your meals, accommodation, fares and incidental expenses. You can't claim a deduction for travel costs incurred looking for work or travelling to a new job.

## CLOTHING, FOOTWEAR AND LAUNDRY EXPENSES

You can claim clothing and footwear you wear to protect yourself from your income-earning activities or the environment in which you carry them out. To be considered protective, the items must provide a sufficient degree of protection against that risk, for example, a cattle farmer can claim gloves and steel-capped boots. You can't claim a deduction for buying or cleaning conventional clothing worn at work, for example track pants, jeans or jackets.

## LICENCES AND PERMITS

You can't claim the initial cost of getting your heavy vehicle permit, firearm or forklift licence in order to gain employment. You can, however, claim the cost of renewing these licences during the period you need them for work.

Remember, if you want to claim a work-related expense:

- you must have spent the money yourself and weren't reimbursed
- the expense must be directly related to earning your income
- you must have a record to prove the expense.

For more information about what you can and can't claim during tax time, go to the ATO's work-related expenses guide for agriculture. ■



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Tasmania



**Harvest Trail**  
AN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE



## WORKFORCE PLANNING TOOLS TO ASSIST FARMERS

The Queensland Farmers' Federation (QFF) has partnered with Jobs Queensland to help small to medium enterprises plan for the future and grow their capability in workforce planning to position their business to succeed in a changing environment.

Launched in May, Workforce Planning Connect is a set of tools and resources that will support the agriculture sector in building business capability and capacity in workforce planning in Queensland.

Queensland Farmers' Federation CEO **Jo Sheppard** said workforce planning and development is an important part of any farming enterprise's future sustainability and a key component of any business plan.

"The agricultural sector continues to grapple with the challenge of attracting and retaining staff," Ms Sheppard said.

"The global pandemic has added to an already challenging workforce development environment and the current housing shortage is making the situation even more difficult."

"These resources will provide farmers with a practical resource to support their ability to plan ahead and develop ways to build a sustainable workforce for their enterprise and also the agricultural sector more broadly."

"The agricultural sector is a key foundation of the Queensland economy, the Australian economy and critical to the future success of our regions."

"In Queensland the agricultural sector is worth well over \$23B and growing."

"A strong workforce plan and the capacity to attract and retain skilled staff is critical for any farming enterprise positioning their business for growth and a sustainable future." Ms Sheppard said.

The Workforce Planning Connect tools have been developed in partnership by QFF and Jobs Queensland specifically for small to medium size farming enterprises and were launched as part of Small Business Month 2022.

The tools are free and aim to help business cover topics such as understanding the benefits and advantages of workforce planning; building knowledge and understanding of workforce planning and, tools to grow their capability and skills in workforce planning.

The free suite of tools can be found at [www.qff.org.au/resources](http://www.qff.org.au/resources) ■



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# The bioproducts race

Queensland is quickly becoming the sweet spot for innovative manufacturers producing bioproducts or bio-based consumables. With approximately 30 million tonnes of sugarcane harvested per year, established logistics and infrastructure, access to mills and ports, and an industry keen to take advantage of diversification opportunities, bioproducts is the hot topic around grower sheds.

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BY ROBYN DEVINE AND NEROLI ROOCKE

*Australian Canegrower* has caught up with a few of the growers and companies looking to use sugarcane in new ways.

## Kecap Manis - Mossman

CocoNutZ, a food technology company, has established a demonstration facility adjacent to the Mossman Mill, using sugarcane juice to produce Kecap Manis. This is a condiment sauce favoured in Indonesia.

After successful trials of small production samples, CocoNutZ aims to start commercial samples in June and move to full production by September.

The Daintree Bio Precinct is a collaboration with project partners CocoNutZ, Bio-Ferm and WhatIF foods, working with Helmont Energy and Far Northern Milling to potentially establish a circular economy.

*"We've got to spend time and money to look into it because we've got to look to the future."*

"The project will continue to see cane from growers delivered to Mossman Mill and processed into raw sugar and feedstock, while Bio-Ferm will process the molasses into biotechnological plant protection products and CocoNutZ will use the cane juice to produce value-added condiments," Managing Director of CocoNutZ Lucas van der Walt said.

"Other regenerative crops, such as bambara groundnut and lupin, will be delivered to WhatIF Foods to produce BamNut Milk.

"By-products such as bagasse from the Mossman Mill and organic effluent from the fermentation processes of Bio-Ferm and CocoNutZ will go to Helmont's Anaerobic Digestion (AD) plant to generate green electricity and biogas, which in turn will power the various facilities during the off-season."



*"The markets are there, the prices are there for the products, we just have to work out how to make it happen."*

"Bambara groundnut shells can be sent to the mill as feedstock for its boiler to generate energy for the bio-precinct during the cane season. Excess biofuel from the plant can be delivered to remote power stations while a by-product, digestate, from the plant can be sold to growers as fertiliser, completing the circle," Mr van der Walt said.

#### Fuel and chemicals - Burdekin

In the Burdekin, growers have had their eyes on the future of the industry through making more than sugar crystals from their cane for some time.

Burdekin Renewable Fuels Pty Ltd (BRF) was set up by a progressive group of growers. It has collaborated with and provided assistance to private investors and researchers alike who are looking with interest at the region's hectares of lush cane and its production system based on a reliable water supply for irrigation.

BRF Chairman and Home Hill grower **Greg Rossato** says the core aim is to ultimately build more value for growers while expanding the region's industrial and employment base.

"In around 2017 a member came in to the office with an idea to use the cane tops and trash to provide a product to the Japanese energy market," Greg explained. "We set about doing some feasibility work on separating the tops and trash and pelletising them. We even went to Japan to look into the potential market.

"What we found was that for the amount of return, we needed to expand the idea into a project that used the whole crop – and the idea of B Green was created."

Project B Green is being led by the growers with the goal of establishing a bio-refinery to transform cane into green hydrogen for fuel and chemicals, such as ammonia and glycols, monoethylene and monopropylene glycols, for plastics and fibres.

Phase One, proving up the business concept through a techno-economic feasibility report, is well underway, funded partly by growers and partly by a Cooperative Research Centre for Developing Northern Australia (CRCNA) grant.

"The markets are there, the prices are there for the products, we just have to work out how to make it happen," Greg says. "I'm passionate about this. We've got to spend the time and money to look into it because we've got to look to the future. If we can re-value every acre of cane, get the value up for the grower, that would be great."

BRF has gathered a project team which includes Sugar Research Australia and the Queensland University of Technology and a number of important corporate partners. Japanese company Sumitomo SHI FW and Haldor Topsoe based in Denmark already have the technology required for the processing of sugarcane

*Continues next page ►*

*Pictured: (main) Greg Rossato and Phil Marano, (below) Daintree Bio Precinct Board and CocoNutZ, (right) Karl Seck from Mercurius.*



*"One we get to the demonstration stage there may be the potential for growers to have a slice of a bigger pie."*



into the target products while PROCOM Consultants is providing engineering and project integration expertise.

"Everyone has their part, their role to play in putting their piece of technology into B Green," Greg said. "We know this is in its infancy, we have a long way to go but we know we can grow the cane and we know there's some markets and it's the in-between we have to work out but we hope that there's money in it for us.

"There's value there, some of these products are high value products and there's demand for them, what we are working out now is how much to we have to spend to get to that value."

The pre-feasibility work should be completed in October 2022.

Licella Holdings is another company which has worked separately with the BRF growers, successfully turning cane trash into biocrude oil in a pilot project.

In the final weeks of the Federal Election campaign, the Labor Party pledged \$5 million to help the company attain aviation fuel certification, an important factor in their aspirations for the Burdekin.

"This renewable biocrude almost identical to crude oil," BRF Board member and grower Phil Marano explains. "It could be turned, with hydrogen also from

sugarcane, into aviation fuel which has a big market.

"The cane industry in Australia is over a hundred years old, which on one hand is a good thing and we should be proud of that, but on the other hand we've been doing the same thing for a century.

"No one's ever really tried to look further and see what more we could do. Maybe we were too comfortable but the time is right to look around and take a new perspective."

#### Fuel and plastics - Mackay

Further south in Mackay, Mercurius Australia is currently showcasing the versatility and efficacy of their patented REACH™ (Renewable Acid hydrolysis Condensation Hydrotreating) technology, at their pilot operation situated in the Queensland University of Technology's (QUT) Biocommodities Facility. The Mercurius pilot converts a range of biomass feed stocks, including sugarcane bagasse, into 'drop-in' fuels that can be tailored for use as jet fuel or diesel, as well as bio-based plastics.

