

BUNDABERG SUGAR SERVICES LIMITED

ACN 109 261 092



Annual Report 2023/2024



Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited

CAPABILITY STATEMENT

ORGANISATIONAL OBJECTIVES

The underpinning philosophy behind the formation of Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited was the acknowledgement by Bundaberg Sugar and CANEGROWERS of the joint responsibility for ensuring the Bundaberg sugar industry's sustainability and the need to work together and to work smarter.

The objectives of Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited are:

- to enhance the productivity of the sugar industry by increasing the quantity and improving the quality of cane produced by crops grown in the Bundaberg district;
- to achieve regional sustainability in the Bundaberg area through full utilisation of sugar industry capital;
- to provide suitable advice and help to members about:
 - the prevention, control and eradication of pest infestation and disease of cane or any other matter or thing that adversely affects the quantity or quality of crops of cane; and/or
 - the production and harvesting of cane;
- to help, and cooperate with, other bodies involved in preventing, controlling and eradicating pests in cane;
- to help, and cooperate with, other bodies involved in researching the production, harvesting, transport and processing of cane;
- to provide advice and information to members for the preservation and enhancement of the capacity of land to sustain crops of cane;
- to help minimise any damage to the environment that may be caused by activities of the sugar industry within our area.

ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS

Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited is a Public Company Limited by Guarantee, and is a not-for-profit Organisation whose funding is provided by a levy on grower members. Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited is controlled by a board of directors, two (2) of which are appointed by growers and two (2) appointed by the mill.

Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited has previously managed funding projects for Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Department of Employment & Training, Qld Department of Primary Industries, The Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Department of State Development, Burnett Mary Regional Group and Sugar Research and Development Corporation.

Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited has experience in managing community based projects and has the necessary personnel, systems and procedures to provide the essential level of corporate governance, management, supervision and administration to direct projects.

Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited also provides direct and extension services such as:

- Approved seed cane for planting;
- Excellent, readily accessible advice;
- Help to identify and control cane pests and diseases;



Top row from left: Michael Cavallaro, Matthew Curtis, Ian Dart, Anna Attard
Bottom row from left: Michael Turner, Dale Holliss, David Dowson

ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

We present the report for the financial year 2023/24.

During the past twelve (12) months we have focused on needs based and member focused programs which consist of the approved plants scheme, plant source inspections, approved seed distribution pest and disease management and general extension.

On 2 January 2024 Michael Turner achieved 50 years of service to the Bundaberg Sugar industry and we acknowledge this very significant milestone.

In his 50 years working with Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited and its predecessors Michael has made a significant contribution.

He has assisted with the eradication of Fiji Disease, establishment of the 'kilogram cane' plots, building industry resilience following the detection of orange rust, smut and more recently Yellow Canopy Syndrome (YCS), as well as the continued monitoring of soldier fly, canegrubs, pink earth pearl, RSD and other pests and diseases that affect the industry.

More recently, Michael has been instrumental in establishing the germination and nursery facilities and protocols to ensure growers can access disease-free planting material and new varieties through the introduction of one-eye sett seedlings.

Michael will be taking his long service leave before finishing in July 2025 and on behalf of our members, we would like to acknowledge the service, assistance and dedication that Michael Turner provides to Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited.

We have been able to recruit David Dowson to take on the more critical Core Programs and he has been a very keen understudy to Michael since 8 January 2024.

We would also like to acknowledge the service that Dale Holliss has provided Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited in the role of Company Secretary since the formation of Bundaberg Sugar Services in June 2004. Dale will be resigning from this role after the AGM and will be replaced by Tanya Howard.

We would like to thank a wide range of sugar industry organisations, particularly Bundaberg Sugar Ltd and Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Limited for their assistance in helping Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited to meet our objectives.

On behalf of the Board, we would also like to formally acknowledge our members who are the reason why Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited exists in the first place.

