

The Bundaberg District Canegrower

Volume 19, Issue 3
March 2024

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Chair's Update



How good has the weather been albeit fairly variable across the district with some good sunlight and a continuation of the hot humid weather, the crop will keep growing.

The crop is looking magnificent with ratoon cane looking like plant cane. Estimates should have arrived in your inbox or letterbox, please fill them out as accurately as you can and return them promptly. With the increased area to harvest and likely crop size, the sooner we can get a handle on it the better.

Both Allan Dingle and myself have been selected for the Fox Resources Regional Reference Group with regard to the MDL3040 application. We are both opposed to this and any similar mining application which could jeopardise agricultural land, ground water and irrigation scheme infrastructure, there is just too much at stake.

The National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) is gaining additional powers in Queensland from 20 April 2024. These new powers mean that NHVR will not only have the ability to issue permits for travel, they will also have the power of enforcement.

Many of the enforcement officers of NHVR will be former Transport and Main Roads enforcement officers who have switched agencies. One area of enforcement that will have an impact on cane growers, harvesting contractors, and mill transport operations is the increased enforcement of covered loads and the issue of spilt billets and trash.

CANEGROWERS is in discussion with NHVR as to how best manage this issue given that we are less than two (2) months from the beginning of the pre season crush and the difficulty of

covering haulouts, multilifts and mill bins. We will keep you informed of the latest information as it comes to hand.

QSL held three (3) shed meetings on 8 March with updates on the new payment regime that will take place from the beginning of the 2024 season, they also gave some insight as to what the markets might do into the future.

QSL are running a series of workshops in April for growers to learn more about the features of QSL Direct. For further information see page 2 or contact Glenn Harris on 0409 601 349.

I would like to congratulate the winners of the various awards which were presented on 8 March, the night was a success once again. I would also like to thank the Committee and staff for their efforts. Further details can be found on pages 4 and 5.

At the time of writing almost all votes cast in the Local Council Elections have been counted and we welcome Helen Blackburn to the role of Bundaberg Regional Council Mayor. We look forward to working with Helen and fellow Councillors over the next 4 years.

Land valuations have been released resulting in an average increase of 63.8% on primary production land in the Bundaberg region. If you would like assistance submitting an objection to your latest valuation, please contact the office on 4151 2555.

I hope you all have a safe and happy Easter.

Mark Pressler
Chairman

Top Five (5) Issues We Have Been Working On

1. Pre season planning and receiving industry updates.
2. Providing representation and information regarding NHVR Load Restraint obligations
3. Working toward a payment plan from Oreco to bring grower payments up to date
4. Assisting Bundaberg Ag-Food and Fibre Alliance with the successful Local Election campaign.
5. Preparations for 2024 soybean harvest



Soybean Update



While the early planted A-6785 crops are getting ready for harvest in mid to late April the later planted Hayman crops are still an extra couple of weeks off harvest. While the showers and rain have been good from an irrigation point of view they have also increased the risk of a range of fungal diseases attacking the crops.

The fungal diseases have two (2) impacts, one being reduced yield as the leaves are infected and prematurely senesce and the other is an impact on grain quality. There are a range of fungal diseases locally that impact the crop at various times of the year depending on temperature and leaf wetness. The more common diseases affecting leaves are rust, target spot and anthracnose. Generally these diseases affect the crop from the bottom up, so the canopy needs to be opened up to see if these diseases are present.

The most common disease affecting quality of the grain is purple seed stain, while it has no impact on yield, can reduce the quality of the grain and decreasing prices achieved. There are some other diseases that can cause damage to the grain if it continues to be wet during the dry down period and during harvest.

There are a range of registered and permitted fungicides for many of the diseases listed. To find the correct product for the disease present, please go to the Soy Australia website www.soyaustralia.com or contact Matt Leighton. ■

QSL Direct training



Growers in the Bundaberg Region are invited to attend a group training session to learn about the features of QSL Direct.