Using excess bagasse provided by the Mackay Sugar's Racecourse Mill, Mercurius CEO and Technology Development Director **Karl Seck** said one of the advantages of their technology over other biofuels technologies is that the reactors use very low pressure,

requiring less capital and operating expenses than reactors with high temperatures and pressures.

"We don't vapourise anything, so we don't have to deal with big volume material, meaning we don't need big equipment, so we have low cap ex," Mr Seck said.

"Compared to fermenting processes that can take two or three days to accomplish we have 'bagasse to fuel' in about two hours. This means our equipment is smaller as well as less expensive.

"A lot of pilot plants are batch orientated, as in you put something in - you heat it up - you cool it down - and then you take it out. This is continuous flow, you put the bagasse in and an hour or so later you get your product out," Mr Seck said.

With a background in the oil industry Mr Seck, along with his wife Louise, also a chemical engineer, decided to move into biofuels about 12 years ago. After researching different options and technology, they got the REACH™ patent.

"The thing about our technology that I liked, is that it's catalytic and fast, you don't have to ferment something for three days," Mr Seck said.

"I really like the model using bagasse because it's already aggregated, which you can't say for most biomass options,





especially agricultural residues left in the field but here it is brought into the plant to make sugar anyway."

"Our technology is a good model for replicating in the sugar industry, not just here in Queensland but worldwide potentially. The sugar mills are looking for ways to use excess bagasse and this pilot provides an attractive option."

The technology and processing are encouragingly successful at the small scale.

"We remain optimistic that a demonstration plant will be operational in two years. Currently we can do 100 kilos a day in this pilot, a demonstration would be maybe 10 tonnes a day, and we are hoping to build that here in Queensland.

"The commercial scale is more like four or five years away. We have had some great support from the Queensland Government. Once we get to the demonstration stage there may be the potential for growers to have a slice of a bigger pie.

"The community interest has generated a bit of buzz and there is increased confidence in our pilot, we have some genuine support by companies with an interest in green industry options.

"With consumer pressure to produce renewable products, we will investigate

the food waste and food processing waste options as well as the bagasse option, there are a lot of different opportunities for us to explore."

Mr Seck remains optimistic and is proud of Mercurius' strong social conscious and environmental stewardship in pursuing innovative technologies.

#### **Mushrooms - Bundaberg**

Bagasse will be used in a new venture in Bundaberg, to grow oyster, enoki and pearl mushrooms for the Kenon Corporation, Queensland's largest producer and distributor of Asian mushrooms.

The Federal Government has supported a \$3.4 million investment from Kenon Corporation with a \$1.9 million grant under the Securing Raw Materials Program.

Kenon Corporation will establish a new farm and factory at Bundaberg to produce high-value mushrooms using sugarcane bagasse as the raw material.

The project will be undertaken in collaboration with CQUniversity, to develop substrate recipes and optimise mushroom growth protocols.

This project will provide a critical component of an integrated local supply chain for Queensland's Asian mushroom industry, and it is hoped to significantly

reduce industry reliance on overseas supply of substrate.

#### **Low GI sugar - NSW**

NSW-based Sunshine Sugar's Low GI sugar has been in high demand since the product featured in a United Nations award for best SMEs (Small Medium Enterprise) in the world as part of the Food Systems Summit 2021.

The nucane™ process is an Australian innovation that has been implemented by the 100% Australian owned sugar brand, Sunshine Sugar. The wholesome sugar that retains naturally occurring and beneficial antioxidants is made at the Condong Mill in the northern NSW Tweed Valley.

Being low in GI (Glycaemic Index) means that it is more slowly digested, absorbed and metabolised – resulting in lower and slower rise in blood glucose.

"Since the United Nations Award announcement we have had very strong interest from consumers across Australia," Sunshine Sugar CEO, Mr Chris Connors said. "With ALDI coming on board as a national stockist, we can now offer Sunshine Low GI Sugar to people across the country who are actively seeking out healthier choices." ■

# CANEGROWERS REGIONAL ROUND-UP

Supplied by CANEGROWERS district offices

## MOSSMAN

The region received some heavy rainfall during late April and May which may impact the proposed start date of 1 June. The late rain has meant that more mature cane is now lodged and the grub damaged areas are more visible due to areas of stool tipping. The April rain was more than double the average for the month.

The Far Northern Milling shed meetings in late-April were well attended. Growers were updated on how the value-add projects are progressing and heard how RSD can impact yields, when the cane plant is growing and when it will set sugar. There were also workshops in May for SIX EASY STEPS and cane grub and chemical application.

The Far Northern Milling Productivity Awards night for the 2021 season (*pictured*) held on 12 May, was very successful with the Growing Excellence Award going to J & J D'Addona; Best 5 year Average Producer to C Fasano & Co; Sustainable Management Practices Award to Ben McClelland; In Appreciation for on Farm Research to Bris Brie Estates; Best Presented Farm to Puglisi Farming, and Harvesting Group Award to Sarona Farming. We congratulate all these winners



and the winners of the seven district zone awards based on actual tonnes of sugar produced per hectare.

**Matthew Watson** has been elected as Chairman of CANEGROWERS Mossman and is the CANEGROWERS Policy Council representative. He attended the first Policy Council meeting in Brisbane on 23-24 May 2022.

**Membership Fee 2022:** The 2022 membership levy, combining the state and local district charges is 34.83 cents per tonne (inclusive of GST) on all sugarcane supplied to Mossman Mill by all members during the 2022 crushing season.

## TABLELAND

Mossman Mill has set its start date for 1 June, with an estimated crop of 762,000 tonnes. The Tableland Mill will start crushing on 7 June with an estimated crop of 550,000 tonnes. The starting dates have not yet been delayed and it is a wait and see if the ground dries up in time.

Due to there being no toll crushing the Mossman Mill will have a 23½ week season and the Tableland Mill will have a 20-week crush. Both mills report that maintenance is on schedule with steam trials to be run within the next week.

The co-generation plant at the Tableland Mill (*pictured*) was scheduled to come online on 23 May.

Tinaroo Dam is currently at 97.47% capacity. If the dam spills (100%) on 30 June it will cancel carryover. As per Sunwater's cancellation rules, the carryover arrangements for the water year cease:

- when Tinaroo Falls Dam spills; or
- 6 months after the commencement of the water year
- when the water level in Tinaroo Falls Dam is less than or equal to 667.0m AHD i.e. 75% of full storage capacity.

Customers must provide current meter readings to Sunwater for all outlets within 48 hours of the spill

commencing. Any volume of water used by the customer will be offset against the carryover volume.

If the carryover volume is less than the volume of water used by the customer, the difference will be deducted from the customers available water account balance. All unused carryover water must be cancelled.

### Membership Fee 2022:

**Tableland Mill Crush:** The 2022 membership levy, combining the state and local district charges is 48.12 cents per tonne (inclusive of GST) on all sugarcane supplied to the Tableland mill by all members during the 2022 crushing season.

**Mossman Mill Crush:** The 2022 membership levy, combining the state and local district charges is 59.12 cents per tonne (inclusive of GST) on all sugarcane supplied to the Mossman mill by all members during the 2022 crushing season. This fee is inclusive of a levy for the productivity extension officer.





## CAIRNS REGION

Major showers have fallen across the region accompanied by high winds causing flooding, and damage to the crop in some pockets.

CANEGROWERS Cairns Region participated in the Sugar Research Australia Meringa Field Day held recently.

Despite the rain, Joel Tierney along with Aaron Davis from TropWATER were on hand to promote the water quality monitoring activities in the Russell and Mulgrave catchments.

CANEGROWERS Cairns Region's mud spreader and direct drill bean planter were also onsite and available for bookings.

After a very successful trip to the southeast corner by representatives of the Young Grower Group, CANEGROWERS Cairns Region is offering professional development, focusing

on understanding strengths, values, leadership styles, accountability, and teamwork.

This workshop has been developed solely for the Young Grower Group by Career Motivate and is proudly sponsored by CANEGROWERS Cairns Region.

