

The Bundaberg District Canegrower

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August 2024

Chair's Update

As I write this the harvest season is approximately 47% and it has been a bit of a stop start affair. Mill throughput has been hovering around 300 – 320 tonne per hour. With the current throughput and tonnes remaining, excluding any more wet weather we will see a finish date of approximately 8 December 2024. Rainfall from the last event was quite variable across the district with falls of anywhere between 60 and 120mm and we have seen the CCS slide backwards once again, how different it is from last year. With the weather warming up and the elevated soil moisture levels the suckers are well on their way and I feel that they will be a major factor in holding the CCS down, the base CCS is still set at 13.00. As the weather and soil temperatures rise spring planting will be in full swing and Michael and David have been very busy propagating and growing out current one-eye sett orders.

Through our membership of Bundaberg Ag-Food & Fibre Alliance we provided feedback to the review of the Bundaberg Regional Council Agricultural Buffer Planning policy, including a request to formulate and implement Right to Farm guidelines to assist the public with an understanding of what it means to live in a rural community and reduce the amount of complaints about farmers undertaking lawful agricultural activities.

We will be reviewing and contributing to the SRA / CANEGROWERS submission on the APVMA proposal to introduce new restrictions on the use of Paraquat. The consequences of the proposed changes could have impacts on productivity, increased input costs and how you manage your farm. If you would like to discuss the proposed changes, please contact Matt Leighton.

Increased land values have resulted in yet another rise in Council rates even though the Category 9 rate in the dollar has been reduced and rates increases capped at 20% after taking increased land valuations into consideration. This is still not a good outcome considering what rates have done in the past although we acknowledge that it could have been a lot worse. We will continue advocating for a reduction to correct those massive increases from the past.

All groundwater Area B users in the Coastal Burnett Groundwater Management Area are reminded your water meters are required to be revalidated by the 30 November 2024. Please ensure you get your name on a waiting list with one of the validators as they are heavily booked and notify the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water of your intention to have revalidation works undertaken.

On Wednesday, 7 August we hosted the first of the SmartAg training programs for the district which saw 14 participants undertake Pilot/escort training for oversized and over massed loads. We hope to hold another of these courses, plus other training when we have enough interest. If you are interested in undertaking training relevant to your farming enterprise, such as a pilot/escort course, chemical accreditation or forklift training, please contact the office to register your expression of interest.

Matt has been kept extremely busy organising soil tests and N&P Budgets for growers to comply with Reef Regulation requirements. If you require assistance with meeting your Reef Regulation requirements or are just looking for further information about what is required, please contact Matt on 0437 084 035.

Courtney has been busy helping quite a few growers access Federal Government funding for the Energy Efficiency Grants for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises – Round 2. This funding will see upgrades to lighting, switchboards, motors, pumps and VSDs that may not have otherwise been achievable without the cash injection. If you were successful and require assistance with the next stage of your project, please contact the office.

Lets hope the rain stays at bay for a while so we can get this valuable crop off and processed in the shortest possible time.

Mark Pressler
Chairman



Top Five (5) Issues We Have Been Working On

1. Taking soil tests and assisting growers with N & P Budget
2. Continuing development of local haulout course, funded by SmartAg Qld.
3. Assisting growers to determine their most suitable electricity tariffs and switch when there are savings identified
4. Finalising the Grain in Cane soybean season and payments
5. End of financial year reporting and preparations for AGM on 24 October 2024