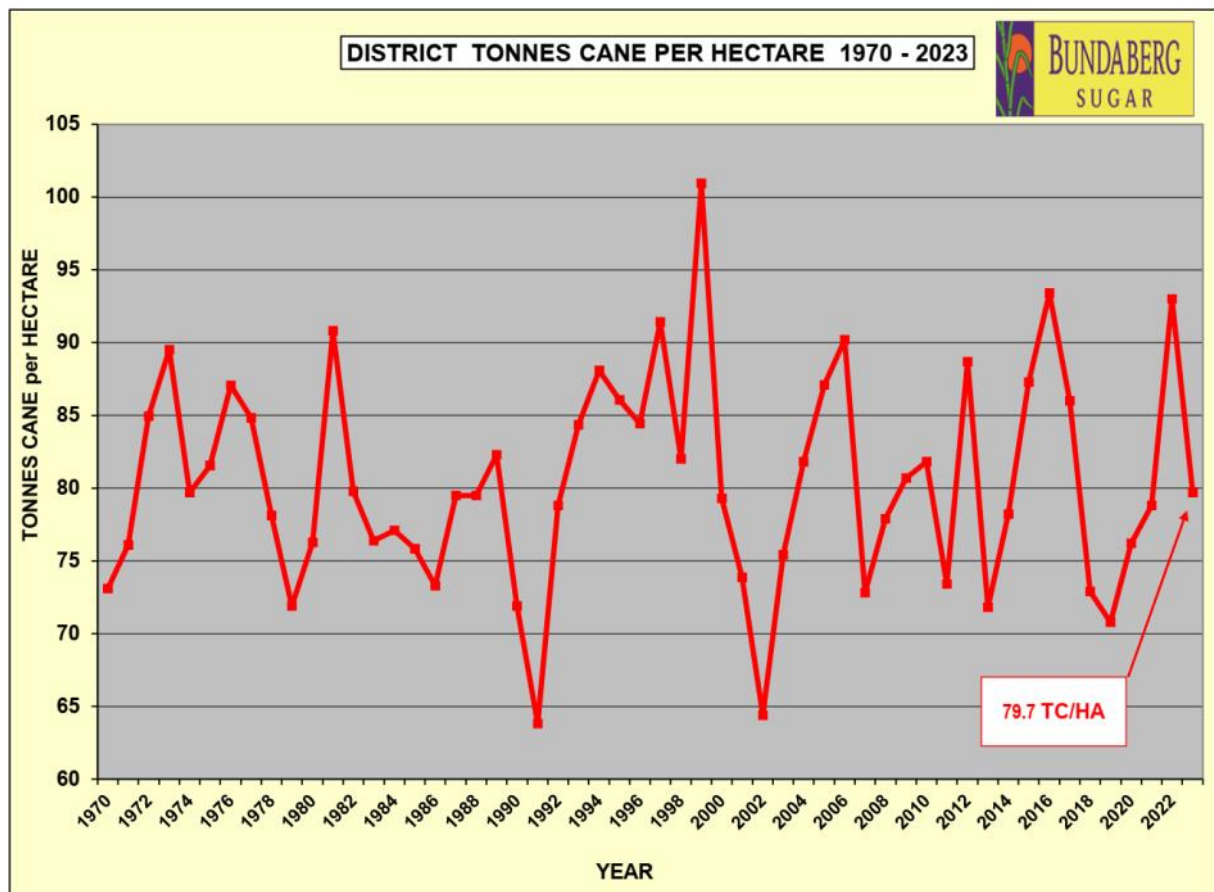