Come along to find out about:

- Monitoring your Advances schedule and payments
- Utilising the QSL App calculators, including the Cane to GEI Sugar converter and Sugar to Cane value tool
- Accessing your personalised delivery estimate

Wednesday 10 April
Wednesday 24 April

9:00 am

Bundaberg CANEGROWERS,
32 Bourbong Street

RSVP by call/text to Glenn Harris on 0409 601 349.

Can't make it and would like to know more?
Get in touch with Glenn to arrange a one-on-one session.

2023 Season Indicative Advances Program

Based on QSL reports 23 February 2024

| Advance Dates | Uncommitted Pool Advance (AUD/tonne IPS) | | Target Price Advance Rates |
|---------------------|--|----------|----------------------------|
| | Payment Date | Increase | |
| Initial | | \$495.00 | \$495.00 |
| Initial QSL Updated | | -\$17.00 | \$478.00 |
| 20-Oct-23 | | \$83.00 | 70% or \$561.00 |
| 17-Nov-23 | | \$97.00 | 72.5% |
| 15-Dec-23 | | -\$12.00 | 77.5% |
| 19-Jan-24 | | -\$7.00 | 80.0% |
| 17-Feb-24 | | \$45.00 | 82.5% |
| 22-Mar-24 | | \$40.00 | 87.5% |
| 19-Apr-24 | | \$20.00 | 90.0% |
| 17-May-24 | | \$21.00 | 92.5% |
| 21-Jun-24 | | \$21.00 | 95.0% |
| Final | | \$41.00 | 100.0% |

Notes:

1. The program above represents indicative advances payable by QSL to Bundaberg Sugar based on estimated pool returns, the marketing plan and forecast cash flows at the time. These indicative amounts will be reviewed on a regular basis and updated for changes in forecasts. **Advances highlighted in bold in the table above have been approved by the QSL Board.**
2. This program is indicative only and should not be taken as a commitment by Queensland Sugar (or Bundaberg Sugar) with regard to the estimated pool return, advance rate or date of increase. The program may change during the season depending on movements in a number of factors including the marketing plan, sugar price and currency movements and timing of cash flows.
3. The advance rates are GST exclusive.
4. The net adjustment, for the estimated US Quota and QSL premiums & costs, to be added / (subtracted) to / (from) ICE No.11 and Foreign Exchange pricing results for the Committed Pools (e.g. Target Price Contract) is **\$42.52**.

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Harvesting contractor agreements

... by Chris Cooper, CJ Cooper and Associates



Written or verbal agreements

Whenever a grower engages a harvest contractor there is a contract or agreement made between the parties.

This contract may be written or verbal, or a bit of both.

But while verbal or handshake agreements are just as binding as written agreements, they are not without problems.

For a start, with a verbal agreement some important terms that govern the relationship may not be discussed.

Also, the grower and contractor may each have a different understanding or recollection of what was agreed.

It is for these reasons that CANEGROWERS strongly recommends that growers and harvesting contractors document in writing the agreement they propose to enter into.

The written agreement should cover the essential and important terms of the arrangement.

Whilst oral agreements are binding and enforceable, there is considerably more scope for dispute and disagreement if there is not a written record of what has been agreed.

A written agreement can clearly set out the expectations of the grower and the contractor.

Harvesting the crop is a major component of sugarcane farming and one of the biggest costs. An efficient and cost effective harvesting operation is important for grower viability.

Similarly, a contract harvesting operation is a significant business investment with large sums of money tied up in expensive machinery.

A reliable harvesting sector is essential for growers to operate their own farming business.

Co-operation between the grower and the contractor can help minimize harvesting losses and improve efficiency and profitability of the growing and harvesting sectors.

Sample agreements

A sample Contractor Harvesting Agreement is available from Bundaberg CANEGROWERS.

If a full written agreement seems too involved, consider using at least a basic Contractor Acknowledgement, a sample of which is also available from Bundaberg CANEGROWERS.