### Membership Fee 2022:

Cairns – Babinda & Mulgrave Areas: The 2022 membership levy, combining the state and local district charges is 49.13 cents per tonne (inclusive of GST) on all sugarcane supplied to Queensland mills by all members during the 2022 crushing season.

## INNISFAIL

Prolonged wet weather with extremely heavy downpours at times has had a minor impact on the 2022 crop. Some lodging has occurred, with an expected impact to CCS. Season estimates are holding at approximately 79 tonnes per hectare, an improvement on last year's crop, but still far from where growers would like to be.

Several growers have pursued objections to their most recent land valuations, with some reporting increases in excess of 40%.

CANEGROWERS Innisfail supported MSF Sugar in its first Careers in Sugar day (*pictured*) at the Australian Sugar Heritage Centre on 11 May. The day was a success with senior students from three local schools attending the morning session and potential job seekers in the afternoon.

MSF Sugar's Production Manager (South Johnstone) Ian Davis reported valuable stakeholder networking throughout the day as well as very promising engagement from job seekers and students.

"We had many expressions of interest for work experience with a number of job seekers putting their names down with all organisations. Some of those job seekers will be interviewed and stand a good chance of getting a start with one of the employers," he said.

The day included a tour of the Australian Sugar Industry Museum, an opportunity to talk to training organisations, employment agencies and employers in the industry, as well as a presentation about the various jobs in the industry.

The initiative is timely with a shortage of labour being experienced from the paddock through to the factory. Congratulations to MSF and all stakeholders who made the day worthwhile for all who attended.

At the time of writing, the board and staff of CANEGROWERS Innisfail were preparing to host their Annual General Meeting on Thursday 19 May.

**Membership Fee 2022:** The 2022 membership levy, combining the state and local district charges is 49.33 cents per tonne (inclusive of GST) on all sugarcane supplied to South Johnstone Mill by all members during the 2022 crushing season.



Continues next page ►

# CANEGROWERS REGIONAL ROUND-UP

## TULLY

The skies opened for a few days in May and while the Tully District was fortunate to miss the heavy falls that others received, we managed a credible 380mm of rain by mid-May, bringing the year's total up to 2,380mm. This is still well below the long-term average of 2,770mm.

The crop is now mostly lodged and with the current estimate of 93 tonnes per h, the cane available for harvest will be above 2,700,000 tonnes. The season was expected to start early on 25 May however it is likely that this will need to be deferred. 2022 will be a challenging year for the harvest fleet and will be dependent on the weather from here on. Given the quantity of lodged cane it is expected that extraneous matter will increase and the CCS decrease.

Early planting will be delayed and Tully Productivity Services staff have reported that they are being asked to sample additional blocks for RSD as growers seek to find suitable planting material.

The Board of CANEGROWERS Tully remains unchanged after the election process and held its first meeting of the new term on 18 May.

**Membership Fee 2022:** The 2022 membership levy, combining the state and local district charges is 39.12 cents per tonne (inclusive of GST) on all sugarcane supplied to Queensland mills by all members during the 2022 crushing season. This fee is inclusive of cane testing/auditing fees.

## HERBERT RIVER

Early May delivered some more rain to the Herbert, flattening cane around the region. However, the crop is still looking promising for the 2022 season and has not begun to arrow. Initial estimates of 4.4 million tonnes are now looking a little low, with the district expected to cut excess of this figure.

CANEGROWERS Herbert River held its first board meeting of the new term in May, with the board nominating a new Chairman and Deputy Chair. I am pleased to announce that **Chris Bosworth** has been appointed Chairman of CANEGROWERS Herbert River and **Steve Marbelli** as Deputy Chairman. Chris and Steve have also been appointed as the two Policy Council members who will represent CANEGROWERS Herbert River and attend the Policy Council meetings with the other 13 CANEGROWERS districts.

We have held our first Relative CCS workshops for members in the Herbert, both of which were well attended.

The first round of the Major Grants Project in the Lower Herbert water quality program has been assessed by the panel. A total of 32 projects were successful in the grant funding. Approximately \$600,000 of funds were granted, with growers providing at least a 50% co-contribution to their project.

**Membership Fee 2022:** The 2022 membership levy for CANEGROWERS Herbert River members includes local district charges of 17.2 cents per tonne plus 5.8 cents per tonne for cane analysis/auditing fees and 19.66 cents per tonne for state levies totalling 42.66 cents per tonne (46.93 c/t inclusive of GST) on all sugarcane supplied to Wilmar mills in the Herbert by all members during the 2022 crushing season.

## BURDEKIN

The Board and staff at CBL have farewelled long term Board members **Phil Marano** and **Roger Piva**, who retired at the end of April after many years of valued service. At the same time CBL welcomed the two new incoming Directors, **Charlie Papale** and **Rian Swindley**. Elections for CBL Board positions were held in May and we are pleased to advise that the new Chairman is **Owen Menkens**, the Deputy Chairman is **Steven Pilla**. Representing CBL at the CANEGROWERS Policy Council are **Owen Menkens**, **Steven Pilla**, **Greg Rossato** and **Glenn Betteridge**.

Wilmar has estimated the crop for Burdekin's 2022 season at 7.94 million tonnes, net of seed cane, which is slightly higher than last year's 7.88 million tonnes. Crushing was originally planned to commence on 7 June, however this has been delayed due to impacts from wet weather. At the time

of writing, the start date had been pushed back by one week to 14 June but this new date may be varied subject to field conditions. Wilmar will review the date on a week-by-week basis and we are expecting a staggered start of the four mills depending on where cane can be sourced.

Some growers will be pleased with the delayed start from a CCS perspective and we need to be more mindful of start dates in future to optimise CCS which in turn puts the emphasis on good mill performance. A later start means the prospect of a later finish which makes mill performance that much more critical to achieve an optimum season length and the need to avoid a late finish which costs everyone.

The sugar price for the 2022 season has growers in a positive frame of mind and the challenge now will be to get the crop



## BURDEKIN (CONTINUED)

off in a timely manner. Tight labour supply has been affecting both the milling and contracting sectors for some time now, with demand for drivers at very high levels.

May 2022 was campaign time for the Federal Election, and it was reassuring to hear candidates' support for agriculture. What is also becoming more apparent is the widespread support for getting new products from the sugarcane plant which is steadily building momentum.

CANEGROWERS ran a successful Business Essentials Course (*pictured*) in the Burdekin. The course received positive feedback from attendees, who said it helped them understand their cost of production, sugar markets, pricing and also farm business risks. The presenters also spent some time with a couple of Burdekin accounting firms to take them through the Cost of Production Tool with the goal of having them able to assist growers locally to put some helpful science behind the costs of running their sugarcane businesses.

The Department of Environment and Science (DES) has installed water quality monitoring equipment at a Dalbeg site. This took longer than expected, but we are pleased that it is now operational as this will enable us to monitor what is coming down the Burdekin River prior to any influence from cane land.

The last water quality monitoring site on the Burdekin River is at LBW's down river pump station, so along with the Dalbeg site we can now capture water quality data from start to finish in our part of the world. CBL lobbied successfully to get the Dalbeg site, which was originally considered to be outside of the project area. We would like to thank DES for its assistance.

The CBL Board was scheduled to meet with the Chair and CEO of Sugar Terminals Ltd in late May to get a stakeholder update on storage and handling, capital investment program and business operations. These are vital industry assets which facilitate the efficient export of our product to end customers and at the same time also provide shareholders with some very nice dividends! It is positive to see the STL leadership engaging with stakeholders at all levels.



Here's to a successful start to the 2022 season. It's usually a little bit wet when the starter gun fires, but we are all keen to get the season underway in what is traditionally a busy and exciting time for the Burdekin community and the industry it relies upon.

**Membership Fee 2022:** The 2022 membership levy, combining the state and local district charges is 48.59 cents per tonne (inclusive of GST) on all sugarcane supplied to Queensland mills by all members during the 2022 crushing season.

*Pictured: (L-R) Rian Swindley, Roger Piva, Phil Marano, Charlie Papale.*

## PROSERPINE

This year's wet season was again a little disappointing, however heavy rain at the end of April and in early May has provided renewed optimism for the 2022 crop.

The district remains on-track to achieve the original estimate of 1.64 million tonnes – slightly up on the previous year's production.

The mill has announced a start date of Tuesday 21 June and a crushing program which should see the harvest completed by mid-November.

Harvest groupings have been completed and despite some early concerns, all cane has now been grouped.