2024 Season Indicative Advances Program

Based on QSL reports 26 July 2024

| Applicable From | Uncommitted Pool Advance (AUD/tonne IPS) | | QSL Standard Advance Rate | |
|-----------------|--|----------------|---------------------------|--------|
| | Payment Date | Payment Change | | To |
| Initial | | \$0 | \$420 | 65.0% |
| 15 Jun 24 | | -\$21 | \$399 | 65.0% |
| 13 Jul 24 | | \$0 | \$399 | 65.0% |
| 17 Aug 24 | | \$0 | \$399 | 65.0% |
| 14 Sep 24 | | \$0 | \$399 | 65.0% |
| 19 Oct 24 | | \$31 | \$430 | 70.0% |
| 16 Nov 24 | | \$15 | \$445 | 72.5% |
| 14 Dec 24 | | \$31 | \$476 | 77.5% |
| 18 Jan 25 | | \$15 | \$491 | 80.0% |
| 15 Feb 25 | | \$15 | \$506 | 82.5% |
| 15 Mar 25 | | \$31 | \$537 | 87.5% |
| 19 Apr 25 | | \$15 | \$552 | 90.0% |
| 17 May 25 | | \$16 | \$568 | 92.5% |
| 21 Jun 25 | | \$15 | \$583 | 97.5% |
| By 31 July 25 | | \$31 | \$614 | 100.0% |

Notes:

Under QSL's Advances program, supplying growers and millers are paid a proportional amount of their current estimated final sugar pricing result. The program is indicative only and may change during the course of the season, and so should not be taken as a commitment by QSL with regard to either the Advance rate or date of increase. The QSL Board reviews the program periodically to determine whether scheduled increases should be approved or amended, weighing factors such as movements in the marketing and shipping plans, sugar price and currency movements and the timing of cash flows. Suppliers' positions in relation to any pricing elections may also impact the timing and size of Advance payments. Based on indicative pool values, with a estimated combined QSL Harvest and US Quota pool value of \$613.63/t IPS as of 26 July 2024.

Note: The 'Applicable From' payment dates listed below may differ from your own payment dates due to your local milling arrangements and bank processing times.

This figure is an estimate only for the default QSL pricing position of 98% Harvest Pool + 2% US Quota Pool based on pool values as at the date specified. Please note that the pool values used to calculate the default payment will change as the season progresses. The default payment figure incorporates a weighted average Shared Pool allocation, with the Shared Pool allocation applied to grower payments varying in each region due to regional costs (regional Shared Pool details are available at www.qsl.com.au). The estimated payment figure quoted also does not include any applicable

Crushing Statistics – 2024 Season



Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Ltd

**OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE REPRESENTATION, LEADERSHIP AND SERVICES,
AND PROMOTE UNITY IN THE INTEREST OF GROWERS**

Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited Annual General Meeting

The Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited Annual General Meeting will be held on 24 October 2024.

Under the BSSL constitution one (1) Grower Elected Director must retire at each Annual General Meeting.

To be a Grower Elected Director you must be a member of the company or a

representative of a corporate member, at least 18 years old, a grower, and a supplier to the Millaquin Mill.

To be eligible for election as a Grower Elected Director the person or some member intending to nominate the person must give notice in writing signed by the nominee giving consent to the nomination.

To be valid the notice must be received at our registered office by close of business Tuesday, 22 October 2024.

Anyone interested in nominating is requested to contact Company Secretary Dale Holliss on 4151 2555 for further information and a nomination kit. ■

Rural plant Code of Practice 2024 commences on 23 September 2024

Following public consultation, the Rural plant Code of Practice 2024 (the Code) will commence as an approved code of practice on 23 September 2024.

The purpose of the Code is to help reduce the risk of injuries and fatalities by providing guidance on working safely with rural plant. Updates to the Code are expected to have significant positive impacts on work health and safety outcomes on Queensland farms.

The Code will also support the agricultural industry to meet its work health and safety legislative obligations.

The Code will replace the Rural Plant Code of Practice 2004 and the Safe Design and Operation of Tractors Code of Practice 2005.

As tractors are rural plant and a common source of fatalities and serious injuries on farms, they are now comprehensively covered under the new Code.

Other key updates to the Code include:

- guidance on technology including the use of drones, quad bikes and side by side vehicles
- modernised content to remove outdated information (such as references to discontinued Australian

Standards) and to include new diagrams and pictures.