Even if only a verbal agreement is being entered into, usually by a discussion in person or over the phone, the grower should still make a diary note after the discussions of what was agreed and the essential terms.

Sending a SMS, note or email after the discussions to confirm the basic terms of the agreement is also recommended. ■



Sugar Research
Australia

BUREAU OF METEOROLOGY WEATHER MEETING

SOUTHERN DISTRICT
18 APRIL

The Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) will present a packed schedule of talks for all weather watchers in the sugar industry.

A dedicated meteorologist will be on hand to provide:

- An overview of recent weather and demonstration of weather and climate products produced by the Bureau
- How sugarcane growers and agronomists could use the Bureau's products to benefit their specific locations and seasonal timeframes
- A review of forecasts compared with actual results for the past 12 months of weather
- an explanation of climate drivers, anomalies and models
- Q&A session.

Participants are encouraged to bring their laptops or tablets to try out some of the website links and processes during the meetings.

When: 2pm - 4pm Thursday 18 April

Where: CANEGROWERS Isis
48 Churchill Street, Childers

RSVP by 10 April to Jennifer Parry (SRA)
on mobile or email
0428 119 542
jparry@sugarresearch.com.au



SUGAR INDUSTRY DINNER

2023 Season Awards

Akers Farms Pty Ltd were announced as the District Champion at the Annual Bundaberg Sugar Industry Productivity Awards held at The Waves on Friday, 8th March 2024.

Director of Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited, Mr Michael Cavallaro congratulated John Akers whose Bundaberg farm took out the top award of the night – Formatt Machinery's District Champion with a three-year average of 15.51 tonnes of sugar per hectare.

Representatives from all sectors of the industry and their business associates gathered to hear the awards announced and to celebrate some great productivity outcomes from the 2023 crushing season.

Chairman of Bundaberg CANEGROWERS, Mr Mark Pressler, took the opportunity to acknowledge the continued support of local sponsors of the awards and encouraged growers to continue to do business with these local service providers.

Krystal Golchert, Chairperson of Bundaberg Women in Sugar, was recognised as an Inspiring Female Leader for her involvement as Chairperson for the past 9 years whilst also being involved in all aspects of the farm whilst running her own hairdressing business.

Matthew Leighton, Membership Services Extension Officer for Bundaberg CANEGROWERS was awarded for his Contribution to Productivity. Matt first joined Bundaberg CANEGROWERS in 2004 as a specialist grains agronomist and has been instrumental in the success of the Grain in Cane Co-operative Ltd. Matt also provides a wide range of agronomic advice for crops grown in rotation with cane as well as agronomic advice for sugarcane nutrient application, pesticides and irrigation scheduling. Matt represents the Bundaberg sugar industry on the Sugarcane Variety Committee, assists growers with soil tests and N & P Budgets and has assisted over 100 growers to access personal and financial assistance to re-establish their farming business and recover from losses following a series of declared natural disaster weather events.

Ross Rehbein, local Bundaberg cane farmer was awarded for supplying cane to Bundaberg mills for the past 50 years.

A total of 19 Award winners were announced in 15 categories.

Further photos of the event can be found here:
<https://www.bdbcanegrowers.com.au/projects-events/2023-season-awards/>



John Akers, Akers Farms Pty Ltd accepts the District Champion Award from Michael Cavallaro

RESULTS

J & R McCracken Highest Actual CCS Sample
NK & Mrs KM Armstrong (No 1) – 19.50 CCS

Cheshire Machinery Harvesting Contractor Award for Best Harvesting Efficiency and Most Reliable Performance
W & K Golchert Harvesting

Wilson’s Industrial Sales Best Farm Presentation For Harvesting
Redtrail Pty Ltd (No 2) (pictured)

QSL Award for Contribution to Productivity
Matthew Leighton

Nufarm Award for Service to Industry
Michael Turner

Sunwater Young Industry Achiever Award
Hayden Attard (pictured)