Wilmar's CS&T will host a pre-season meeting on 14 June to advise the logistical arrangements.

CANEGROWERS Proserpine held its statutory meeting in early May, with Glenn Clarke being returned as the organisation's Chairman and CANEGROWERS Policy Council representative for the next three-year term.

*Continues next page* ►

# CANEGROWERS REGIONAL ROUND-UP

## PROSERPINE (CONTINUED)

**Tony Large** was reappointed as Deputy Chairman and will continue his leadership role on the productivity board.

CANEGROWERS has announced it would pay members' crop insurance for the 2022 season for an indemnity value of \$35 per tonne with a nil excess. CANEGROWERS Proserpine has topped-up the indemnity value to \$40 per tonne at no additional cost to district members.

Members still have the option to take out further top-up cover to meet their personal requirements. Please contact the office if you would like to avail yourself of this option.

A successful CANEGROWERS Business Essentials workshop was held in May with participants reporting the content to be highly beneficial.

**Membership Fee 2022:** The 2022 membership levy, combining the state and local district charges is 39.23 cents per tonne (inclusive of GST) on all sugarcane supplied to Queensland mills by all members during the 2022 crushing season. The PDCC will pay the additional cost of a top-up to the crop insurance indemnity on behalf of its members.

## MACKAY/PLANE CREEK

Widespread rain in May across the Pioneer River, O'Connell River and Plane Creek catchments have dominated the thoughts of growers and millers as they plan for the coming crush.

While what was expected to be a much more substantial rain event in the week to May 12 did not deliver the predicted 375mm+ totals, all areas across the district received 100-200mm for that week topped by Mt Jukes with a daily total of 129mm on May 11 and 202mm across that rain event.

If rain does not persist, it will give a much-needed boost to the crop, tailing a failed wet season. Rain and wind have caused some cane lodging and distinctly boggy conditions in many areas.

Dependent on no further significant rain or technical issues, it is expected that crushing at the three Mackay Sugar mills will commence between 9-15 June. A similar mid-June start is expected for Wilmar Plane Creek (although is was still to be determined at time of writing).

The rain event threw a spanner in the works of the practical side of the first running of the region's two mid-May Haulout Operator training courses (*pictured*), with headland and sidings reduced to swampy conditions at our on-farm site, at Yukon in the Plane Creek district.

Nonetheless, trainers were able to head to the shed to work through theory modules of the course (which can go towards a Cert II in Rural Operations) and waited for conditions to dry out and enable hands-on-wheel training. The second course was able to proceed as scheduled.

With the crush getting underway in

mid-June, efforts to attract young workers to the harvesting sector continue via billboards, social media, and print media.

Any growers still requiring assistance to source harvest labour are welcome to call 0749442600, or post positions vacant direct to

[www.mackaycanegrowers.com.au/farmers-notice-board](http://www.mackaycanegrowers.com.au/farmers-notice-board)

### **Membership Fee 2022:**

**Mackay Sugar Area:** The 2022 membership levy, combining the state and local district charges is 42.68 cents per tonne (46.95c/t inclusive of GST) on all sugarcane supplied to Queensland mills by all members during the 2022 crushing season. This fee is inclusive of cane testing/auditing fees.

**Plane Creek Area:** The 2022 membership levy, combining the state and local district charges is 49.43cents per tonne (54.38 c/t inclusive of GST) on all sugarcane supplied to Queensland mills by all members during the 2022 crushing season. This fee is inclusive of cane testing/auditing fees.





## BUNDABERG

CANEGROWERS Bundaberg sent all local candidates for the Federal Election a questionnaire to ascertain their positions on pressing subjects. Face-to-face meetings were also held with LNP candidate for Flynn, Colin Boyce, and UAP candidate for Hinkler, Kristie Nash, to discuss key election issues for our members.

The April Board Meeting was the last for **Allan Dingle**. His contribution to the local industry and state industry has been colossal.

April also saw the drought declaration revoked due to the good rainfall over summer. This has brought about some changes to electricity tariffs.

Sunwater is holding meetings to assess Bundaberg and Burnett irrigation needs into the future to help understand security and needs. **Dale Holliss, Simon Doyle, Matthew Leighton and Mark Pressler (pictured)** are on the stakeholder advisory group which has already held meetings in Bundaberg, Murgon and Nanango.

The start date is 6 June for the pre-crush season, which will see BSL harvest standover and then organic cane with the core season to start on 20 June. The estimate is approximately 1,070,000 tonnes in total, which gives us an approximate 15 November finish, weather permitting.

There has been a somewhat stop-start beginning to soybean harvest due to some showery weather. However, harvested beans to date have been predominately high quality.



### Membership Fee 2022:

There has been considerable change over the past 10 years in the structure of the sugarcane industry in the Bundaberg Region. 10 years ago we had a levy base of 1 million tonnes of cane. This year we have a levy base of less than 500,000 tonnes. We have had to increase levies to continue with our level of service - providing representation, leadership, services and the promotion of unity in your interests. The Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Board has resolved to increase levies for the 2022/23 financial year. In establishing these fees the directors have taken into account the level of services available and the need to set a reasonable fee.

The 2022 membership levy, combining the state and district levy totals 87.63 cents per tonne (inclusive of GST), on all sugarcane supplied to the Millaquin Mill by all members during the 2022 crushing season. This fee is inclusive of cane testing/auditing fees and an adjustment to top up the crop insurance offering.



Continues next page ►

# CANEGROWERS REGIONAL ROUND-UP

## ISIS

The follow up mid-May rain has kept the crop looking good but may make the anticipated early crushing start date of 7 June challenging. We're working towards a rough combined estimate between Isis and Maryborough districts of 1.45 to 1.5 million tonnes. Our CSA review and negotiation is almost complete in readiness for crushing start date.

During May we held a Cost of Production Workshop (pictured) 'Getting a Grip on your Numbers'. Chris Gillitt from CANEGROWERS and Harry Millbank from DAF gave growers a run-through of the CANEGROWERS Cost of Production Tool and the DAF FEAT online tool. The workshop gave growers the opportunity to compare the tools and choose which might best suit how they calculate their costs of production.

Due to the continued wet weather, our preseason shed meeting was held in the CANEGROWERS Hall with Isis Productivity Limited. Growers got their first look at new varieties SRA29, SRAW33 and QS10445 with some sticks on show. An overview of the 2022 season outlook and an update on how CANEGROWERS Isis and Isis Productivity will work towards every grower in our district being Reef Reg Ready by 1 December. Lisa Devereaux and Barry Salter from SRA explained their roles in the Southern Region.

**Membership Fee 2022:** The 2022 membership levy, combining the state and local district charges is 50.23 cents per tonne (inclusive of GST) on all sugarcane supplied to the Isis mill by all members during the 2022 crushing season.

*Pictured: (top) Justin Anderson, Darren Harney (ICSM Chair), Graeme Anderson – Isis Preseason Shed Meeting, (bottom) Harry Millbank DAF, John Tanner, Chris Gillett – Cost of Production Workshop 'Getting a Grip on your Numbers'.*



## MARYBOROUGH

Another month, another flood. It's all getting a bit monotonous. At least the May flood level was below the January or February peaks.

Despite the flooding, the crop is in a very good condition, with an estimated 620,000 tonnes ready to be cut. Combine this with Isis growers total of around 900,000 tonnes and we have a busy season ahead. The intended start is early June (subject to weather).

At the pre-season meeting on 26 May, Isis Mill covered NHVR and TMR requirements on vehicle movement and chain of responsibility for loading of cut cane. This has been covered in previous years and if you see an overloaded trailer on your farm, don't ignore it. Safety must come first.

Mill repairs have been delayed by delivery issues for cooling tower parts. Initially, the plant will operate on the one tower until new parts arrive.

Changes to the transloader have been around adding a rail loop to allow an extra line of carriages and improve consistency of delivery. Technology issues have also been worked through for reporting.

As this is the last year of the Toll Crush arrangement with Isis, information is still coming via MSF Sugar, but we expect this will be smoother than last year.

Our 126 Anniversary of Sugar Crushing in Maryborough Dinner is on 2 June and, with plenty of photos coming in, there are sure to be some memorable conversations and sights during the evening.