- guidance on :
 - * how to consult, cooperate and coordinate activities with other duty holders.
 - * requirements for high risk work licences for certain plant.

The new Code reflects the latest in safety best practices tailored specifically for Queensland's agricultural industry.

Read more about the Rural plant Code of Practice 2024 at

www.worksafe.qld.gov.au. ■



Soybean Update

2024 Season

The last of the 2024 soybeans have been dispatched to Toowoomba in what has been the latest soybeans have been sent by the Grain in Cane Co-op. This means that 100 tonnes were dispatched for the season which is an unfortunate record to have, though understandable given the high sugar prices last September and the long term El Nino climate forecast, which fortunately did not eventuate.

2025 Season

With sugar prices coming off the record high prices now is the time to plant soybeans as part of the farming system rotation. Soybeans provide an opportunity to target hard to control grass weeds from cane as well as reducing the nematode pressure. The improved soil health also helps with making it easier to plant cane due to improved soil structure from soybeans.

Another benefit is that the nitrogen from soybeans does not need to be included in the Nitrogen and Phosphorus Budget for the farm. This means when growers reduce the amount of fertiliser nitrogen in the plant cane there is the ability to increase the amount of nitrogen in the ratoons as long as the total farm nitrogen budget is not exceeded.

Indicative soybean prices for the 2025 season are currently \$750 per tonne for full fat soybeans and \$850 per tonne for edible 1 quality soybeans.

The main varieties for the region have not changed with A-6785, Hayman[®] and Kuranda[®] the most common varieties however other varieties can be grown. Each soybean variety has an ideal planting window and given the amount of disease pressure over the last couple of years planting slightly later than ideal to get a smaller plant with more airflow

will be beneficial.

If anyone is looking to grow soybeans and is looking for some advice they can contact Matt Leighton on 0437 084 035 or refer to the online soybean manual available at www.soyaustralia.com. ■



Soils Workshop in Bundaberg Shows One Agronomic Solution Cannot Fit All

SRA recently ran a three-day workshop at SRA Bundaberg for industry professionals, facilitated by John Panitz, Morrisey Ag, and Bernard Schroeder, University of Southern Queensland, and focused on sugarcane agronomy and soil management.

Participants included Isis Productivity Limited, Bundaberg Sugar Services, CANEGROWERS Bundaberg and SRA staff.

The workshop curriculum included travelling to seven sugarcane farms to examine the diversity of soil types in the area. At each site participants discussed the farm's position in the landscape, soil properties, management practices and possible productivity constraints arising from the physical and chemical properties of that particular soil type e.g. sodicity, pH and soil structure.

Participants collected topsoil and subsoil samples for detailed physical and chemical analysis. These analyses were

conducted in conjunction with existing soil test data to identify soil characteristics and potential production constraints.

Participants enjoyed the opportunity to visit innovative growers, Tony Chapman and Bruce Peterson. Participants were able to identify and discuss critical production constraints and develop tailored management strategies for their farms.

Participants recognised that the production constraints were specific to each farmer's operation due to soil type and other pertinent factors and therefore farming operations needed to be specific to those challenges – one recipe could not fit all. ■



In the field are University of South Queensland's Prof. Bernard Schroeder and John Sutcliffe, with Bundaberg Sugar Services Field Officer David Dowson, SRA Project Officer Agronomy Hector Fleury and Isis Productivity Services Officer, Anthony La Rocca.

Industrial Relations Reforms

Recently a series of federal workplace legislation amendments came into effect.

These new laws are the biggest change to workplace laws in decades and impose another layer of complexity in an already challenging business and employment environment.

Plus, stiff penalties could apply to employers who don't comply with the new-laws.

What changed:

Right to disconnect

Employees in businesses with more than 15 staff will now have the right to refuse to monitor, read or respond to contact from their employer after hours, unless doing so is 'reasonable'. This change will not apply to small business employers (that is, those with less than 15 employees) until August 26, 2025.