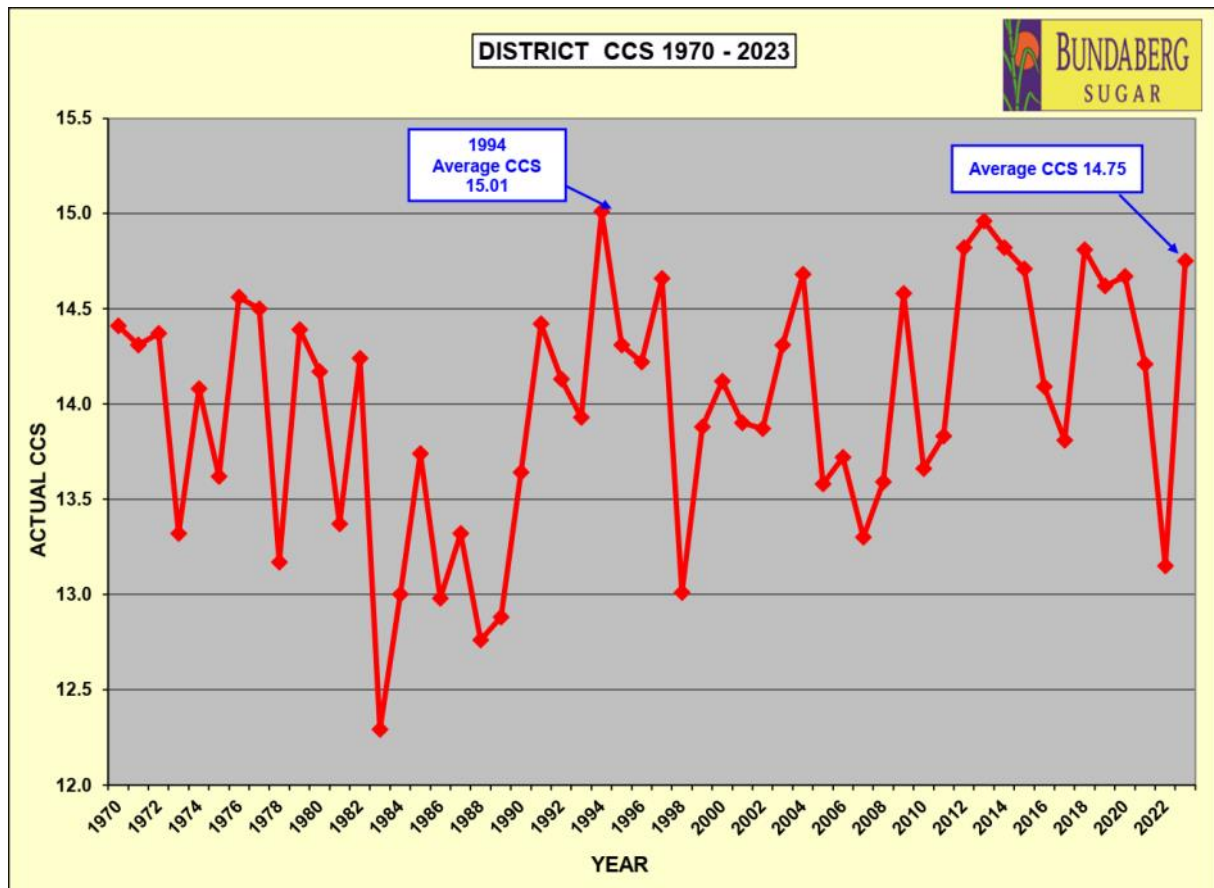
Michael Cavallaro
Chairman