**Membership Fee 2022:** The 2022 membership levy, combining the state and local district charges is 31.67 cents per tonne ex gst (34.83c/t inclusive of GST) on all sugarcane supplied to Queensland mills by all members during the 2022 crushing season. This fee does not include the productivity levy.



## ROCKY POINT

Over the period 7-15 May, on average 130mm of rain was recorded across the district. This delayed the start of the soybean harvest, with a solid week of dry conditions required before machinery could head into the field. There is high probability that some beans will be lost.

Flooding occurred, with some fields being under water for the fourth time this year.

The district will need weather conditions to improve drastically if there is to be a late June season start. With 30% of standover cane across the district, and in most parts lodged, this will take time to dry out.

The district has been issued new unimproved land valuations, with increases of around 10% on average.

CANEGROWERS Rocky Point and the mill held a meeting with the Valuer General's representatives in May, but will also prepare objections.

CANEGROWERS Rocky Point has also been in discussions with Biosecurity Queensland for the supply of more fire ant bait, as the ants are widespread, with reports of high numbers of nests across many farms.

It is crucial that the fire ants are kept in check, so the cane mulch industry can be maintained.

A joint CANEGROWERS-SRA workshop was held on 19 May, with SRA's Phil Patane presenting on the impacts of harvesting practice on cane yield and sugar. The presentation included both machine set-up and changes to the harvesting parameters.

The workshop also included new technologies available to assist in achieving the optimum harvesting practice and an introduction to the Agtrix Electronic Farm Plans.

**Membership Fee 2022:** The 2022 membership levy, combining the state and local district charges is 70.06 cents per tonne (inclusive of GST) on all sugarcane supplied to the Rocky Point mill by all members during the 2022 crushing season. This fee is inclusive of cane testing/auditing fees, a levy for productivity/extension officer and an adjustment to top up the crop insurance offering.



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# PAYMENTS FOR SOIL HEALTH?

Soil is important for supporting economic growth and protecting the nation's food security. Concerns about the effects of traditional broadacre farming methods in the 1960s led to innovations in conservation agriculture, built on reduced tillage and retention of crop residues to maintain soil cover.

It is estimated that 80%-90% of Australia's 23.5 million hectares of winter crops are now grown using conservation agriculture principles. Similar changes in cane farming occurred from the 1970s with green cane harvesting and reduced tillage and, more recently, increased use of legume fallows and controlled traffic.

The imperative for improving soil health continues, with both governments and industry investing in related research and extension programs.

The rationale for these efforts to conserve and improve soil is based on two well-known but oft-forgotten facts:

- Soil is incredibly slow to form with, on average, 115 millimetres of additional soil depth formed every 1,000 years. For all intents and purposes, it is a non-renewable resource.
- Soils directly contribute about A\$63 billion each year to the economy through agriculture.

While improving soil health has significant private benefit for farmers, policies are being considered to accelerate improvement including some form of market-based incentive. This push has, however, been largely overwhelmed by the imperative to capture and retain more carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in soil organic matter and thereby reduce atmospheric concentrations of this gas. Soil carbon is now the catchcry. So, how best can we move forward on both soil carbon and soil health?

The Australian Government recently hosted a forum on the potential economic and market-based drivers of soil health. Soil specialists explained how a healthy soil is more than just its amount of soil organic carbon (SOC) although it was noted that, where a soil has been depleted of organic matter, improvement in SOC will often correlate strongly with other aspects of soil condition. But maximising the store of SOC is not necessarily consistent with soil conditions that will maximise crop production. Breakdown and mineralisation of organic matter makes nutrients available to plants but this releases carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. Cycling of carbon, with release of CO<sub>2</sub>, is therefore essential for productive crops. Also, some soil constraints will not be adequately addressed by simply adding more organic material.

In any case, government or private funds looking to incentivise farm management are largely focused on purchasing carbon credits, not on broader aspects of soil health. This is driven by the need of governments and private corporations to meet regulated or nominal targets for greenhouse gas emissions, or to decarbonise their balance sheets. There is no equivalent need for these entities to incentivise management focussed on soil health. The public benefits of soil health for food security and the national economy may be too far into the future to generate a sense of urgency.

Consumers are also reluctant to pay more for produce verified to come from healthy soils. While market research suggests some consumers will pay extra for product verified to be from healthy soils, the willingness seems limited to niche markets. In the meantime, productivity benefits will continue to be the main driver of innovations that boost overall soil health. ■

## SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT MICK QUIRK

### KEY POINTS:

- Most of Australia's crops are grown using conservation agriculture principles.
- Soil health is more than just the amount of organic matter.
- Payments for improving overall soil health are unlikely with soil carbon being the focus of Government incentives.



# ATTRACTING WORKERS TO AGRICULTURE

Attracting a suitable workforce is critical to every industry. Sugarcane industry is no exception and CANEGROWERS is working on a range of fronts to ensure farms and contractors find the workers they need.

In general, family-operated sugarcane farms do not employ a lot of labour. A 2016 survey found that over 80% of growers did not employ any full or part time staff and 60% did not even employ casual workers.

However, 72% used contractors, mostly for harvesting (57%) and planting (27%), and it is here that staff shortages can cause real problems. In recent years, harvester and haulout drivers have been in short supply. Sugar mills are also finding it difficult to recruit and retain staff, such as loco drivers.

So, while workforce shortages affect cane growers more indirectly than other agricultural industries, it's still a critical issue. This year CANEGROWERS is running a recruitment campaign via media and social media interstate to attract workers to the 2022 season.

Agriculture also has to compete with mining, retail and hospitality in the labour market. While the mining industry, with a few very large companies, can provide resources for programs to attract a workforce, agriculture has been far from cohesive, yet we need to work together if we are to compete.

The National Farmers' Federation (NFF) has a vision for agriculture to become a \$100 billion sector by 2030 and part of the strategy is attracting a suitable workforce. The AgATTRACT program aims to shift perceptions of agricultural work and showcase the diverse opportunities. With \$25 million over four years, it includes a range of activities:

- AgCAREERSTART is a structured program to help young Australians try their hand at working in agriculture and gain a taste of what a regional lifestyle can offer. CANEGROWERS has signed up and in conjunction with the Queensland Agricultural Workforce Network officer based in Mackay will place two or three young people with employers for a gap year.
- AgUP is a grants program to support industry-led projects that create opportunities for upskilling and career progression
- AgFAIR provides funding to support the uptake of the Fair Farms program and to procure practical resources to support agriculture employers to implement modern workforce management and planning practices.
- AgMove reimburses eligible costs to workers who relocate for short-term agricultural and harvest work.

CANEGROWERS is also a member of the

- Primary Industry Foundation Australia (PIEFA) which has and will continue to develop resources for schools based on sugarcane and
- Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance run by QFF which has the mission to identify agricultural workforce needs and seek effective solutions in Queensland.

As you can see, there is a significant effort going into attracting a suitable workforce to agriculture, and CANEGROWERS is playing its part to ensure this is achieved. ■



## INDUSTRY AND FARM INPUTS BURN ASHBURNER

### KEY POINTS:

- Family-operated sugarcane farms do not employ significant amounts of labour. Over 80% of growers did not employ any full time or part time staff and 60% did not even employ casual staff.
- 72% used contractors, mostly for harvesting (57%) and planting (27%), and it is here that staff shortages can cause real problems.
- While workforce shortages affect cane growers more indirectly than other agricultural industries, it's still a critical issue.
- Industry stakeholders aim to shift perceptions of agricultural work and showcase the diverse career opportunities on offer.

# QUEENSLAND SUGAR RECOGNISED FOR SUSTAINABILITY CREDENTIALS

Smartcane BMP and a program called VIVE now offer a market pathway for sustainably produced sugar from Queensland.

Smartcane BMP has recently achieved what has been termed 'advanced alignment' with the VIVE Sustainable Supply Programme which is operated by Czarnikow.

It's taken a few years of benchmarking and alignment work and now VIVE will recognise sugarcane sourced from farms accredited through Smartcane BMP. While it sounds technical, this is an important step in meeting the increasing demand for sustainably produced sugar and therefore supporting the environmental, social, and governance (ESG) requirements of businesses in the global food supply chain.

Proof of the provenance of food and beverage ingredients along with transparency around how they are produced is becoming increasingly important to consumers. This in turn means sugar buyers, commodity marketers and food manufacturers are under increasing pressure to respond.