Casual employment changes

There is also now a new definition of 'casual employee' and a new pathway for casuals wanting to convert to more permanent work. Casual employees will

now have the discretion to convert to permanent employment after 6 months of employment (12 months for small businesses) if they believe their employment status no longer meets the casual definition. Again, this change applies to businesses with more than 15 employees from this week with small businesses impacted from 26 August 2025.

To discuss these changes or other Sugar Industry Award related matters please contact the office on 4151 2555.

Compliance with Reef Regulations

Growers are reminded that Compliance/Audit Checks from DES have recently occurred in the region.

The audits checked records from previous years as well as checking where growers had current Nitrogen and Phosphorus Budgets for their farm.

If any member receives notification about an upcoming audit please contact Matt Leighton for assistance in preparation for the audit, as well as being available on farm while the audit check takes place. ■



FARM CHEMICALS RECORD BOOK

Completing this book assists Growers to meet their record keeping obligations as part of the Reef Regulations.

To collect a record keeping book call into the office or contact us on 4151 2555.



Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Ltd



SmartAg Queensland is an industry-led initiative designed by farmers to support farmers access relevant training.

Through SmartAg Queensland, farmers can access accredited, non-accredited and micro-credential training to support their agricultural enterprise to attract, train, and retain a skilled and diverse workforce.

- 1 Safety
- 2 Production
- 3 Business
- 4 Technology

Types of training that may be offered through the four key areas include:

- Pilot/escort
- Haulout
- Forklift
- Rural/remote First Aid
- WHS essentials
- Business Management skills
- Digital literacy
- Technology
- Risk management
- Leadership skills
- Agronomy



Express your interest
 Growers are invited to submit an expression of interest for training that will assist you or your employees within your business by contacting Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Ltd on the details below.

07 4151 2555 reception@bdbcanegrowers.com.au

SmartAg Queensland is a collaboration between the Queensland Farmers' Federation and the Queensland Government to support Queensland farmers. SmartAg Queensland is being delivered in partnership with [Cotton Australia](#), [Queensland Fruit & Vegetable Growers](#) and [Canegrowers](#).

District Tour

In July we welcomed staff from the CANEGROWERS Brisbane office to the district for an industry familiarisation tour.

Brisbane staff started off the tour with an on-farm talk by Mark Pressler where he discussed his mixed cropping operation as well as showing staff machinery including his cane harvester. Unfortunately a cane fire couldn't be found that evening so staff found

themselves on top of the Hummock to see an overview of the Bundaberg district and view a spectacular sunset.

The tour also visited the Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited One-eye Sett shadehouse facility as well as a tour of Millaquin Mill, the cane analysis lab and a tour through the Bundaberg Sugar Terminal including a look at the sugar pile from ground level and from above.

Courtney Moar and Sarah Standen facilitated an information session on the Cane Analysis Program to finish of their tour of the Bundaberg District. ■



Farm check-in

Biosecurity is everyone's responsibility and we must all play a role to ensure we minimise biosecurity risks to protect Queensland's lifestyle, industries and environment from pests and diseases.

All people in Queensland have a general biosecurity obligation (GBO) under Queensland's *Biosecurity Act 2014* to ensure they do not spread a pest, disease or a contaminant. This applies to corporations too.

This means everyone is responsible for managing biosecurity risks that are under their control; and to the best of their ability, recognise and minimise

biosecurity risks within their industry, home, or places they are visiting.

To assist with record keeping, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries have available an online Farm Check-in form to record visitors to your agricultural property. Recording visitors is a key component of a biosecurity management plan and can help growers and their visitors to meet their general biosecurity obligation.

Growers should also download and display the Farm check-in front gate signage on your property entrance to help visitors check-in to your property.