Matthew Curtis
Deputy Chairman

Anna Attard
Director

Ian Dart
Director





CORE PROGRAMS

APPROVED SEED PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

The approved Seed Production and Distribution program ensures that all Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited plots are sampled for RSD, planted with the selected varieties and routinely inspected. As a service to members inspection of plant sources on individual farms is carried out upon request. The approved seed production is our core business and it is critical that we maintain and where possible, modernise how this service is delivered.

Approved Plants Scheme

The usual preparations for plants distribution including, organising, mailing out grower order forms, confirmation of orders, casual labour requirements, plot inspections and RSD testing of the plots were conducted. DNA samples were also taken on the varieties planted in the mother plot.

Three (3) general disease inspections were conducted at regular intervals during the year. No disease issues were detected during these inspections. There were some SRA20^Φ stools found mixed with the SRA29^Φ which could have happened during planting of the plot. The Mother plot was chipped on a regular basis for weeds.

Plant Source Inspections

Thirty-one (31) growers including Bundaberg Sugar requested plant source inspections and RSD tests on fifty (50) blocks of plant sources. Two (2) sources were identified with light smut infection. Four (4) blocks returned a positive result of RSD. All growers were sent notification letters outlining the RSD results.

Plot Planting

Mother plot

Spring 2023

The spring 2023 plot was planted on the 26 September. Varieties planted consist of Q138, Q183, Q208^Φ, Q232^Φ, Q238^Φ, Q240^Φ, Q242^Φ, Q245^Φ, Q247^Φ, Q252^Φ, KQ228^Φ, SRA2^Φ, SRA4^Φ, SRA11^Φ, SRA19^Φ, SRA20^Φ, SRA29^Φ, SRAW33^Φ, SRA34^Φ, SRA38^Φ, Q124, Q151 and Q188.

Autumn 2024

The autumn 2024 plot was planted on 5 April. Varieties planted consist of Q138, Q183, Q208^Φ, Q232^Φ, Q238^Φ, Q240^Φ, Q242^Φ, Q245^Φ, Q247^Φ, Q252^Φ, KQ228^Φ, SRA2^Φ, SRA4^Φ, SRA11^Φ, SRA19^Φ, SRA20^Φ, SRA29^Φ, SRAW33^Φ, SRA34^Φ, SRA38^Φ and Q151.

All the planting sources for mother plot are derived from tissue sources to maintain integrity of the variety.

Approved Seed Distribution

One-eye setts

Bundaberg Sugar Services one-eye setts propagation program is the main source of purchasing approved seed cane by growers.

Since the inception of one-eye setts (2019) there has been a marked increase in the number of seedlings purchased by growers each year to the point where we have outgrown the previous facility.

Some growers are ordering enough seedlings to plant up to one hectare of approved seed cane.

Breakdown of seedlings distributed to growers

Variety	Spring 2023	Autumn 2024
Q124	160	0
Q138	0	96
Q151	448	0
Q183	384	416
Q208 ^Φ	2,528	1,184
Q232 ^Φ	0	640
Q238 ^Φ	256	2,656
Q240 ^Φ	13,824	3,744
Q242 ^Φ	0	0
Q245 ^Φ	0	0
Q247 ^Φ	0	0
Q252 ^Φ	160	1,280
KQ228 ^Φ	4,128	800
SRA 2 ^Φ	32	0
SRA 4 ^Φ	32	640
SRA11 ^Φ	448	2,880
SRA 19 ^Φ	3,840	0
SRA 20 ^Φ	2,176	0
SRA 29 ^Φ	6,816	6,752
SRA34 ^Φ	12,064	6,176
SRA38 ^Φ	2,944	2,592
SRA39 ^Φ	2,016	1,120
SRAW33 ^Φ	3,136	6,496

Spring 2023

The distribution of spring 2023 seedlings commenced on 16 August. Thirty-two growers (32) growers collected 55,391 seedlings. There were no orders from Bundaberg Sugar company farms.

Autumn 2024

Autumn 2024 distribution of seedlings commenced on 18 March. Twenty-six (26) growers including Bundaberg Sugar company farms collected 37,472 seedlings.



New Greenhouse



Planting one-eye setts (BSSL planter)

Seedling water wheel planter

Bundaberg Sugar Services have a dedicated seedling planter available to plant seedlings which growers can borrow to plant their seedlings, the planter is delivered to farm and collected once they are finished using it by Sugar Services staff. Growers are taking up this offer of the seedling planter when purchasing seedlings.

There have been no major issues with the planter.

One-eye sett seedling sales (Jan-Dec) 2019-2024

Year	Autumn	Spring	Total
2019	0	9,440	9,440
2020	11,296	34,016	45,312
2021	18,976	27,573	46,549
2022	23,680	62,160	85,840
2023	40,448	55,391	95,839
2024	37,536	41,056	78,592



BSSL seedling planter in trailer



Potted one-eye setts

Note: The spring sale number includes sales to Maryborough.