Global food and beverage companies including Coca Cola, Nestle, PepsiCo, Barry Callebaut and Ferrero have all made commitments to source sugar from sustainable sources as their supply chains are under increasing pressure from population growth, increased demand for food products and climate change.

Nestle has made commitments to ensure that its sugar is from farms and mills that comply with local laws and regulations and the Nestle Responsible Sourcing Standard. The Coca Cola Company also depends on a sustainable supply of high quality agricultural ingredients and raw materials to make its drinks.

From 2022 onwards, Coke made a commitment to ensuring 100% of its main agricultural ingredients and raw materials come from sustainable sources.

Coke tracks its progress by measuring compliance with its Supplier Guiding Principles, which apply to all suppliers, and its Principles for Sustainable Agriculture, which applies to its suppliers of agricultural ingredients.

VIVE is one of the global third party sustainability standards that meets these principles.

VIVE was created by Czarnikow and its partner Intellync in 2015 to ensure its trading activity is integrated with sustainability.

The programme consists of five modules that, in combination, cover all the operations and activities that contribute to the sustainability of supplied ingredients.

The collaborative work between Smartcane BMP and VIVE supports CANEGROWERS' aim to build and secure the industry's reputation for environmental stewardship and demonstrate the sustainability of Queensland sugar to domestic and export supply chains.

Smartcane BMP currently has 682 businesses accredited, which accounts for almost 40% of the sugarcane area in Queensland.

This equates to around 1.6MT of sugar accredited by Smartcane BMP.

Through their collaboration, VIVE and Smartcane BMP will be able to promote further sustainable improvement in sugar, bringing the Smartcane BMP standard to markets outside of Australia. ■



MEMBERSHIP  
ENGAGEMENT &  
INNOVATION  
MATT KEALLEY

## KEY POINTS:

- ▶ Smartcane BMP has achieved advanced alignment with the VIVE Sustainable Supply Programme.
- ▶ Global food and beverage companies including Coca Cola, Nestle, PepsiCo, Barry Callebaut and Ferrero have all made commitments to source sugar from sustainable sources.
- ▶ VIVE is one of the global third party sustainability standards that meets key sustainability principles.
- ▶ Smartcane BMP currently has 682 businesses accredited, which accounts for almost 40% of the sugarcane area in Queensland.



## SUNSHINE COAST'S SUGARCANE SPIRIT GOES TO RIO

Australia's Brazilian community has developed a sweet spot for a locally produced sugar cane spirit, and now the Aussie version of Brazil's most popular drink is on its way to Rio.

The first distillery to craft a locally made drop, Sunshine & Sons said production of the juice-based spirit had grown 10-fold in the past six months.

Matt Hobson, Sunshine & Sons' Founder and Chief Imagineer, said the distiller had already produced 5,000 bottles of the spirit and once the 2022 cane harvest has commenced there were plans afoot to make more.

"Sunshine & Sons' 'Original Cane' was inspired by Latin America's biggest selling spirit – Cachaca," Mr Hobson said.

"Our climate and conditions are similar to South America's, which means that both are conducive to producing high quality sugarcane and cane-based spirits.

"Given that Australian sugarcane spirits have historically lacked the flavour and aroma consistent with Cachaca we felt it was well and truly time to make an Australian equivalent."

The Brazilian version of the spirit is held in such high regard by locals that it is the base of their national drink – the Caipirinha.

"Just as beer is the most popular beverage in Australia, for Brazilians it is sugarcane spirit. Over there consumption rates for this year sit at around 523 million litres."

According to Mr Hobson the distillery's Brazilian-Australia fans have said that the Sunshine & Sons version is on par with their South American competitors.

"It's this that has motivated us to look into venturing into the export market."

Third-generation Maroochy River cane farmer Gordon Oakes said he was thrilled to see his family's decades of hard work go into a specialist locally made product.

"It's exciting to see Queensland cane used to produce such a unique spirit," Mr Oakes said. "Products like these provide opportunity to the entire industry.

"My sugar cane is quite literally producing liquid gold. This season we're expecting to harvest a bumper crop that will quite possibly make its way to Brazil given the international interest."

"The added bonus is we only have to drive the loads down the road, leaving a few extra dollars in this farmer's pocket!"

Sunshine & Sons 'Original Cane' is available at some of Australia's best bars and restaurants, the distillery cellar door in Woombye, online and at select Dan Murphy's outlets. ■



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# Annual Queensland Land Valuations- 2022

## CURRENT REVALUATIONS

During March 2022 the Valuer General issued new land valuations for 30 local government areas in Queensland, some of which are in sugarcane districts, including Cairns, Mareeba, Bundaberg and Fraser Coast. 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.

## WILL MY COUNCIL RATES INCREASE?

Just because your Valuer General land valuation increases does not automatically mean your local council rates will also increase. Councils have very wide powers to manage rating and changes in property values. Councils can apply caps, averaging of values over several years, differential rating and, most obviously, changing the rate in the dollar of land value. From my experience, I have noticed many local councils use as an excuse the increase in land values by the State Valuer General to justify increases in local rates. There however is no valid basis for this approach and councils certainly have many ways in which it can ensure that an increase in land values does not equate to an increase in rates.

## 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



By Chris Cooper,  
CANEGROWERS  
Legal Advisor





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 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 notice of objection. The notice must follow a set format and be lodged with the department within 60 days of the valuation issuing. As the recent new valuations were issued on 31 March affected land holders had until 30 May to lodge their objection. In certain special circumstances the Valuer General will accept a late objection.

### REVIEW PROCESS

If a properly made objection has been lodged by a landholder, then the objection must be considered by a senior valuer within the government department who was not involved in the original valuation. With the agreement of the objector and the valuer a conference to discuss the valuation may also be held. In some circumstances if there are a significant number of cane grower objectors, CANEGROWERS may also make submissions to the department. The department will reconsider the valuation and notify the objector of the decision.

### APPEAL PROCESS

If the objector does not agree with the decision on the objection, then an appeal can be lodged with the Land Court within 60 days.

### FURTHER ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

The Department of Resources website ([www.resources.qld.gov.au](http://www.resources.qld.gov.au)) contains useful information about the valuation process undertaken by it. Your local CANEGROWERS district office can also assist with advice and information. Any CANEGROWERS member wishing to discuss any aspect of legal matters should contact their local CANEGROWERS district office or call me on Free Call 1800 177 159, for free initial legal advice. ■

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

# CANEGROWERS community news



## Innisfail farm – keeping it in the family

On Saturday 30 April the Benn family celebrated an amazing milestone, 100 years of direct succession for their World War 1 Soldier Settlement sugarcane farm.

Percy Benn was a gunner in WW1 and served in France. After visiting Innisfail in 1921 he took over the selection 'Block 238' at the Maria Creek settlement.

Percy cleared the rainforest himself, as he believed contractors were too expensive and didn't do as good a job, clearing five acres a year he received £5 per acre which he considered a hefty sum for his labour.

Percy operated the farm his entire life, assisted in his later years by his son, Maurice Penn, until his passing. Percy was a founding member on the Tully Cooperative Sugar Mill Board and a Councillor in the Johnstone Shire.

An avid inventor of farm machinery one of his creations, a high clearance Fordson steel wheel tractor, is on display in the local sugar museum.

"The construction of his unique concrete farmhouse, built in 1936 is well-known within the region and his record cane stalk measuring 21'6" Badilla Seedling always made him smile," Percy's grandson Jason Benn said.

"Sugarcane from our farm was sent to South Johnstone mill in 1922 on the government rail and then to Tully Sugar mill when it was opened in 1926. 100 years later and we are back in the South Johnstone mill where we started.

"In 1993 the farm was passed to my father Maurice, and I became a partner in the early 2000s. My wife Suari Mason and I took over the farm in 2012 after my father's passing.

"Our son William is keen to keep the farming legacy going although he has reservations about the long term security of sugarcane growing.



If you have news to share with the CANEGROWERS community, send us an email  
[editor@canegrowers.com.au](mailto:editor@canegrowers.com.au)



“Our son William is keen to keep the farming legacy going although he has reservations about the long term security of sugarcane growing.”