Further information can be found here <https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/news-media/campaigns/on-farm-biosecurity/farm-check-in> ■



FARM CHECK-IN

All visitors are encouraged to check-in prior to entering this property to help identify and manage biosecurity risks.

Property owner or manager's contact details:

Phone:

Email:

Report any biosecurity issues or concerns to Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23.

Bulk Fertiliser Bag Disposal

Reminder that the Big Bag Recovery program accepts approved brands of 1T bulk fertiliser bags to be dumped for free while the other brands incur a \$5 per bag disposal fee. Currently the only place where both types of fertiliser bags will be accepted is at the Qunaba Waste Disposal Site on Potters Road. Bags delivered at other sites are deemed general waste and a higher fee is charged.

The approved fertiliser bags include those from Incitec Pivot Limited, Nutrien Ag Solutions, Impact fertilisers, Tarra, GrowForce and Summit Fertilisers. The

full list of approved bags can be found at www.bigbagrecovery.com.au/#brands.

Non approved brands such as Koch will incur the \$5 per bag disposal fee.

To prepare for disposal the online disposal booking form needs to be completed with a date and time, preferably with 24 hours notice, the bags need to be stacked and folded with the fertiliser brand facing out, stack the bags onto the vehicle separating the approved and non approved bags. Once at the disposal site a declaration form needs to

be completed with up to 300 bags accepted at one time.

If growers have more than 300 approved scheme bags they are able to organise for an on-farm collection by Gary Gillis of Beneficial Recycling who can be contacted by email gary.gillis@beneficialrecycling.com.au or phone on 0403 431 705.

Further information can be found on the Bundaberg Regional Council website www.bundaberg.qld.gov.au/waste-recycling/waste-recycling-programs/8



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 |
|-------------------------------|---|---|--|
| 8/07/2024 | Monthly District Manager Meeting | To Represent Members | Tanya Howard Dale Holliss |
| 15/07/2024 | Regional Business HQ Board Meeting | To Represent Members | Tanya Howard |
| 16/07/2024 17/07/2024 | Qld CANEGROWERS Policy Council | To Represent Members | Tanya Howard Anna Attard |
| 18/07/2024 | Bundaberg Regional Ratepayers Association Meeting | To Represent Members | Tanya Howard Dale Holliss |
| 29/07/2024 | District Director Briefing | To Receive Update | Tanya Howard Mark Pressler |
| 1/08/024 | Cane Analysis/ Audit information session | To Provide Update | Tanya Howard Courtney Moar |
| 6/08/2024 - 7/08/2024 | SRA Soils Workshop | To Increase Knowledge | Matthew Leighton |
| 7/08/2024 | Reef Integrated Science Forum | To Represent Members | Matthew Leighton |
| 8/08/2024 | Soy Program Review | To Represent Members | Matthew Leighton |
| 13/08/2024 | Paradise Dam Reference Group Meeting | To Represent Members | Tanya Howard |
| 13/08/2024 - 16/08/2024 | Walking the Landscape Burrum | To Represent Members | Matthew Leighton |
| 20/08/2024 | QCA Irrigation Pricing Review | To Represent Members | Tanya Howard Dean Cayley Anna Attard |
| 22/08/2024 | BSL Bonsucro Meeting | To Review Arrangements | Tanya Howard Matthew Leighton |
| 27/08/2024 | QSL Meeting | To Discuss Season Progress & Arrangements | Tanya Howard Mark Pressler |



Positions vacant Farm Business Planning Officers

Locations: Central Queensland, Wide Bay and South East Queensland/Darling Downs

Apply now and make a difference in your community



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CANETRENDS AT AGROTREND

Friday, 20 September 2024

Representatives from Bundaberg Sugar, QSL,
Bundaberg Sugar Services and Bundaberg
CANEGROWERS will be available throughout
the day at Site 68.

**\$5 Entry and complimentary lunch vouchers available
upon presentation to the CaneTrends tent at Site 68.**

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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