PEST AND DISEASE MANAGEMENT

Pest and disease management remains a vital function of Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited who carry out farm inspection and interpretation of specific pest or disease incidence at the request of grower members.

One of our objectives is to provide suitable advice and help to the members about the prevention, control and eradication of pest infection and disease of cane or any other matter or thing that adversely affects the quantity and quality of crops of cane and/or the production and harvesting of cane.

Yellow Canopy Syndrome (YCS)

The 2023/24 season observations identified that there was some YCS present throughout the Bundaberg district, but not to the same extent as previous years. Some of these blocks identified were in previous year observations.

Ratoon Stunting Disease

Ratoon Stunting Disease (RSD) still remains a major disease facing the Bundaberg district. With this in mind Bundaberg Sugar Services Ltd conducts annual surveys and promotes the regular use of recommended hygiene measures to manage this disease.

Bundaberg Sugar Services conducts annual surveys across the district to identify the extent of this disease and promote the regular use of recommended hygiene measures to manage this disease.

RSD testing of the mother plot at Clayton road was conducted with twenty-four (24) samples collected using the new method of bulking stalks from a block or individual variety and sending the sample to SRA Brisbane for analysis. Samples are collected every ten (10) metres in the mother plot. All samples returned a negative result.

Sampling results below.

	Number samples collected	Doubtful samples	Positive blocks
Approved seed plots	24	0	0
Grower plant source / RSD survey	216	0	14
Total samples	240	0	14

Machinery Inspections

There were no requests for machinery inspections in the last twelve (12) months. Any inspections requested are directed to the relevant authorised person at the Biosecurity office (DAFF) Bundaberg.

Planting, Pest and Disease data collection

Due to other work commitments a small number of grower members were surveyed including Bundaberg Sugar farms across the Bundaberg mill area.

Information collected includes where approved seed cane was planted, row spacing's, GPS planted or block just marked out by GPS, break crop rotation (soybean, peanut, smallcrops), pest or disease problems (e.g. cane grubs area affected, tonnes loss) irrigation type, fertiliser/insecticide use.

This information gives us an idea of what is going on around the district and where we need to tackle a pest, disease or nutrient situation.

IRRIGATION & DRAINAGE

Drain Cleaner

Three (3) growers requested to use the cleaner to clean underground soakage lines. General maintenance was carried out on equipment.



EXTENSION

EXTENSION SUPPORT

Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited provides support to members in an effort to reduce the impact of rising costs on farm productivity and to enhance the future economic viability of the Bundaberg sugarcane industry.

General Extension

During the past twelve (12) months a range of grower requests were investigated and depending on the problem identified appropriate control measures were recommended. There was a range of requests involved:

Pest

- Pink Earthpearl
- Rhypardi beetle
- Moth borer
- Soldier fly

Disease

- Yellow Canopy Syndrome
- Smut in SRA20[Ⓛ] and SRA29[Ⓛ]

Tissue culture seedlings

- The only tissue culture seedlings ordered were for the mother by BSSL.

One-eye sett seedlings

- Information on seedlings
- Posted confirmation letters
- Availability of seedlings to purchase from other mill areas
- Planting distance/tray
- Spare seedlings available