Ergon Energy Inspiring Female Leader Award
Krystal Golchert

Incitec Pivot Cane Growing Excellence – Farms Up to and including 60 ha
MGBJP Pty Ltd (No 4)

Incitec Pivot Cane Growing Excellence - Farms larger than 60 ha
Milworth Pty Ltd

RDO Equipment Closest Percentage Estimate to Actual Tonnage
AR, PA & AJ Slean (No 3) (99.96% accuracy)

Wide Bay Drones Award for Highest Tonnes Sugar Per Harvested Hectare
Redtrail Pty Ltd (No 3) 18.47 ts/ha

Waterfind Award for Most Sustainable Yield for the Past 3 Seasons
WR & AJ Baldry (No 1) 109.16 tc/ha

Bundaberg Distilling Co High Sugar Producer Awards

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <i>RJ & Mrs JE Zunker (No 2)</i> | <i>16.21 ts/ha</i> |
| <i>SA Algeo</i> | <i>16.16 ts/ha</i> |
| <i>MGBJP Pty Ltd</i> | <i>16.13 ts/ha</i> |
| <i>Milworth Pty Ltd</i> | <i>15.33 ts/ha</i> |
| <i>G Wesche (pictured)</i> | <i>14.42 ts/ha</i> |

Formatt Machinery District Champion
Akers Farms Pty Ltd (No 3) – 15.51 ts/ha

50+ Years – Ross Rehbein (pictured)





WOMAN IN SUGAR HERBERT
IS INVITING YOU TO THE



WISA conference

Women Powering Agriculture

28 - 30 APRIL 2024

INGHAM - NORTH QUEENSLAND

Meet and Greet on Sunday - Hinchinbrook Hotel 5pm

Day one

Hinchinbrook Shire Hall

Conference

8.00am to 3.00pm

Guest Speaker:

Kate Lamason | "Little Tuna"

Formal Dinner

6.00pm to 11.30pm

Guest Speaker:

Maree Crawford | Elders

Day two

RSL Ingham

Bus Tour

8.15am to 1.30pm

Activities:

Tissue Culture - CD Nursery

Mental Health Activities

Lunch (optional)

RSVP & Pay by

1st April 2024

Scan QR Code to access the registration form. Complete the form and email to womeninsugarherbert@gmail.com.



HINCHINBROOK
SHIRE COUNCIL



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TOWNSVILLE
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CANEGROWERS



CANEGROWERS
HERBERT RIVER



valuing the environment



Your Trusted Partner





113th GIN GIN SHOW

**Saturday 1st and
Sunday 2nd June 2024**

Show Schedule and Program now
available including
Section 6 - Sugarcane competition

www.ginginshow.com.au

CANEGROWERS' newest Board member

CANEGROWERS Tully Chairman and long-time Policy Council member Bryce Macdonald was recently appointed to the CANEGROWERS Queensland Board of Directors. Congratulations to Bryce taking on the position from Stephen Calcagno, who stepped down earlier this year. The Board thanks Stephen for his insight, continuous support and leadership for the industry. ■



Representation on Your Behalf

The Chairman, Elected Members and Staff of Bundaberg CANEGROWERS represented cane growers on a number of occasions. Executive members also attended many Branch meetings and other engagements in their own time.

| DATE | MEETING | PURPOSE | FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT |
|---------------|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| 19.02.2024 | Regional Business HQ | To represent members | Tanya Howard |
| 20.02.2024 | Bundaberg Ag-Food and Fibre Alliance | To discuss Local Election details | Tanya Howard Dean Cayley Dale Holliss |
| 21.02.2024 | Sustainable Aviation Fuels webinar | To receive update | Tanya Howard |
| 21.02.2024 | Grain in Cane AGM | To receive update | Tanya Howard Matt Leighton |
| 21.02.2024 | QCGO Farm Inputs Research Committee | To represent members | Tanya Howard |
| 22.02.2024 | QCGO Environment Committee | To represent members | Mark Pressler |
| 22.02.2024 | End of Season meeting | To represent members | Anna Attard Dean Cayley Tanya Howard Courtney Moar |
| 28.02.2024 | Bundaberg Area Fire Management Group Meeting | To represent members | Matt Leighton |
| 29.02.2024 | Bundaberg Region Mayoral Debate | To represent members | Tanya Howard |
| 07.03.2024 | SRA Southern District Activity update | To receive update | Tanya Howard |
| 12—13.03.2024 | QCGO Policy Council | To represent members | Mark Pressler Tanya Howard |