“I cannot recall any other sugarcane farm in my area that has stayed in the same family for 100 years.” Jason said. ■

*Pictured: The family celebrated 100 years of direct succession for their World War 1 Soldier Settlement sugarcane farm.*



## Long term benefits of liming your soil

If you think you have reduced crop yields due to acidic soils, a good place to start is to have your field sampled to determine the soil pH level. The application of lime to acidic soils will improve the biological, chemical, and physical properties of the soils. Liming will increase soil pH, causing a more favourable environment for soil microbiological activity. Ultimately, lime can contribute to improved soil health and crop yield.

By reducing soil acidity, you will increase the availability of plant nutrients, particularly phosphorus. In strongly acidic soils, phosphorus is retained in less available forms than on slightly acidic and neutral soils. Therefore, a major benefit of liming acidic soils is the increased utilisation of residual phosphorus by crops. The application of lime can also improve the physical properties of some soils including improving soil structure making soil crusting less of an issue.

In any agricultural business, people are the most important element for success, but healthy soil is a close second. Soil underpins all plant and animal growth; and your soil is the foundation to your farming success. It forms a key part of the natural capital that supports a grazing enterprise in the Gulf, a cane farm in the Burdekin, a tropical fruit orchard in the Tropics or hay production in the Northern Territory.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

To increase your crop yield, contact Wayne today on 0427 008 856. It's time to lime! ■



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ADVERTISING FEATURE



Bacstim® 100 & Rhizovator™ OB

Control

## Biostimulants Increase Cane Growers Bottom Line

"As far as results go, they have been outstanding for two years in a row. Visually the treatment blocks are a lot stronger. After the first year we had the products tested on different soil types with similar visual differences experienced. To top it off we increased yield by an average of 25% over the two years". These are the words of Elders agronomist **James Dunn** in relation to a sugarcane trial using products designed by Omnia Specialities.

Omnia Specialities is an Australian company known in the agricultural market for their high quality humates, fast acting trace elements and innovative solutions to everyday agricultural problems. With the standing pressures placed on sugarcane growers regarding fertilizer use, Omnia's solution not only provides the benefit of returns to the grower, but also provides benefits to soil health. This solution comes in the form of a synergistic relationship between two biostimulants.

Rhizovator OB, a humate based biostimulant with inclusions of kelp, fulvic acid and amino acids, was developed with soil health in mind. Supplying a natural soil conditioner to

the root zone, improving nutrient uptake, and stimulating root development, all whilst providing a feed source to the inherent microbial life within the root zone. To complement these benefits, Bacstim 100, a microbial biostimulant consisting of 5 strains of bacillus spp. work closely with plant roots to bring out the following benefits:

- Improve nutrient mineralization and uptake
- Produce phytohormones encouraging root growth
- Improve stress resistance
- Increase crop biomass and yield

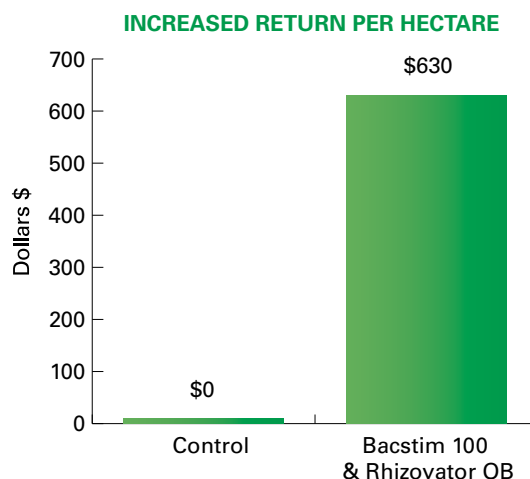
Applied together, the synergies of these two products sees significant effect on production through improved root development and nutrient use efficiencies, something which has been in the forefront of all cane growers' minds. **Andrew Doecke**, Omnia's Innovation and Development Manager commented "we have been working hard to achieve improved nutrient use efficiencies through

the benefits of biostimulants. To achieve an average increased return of \$630 per hectare over the two years is exciting, to say the least."

With a return on investment of over \$4.00 per \$1.00 spent, this is a result anyone would be excited about.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

If you wish to learn more about Omnia Specialities and how they can help increase your bottom line, be sure to visit their website at [www.omnia.net.au](http://www.omnia.net.au) or contact their offices at 1800 466 642. ■



ADVERTISING FEATURE



# Farm Pests & Soil Health

The sugar industry, working with the Wet Tropics Management Authority, has made significant progress to rid the highly invasive and destructive yellow crazy ant from the agriculture sector of the Cairns region.

With the Authority providing expertise about this species and how it spreads, MSF Sugar's Mulgrave mill, harvesting contractors and growers have developed a system of protocols on how farm machinery is moved from site to site. Farmers are kept up to date on ant infestation areas by the Authority and interactive maps are frequently updated on the Authority's website.

The Authority's Executive Director **Scott Buchanan** said: "These tools and protocols allow operators to recognise areas of high risk and minimise the potential for contact with the ants, which in turn reduces the risk of spread associated with movement of farm equipment and harvested crop."

The Authority's Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Program Project Manager **Lucy Karger** said: "By following a simple but effective 'traffic light' mapping system, we have greatly reduced the potential to spread ants from contaminated sites into clean areas."

The mapping system uses green to indicate ant-free zones, orange to highlight high-risk zones, and red for active infestation areas. Any movement from red zones to other zones poses a risk of ants being moved to new sites.

Ms Karger said: "Working with MSF Sugar's Mulgrave mill to share data allows us to map harvester movements,

keep a close eye on high-risk areas, and trace new infestations back to their source."

"This cooperative management of a pest that threatens one of our region's important industries is a testament to the impressive efforts made at all levels. From the farmers, harvesting contractors and MSF Sugar mills, everyone has pulled together to ensure the future of cane in Cairns," Ms Karger said.

"Collaboration like this is paramount to the further success of the Eradication Program. The ground-breaking work the sugar industry has been doing with the Authority shows that solid working relationships allow us to truly partner with industry and work towards a mutually beneficial goal," Ms Karger said.



With the Authority's ongoing ant surveys and infestation treatments, as well as the sugar industry's new machinery cleaning protocols and harvester movement tracing complete eradication of yellow crazy ants in the region is achievable. ■

*Pictured: Yellow Crazy Ants Farming Aphids, cane fields south of Cairns.*



## REPORT YELLOW CRAZY ANTS

CALL: **1800 CRAZY ANT**

P: (07) 4241 0525 | E: [yca@wtma.qld.gov.au](mailto:yca@wtma.qld.gov.au)  
W: [www.wettropics.gov.au/yellow-crazy-ant](http://www.wettropics.gov.au/yellow-crazy-ant) | Facebook: @ycawettropics



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Next deadline is **22 June 2022**.

\* 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.

### Mossman-Tully

JD4055 coupled to Newton 6T Side-Tipper \$30,000 + GST. Fiat M100 coupled to Newton 6T Side Tipper \$30,000 + GST. Ph: 0429652235.

Bonel Billet Planter. Hydraulic lock in pins. Good condition. Text msg for photos. \$6,500.00 + GST located in Bloomsbury. Ph: 0428541197.

Toft 6000, CAT 3306DI, Rotary Chop, Bent elevator, standard topper. Good condition for age. Ph: 0740675327.

Expressions of interest are invited in the purchase of harvester, haulout equipment and a contract of 42,000 tonnes of cane to harvest. Mulgrave Mill Area, 2022 Season. For enquires please phone: 0407160673.

Fiat 980 2WD 3,500hrs, Fiat 1000 2WD 5,000hrs, John Deere 4040 2WD 3,600hrs, Chamberlain JD 4080 2WD 5,000hrs, Case 2590 2WD 5,700hrs, Michigan 110-14 Elevator Scraper-New engine & Spare engine, D Massey Ferguson 3635 4WD 5,500hrs, 6 tonne tipper bin, Silvan Euro Spand CX2 Spreader, Portable bulk bin, Hustler Super Z Zero turn mower, Bunning Lowlander Mk 40-60 Ag Spreader near new, Complete tracks to suit cane harvester, Half

tracks to suit cane harvester, and Fuel trailer tank. Mulgrave area. Ph: 0407160673.

Spitwater Guerney Honda Motor 2500PSI, 2 Newton 4T Tipper Bins suitable for Billet Planting, No Rust, All GC. Ph after 7pm 0740645153.

1T Fertiliser Box with Coulters. Hodge 4 Furrow Plough. Ten Tynes Grubber. 650 Fiat Tractor. Ph: 0417722229.