- Late order for seedling availability
- Planter availability

Soil testing

- Nutrient
- Pachymetra

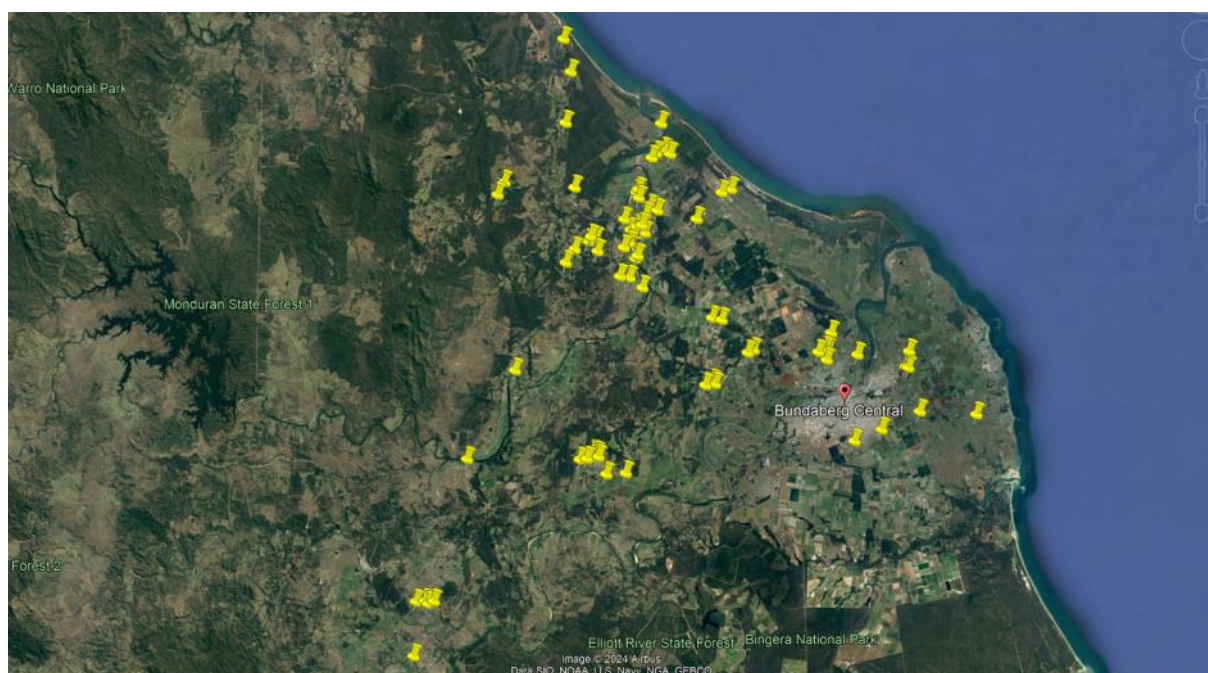
Other general requests

- Plant source inspections
- RSD test plant sources
- Water logging damage
- Herbicide damage
- Variety identification/information
- Drain cleaner
- Slow ratooning
- Smut (SRA20[Ⓛ], SRA29[Ⓛ])

Grower requested nutrient requests

During the past twelve (12) months a number of growers have taken advantage of the service provided by BSSL. Twenty-nine (29) blocks from seventeen (17) growers were sampled to determine the current nutrient status and requirements for plant and ratoon crops.

Growers are provided with a nutrient management plan and N & P budget when receiving the results.



During the 2023/24 year there were 72 soil tests for 39 growers.

FUNCTIONS & EVENTS

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, 8 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.



Mark Pressler presents the Inspiring Female Leader Awards to Krystal Golchert.

Krystal Golchert, Chairperson of Bundaberg Women in Sugar, was recognised as an Inspiring Female Leader for her involvement as Chairperson for the past nine (9) years and 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.



Michael Cavallaro presents 50 years medallion to Ross Rehbein

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.



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

ANNUAL BUNDABERG SUGAR INDUSTRY AWARDS

J & R McCracken Highest Actual CC 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)***QSL Award for Contribution to Productivity***Matthew Leighton***Nufarm Award for Service to Industry***Michael Turner***Sunwater Young Industry Achiever Award***Hayden Attard***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</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*



Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited
ABN 12 109 261 092

Canegrowers' Building
32 Bourbong Street
(PO Box 953)
BUNDABERG QLD 4670

Phone: (07) 4151 2555
Fax: (07) 4153 1986
Email: sugar_services@bdbcanegrowers.com.au