Farm Electrical Safety with Look up and Live

With crushing season ahead, it is a timely reminder to take care with electrical safety.

Many types of farm work can put you at risk of contact with powerlines, especially if you're using large machinery like cane harvesters. To keep safe, you'll need to know how to spot electrical hazards on the job and use safe work habits to reduce risks.

Some farming activities carry a higher risk of unexpected contact with energised cables. This could cause power outages, damage your equipment or give you a life-threatening electric shock. High-risk jobs often involve large machinery that can contact powerlines when passing underneath or restrict your field of vision.

Farming jobs with a higher risk of electrical accidents include:

- harvesting
- spraying
- transporting machinery or other high loads
- moving equipment while irrigating
- excavating.

The Look Up And Live mobile app helps you plan to work safely around powerlines. It lets you see where powerlines and pillar boxes are, assess the safe working distance from powerlines with the Exclusion Zone Calculator, and request safety advice and resources.

It also combines several important safety features in one handy location, including:

- Safety guidelines and advice, including powerline exclusion zones
- Options for planning or performing work e.g. powerline visual indicators
- Information on de-energisation or relocation of powerlines
- High load forms
- Before You Dig Australia enquiry details.

Download the app from the Apple Store or Google Play.

Ergon Network also have cane industry electrical safety packs available to order free of charge from their website containing a Look Up and Live folder, cane industry brochure, marking powerlines brochure, exclusion zones sticker, what to do if your harvester brings down powerlines sticker and the exclusion zone low tac

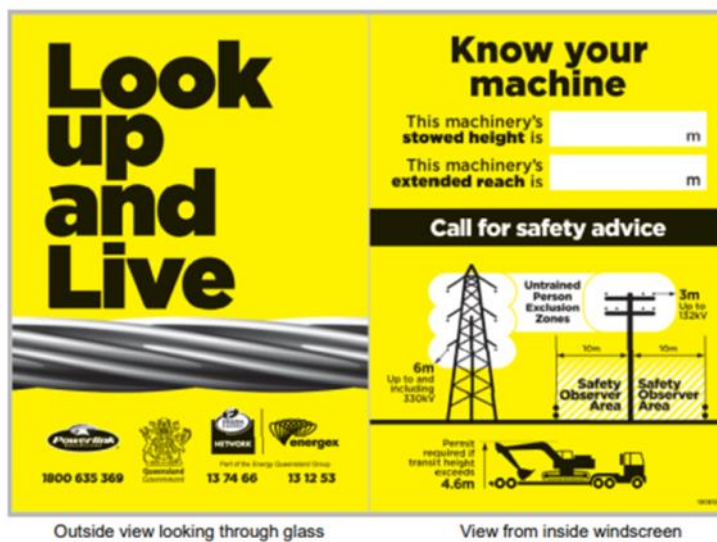
windscreen sticker (pictured below).

Additional Look up and Live exclusion zone stickers for vehicle windcreens, exclusion zone corflute signs and delineator covers (suitable for witches hats) are also available to order at no cost.

Complete the order form at <https://lual.cpxonline.net.au/> to receive yours.

Bundaberg CANEGROWERS will also have a limited amount of cane industry safety packs, signs and stickers available at the front counter for members. ■

Windscreen low tac sticker 100mm x 140mm



Articles appearing in *The Bundaberg District Canegrower* do not necessarily represent the policies and views of Bundaberg CANEGROWERS.

The Bundaberg District Canegrower

If undeliverable return to:



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