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

### Herbert River-Burdekin

Farm Tractors. Massey Ferguson 178. New mudguards and seat. Runs well. Also same Jaguar low hours. 4WD Jaguar 95 HP ROPS Canopy. Phone for price, details, photos. Ph John: 0417070844.

Massey Ferguson 65 fitted with remotes. In running order. \$4,000.00 ONO. Ph: 0417638318.

Tractor Tyres 18.4 \* 34 Goodyear on 12 hole JD rims. \$800 each. Chamberlain Canelander runs well boat tractor, small farm jobs, PTO Linkage.4000# Photos available. Ph: 0417070844.

1988 Ford 7700 Tractor 6720hrs, 2WD. Single Remotes, GC \$17,000 plus GST. Ph: 0407154250.

### Mackay-Proserpine

4280 Chamberlain tractor, John Deere engine, for spare parts. Ph: 0409264351.

Newton elevator bin in reasonable condition, on a John Deere tractor. \$35,000 incl. GST. Ph: 0749541174

Howard 6" slasher. Good condition. \$2400 incl. GST. Ph: 0749545052.

Massey 105 Harvester, Fair condition \$5000. Moller Sorter on a Don Gough Planter, Fair condition, \$5000, both shedded. Ph: 0407130004.

Massey Ferguson 8110 4-wheel drive with cab, 135hp, only 2,636 hours in good condition. \$55,000 incl. GST. Ph: 0438606578.

12t self-propelled 6x6 elev infielder. VGC. Mackay. Ph: 0438606578.

6t side tipper on Leyland tandem. GC. 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. VGC. Mackay. Ph: 0438606578.

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

### Bundaberg-Rocky Point

HBM billet planter rear wheel steer Suscon and fert box all in good working condition. \$10,000 + GST. Ph: 0419270981.

6 ton side tipper on single axle 23.1-26 tyres, bin flaps and paddle, bin is operated through tractor remotes. \$5,000 + GST Ph: 0419270981.

Two 6 ton side tippers, on bogie super singles, pto hydraulic pumps bin flaps and paddles all in good condition. \$8,500 + GST each. Ph: 0419270981.

Cameco 2003 track harvester, John Deere engine approx 9,000 hrs whole topper, \$85,000 + GST. Ph: 0419270981.

Valley pivot pipes. 8 poly line pipes 11.5m x 150mm. 8 sub tower pipes 150mm. POA. Ph: 0477704134.

3 inch 2 in 1 Avoca double reel water winch, 4 inch Avoca 2 in 1 heavy duty water winch, 2,200litre diesel fuel tanker is a complete

# SNG

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## New Hydraulic Heavy Duty

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## New Heavy Duty SLASHERS

2.1 metres width  
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## Johnny Farming Company

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trailer Massey Ferguson 65 high clearance. Ph: 0427598333.

2 x Massey Ferguson 102 cane harvesters VGC Shredded \$5,000 each, 4 tyne Paraplow Ripper \$4,000, Croplands Ute Sprayer 1200L 16M BOOM \$5,000, Grain Bin Trailer \$1,000, 2 x Linkage break pusher \$400 each, Side Dresser Fertiliser Box \$1,200, ½ Tonne Linkage Spreader \$500. All + GST. Ph: 0488662313.

### Wanted

Wanted to buy. Backhoe. Mackay/Sarina area. Ph: 0439113511 or 0448057574.

### Positions Vacant

Sugarcane Haulout operator opportunity for 2022 Crushing Season. Located south of Sarina. 6 on 2 off roster. Tractors and 14 tonne elevating bins. Experience not essential but some knowledge of tractor operating and maintenance preferred. Ph: 0417611809.

### Work Wanted

Couple with tractor and loader experience. Forklift licences. Resumes available. Mackay area. Ph: 0466073438.

Looking for bin hauling work. Some farming experience. Ph Tyler: 0403347340.

Truck driver with H C licence can drive 18 speed road ranger, has had experience in the cane harvest before looking for work. Contact Angus angusptr@yahoo.com.au.

Retired driver living in Wongaling Beach is looking for work as a driver for the harvest season, holds a current HR license, and has for 40 years with a clean traffic record. Experience driving for Brisbane transport and QANTAS domestic. Available for interview by phone or in person. Phone Colin on 0407530031.

Experienced machine operator looking for work as machine operator or truck driver. Resume available, please phone John on 0418 152 052.

Looking for work. Previous farm experience. Location is flexible. Available immediately. Fully vaccinated. Ph Craig: 0412323034.

### Property - For Sale

70ha Cane Farm with 61.5ha under cane. Located 8 km from town centre and 1 km from Victoria Mill. Property is flood free with town water supply running along property

front. Paddocks have all been lasered and are well maintained and up to date with new varieties. Ph: 0427912277.

Cane farm to lease Munburra, Sunnyside or Oakenden areas. Have own equipment. Ph: 0408011983.

840 meters opposite Moore Park Beach. Coastal Cane Farm 93 Acres and 146 megalitres of ground water. Large storage Shed. 1 x Diesel Irrigation pump for the underground irrigation. There are 2 fenced off areas, currently used for horses and cattle. No house on this property. Comes with crop. Ph Larry: 0418496864.

DEERAL Cane Farm for Sale. 52.9ha on 2 titles. Only 45mins to CBD. Peaceful

location, close to panoramic river, boat ramp & mountain views. 186 Ross Road, Deeral. Ph: 0412968434.

Cane Farm, 47 acres. 23 acres Cane Production for 2021, remainder fallow. 40MG Kinchant Dam Allocation. Supplied to Racecourse Mill. 20 mins from Mackay. Ph: 0466241656.

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: 0415881092.

Pleystowe cane farm. On 2 Lots. Approx 190 acres all up. Teemurra water, 2 pumps & licences, plus 32,000 gallons an hour

## Rainfall Report

Location	Recorded rainfall (mm)			Average rainfall (mm)
	Month prior (Apr 2022)	Month to date (1 May-24 May)	Year to date	Jan-May
Whyanbeel Valley (Mossman)	859.6	193.8	2147.2	2151
Mareeba Airport	99.4	60	620.6	648.6
Cairns Aero	381.6	178	1414.4	1548.9
Mt Sophia	718	457	2947	2487.1
Babinda Post Office	753.2	514.1	2877.7	3052.8
Innisfail	391.6	566.8	2387.4	2512.4
Tully Sugar Mill	655.2	437.5	2436.8	2938.3
Cardwell Marine Pde	307.4	294.6	1261	1604.6
Lucinda Township	532	350.8	1521.2	1593.4
Ingham Composite	435.6	285.7	1358.7	1577.3
Abergowrie Alert	11	4	324	1044.3
Townsville Aero	293.4	153	944.4	863.2
Ayr DPI Research Stn	192.2	198.2	679.6	697.4
Proserpine Airport	120.8	181.2	982	1038.7
Mirani Mary Street	178.8	182	601.5	989.5
Mackay MO	208.6	132.2	711	1113.5
Plane Creek Sugar Mill	267.6	144.8	831.4	1236
Bundaberg Aero	12.4	201.6	798.2	556.8
Childers South	15.2	252.6	866	472.8
Maryborough	37.2	168.4	804.4	655.2
Tewantin RSL Park	79.2	594.8	1839.8	899.5
Eumundi - Crescent Rd	83.6	313	1611.4	1004.7
Nambour DPI - Hillside	115.8	565	2118.4	1094.7
Logan City Water Treatment Plant	55.4	308.6	1119.1	621.4
Murwillumbah Bray Park	83.5	314.1	1345.1	936.4
Ballina Airport	99.2	243.6	2020.4	963.3
New Italy (Woodburn)	119.8	214.5	1979.9	773.4

Brought to you by Australian Retirement Trust



Zero indicates either no rain or no report was sent. These rainfall figures are subject to verification and may be updated later. Weather forecasts, radar and satellite images and other information for the farming community can be accessed on [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au). Weather report sourced from the Bureau of Meteorology Recent Rainfall Tables.

## Classifieds

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 2021 crop. Selling due to health reasons. Ph: 0408733793.

### Property - Wanted

Wanting to buy/lease cane farm. Close to Racecourse mill, Tekowai, Alexandra areas. Ph: 0438545251.

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

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

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

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

### WANT THE LATEST NEWS AND PHOTOS?

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# Spotted anything unusual?

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

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

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

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

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



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

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