



The Bundaberg District Canegrower

Volume 19, Issue 8
December 2024

Chair's Update

As I write this Millaquin has received the last cane for the season and the rain has been steadily falling over the last few days. Growers finished a couple of days earlier with company cane coming in over the last few days which saw almost everything harvested that was included in the original estimate. A total of 1,205,229.24 tonnes was crushed for the 2024 Season, a record throughput for Millaquin Mill. Sugar has been below what we are used to for most of the year which will see a season average of 13.5897 CCS for the assigned area and Relative average CCS was 13.8190. The weather made it a peculiar season with some rain and storms being sporadic over the district with only a couple of wet weather stoppages. In saying that there have been some growers impacted more than others. Our initial assessment is that mill availability was 96%. We would like to thank growers, contractors and Mill Manager Rob Zahn, Cane Supply Manager, Micheal Green and all mill staff on a job well done.

In week 29 No. 1 Mill failed due to some extremely high loadings of mud and cane stool, this is an avoidable problem which should not have happened. Harvesting operators need to keep a close eye on the product they are sending to the mill. Mill staff were able to bypass No. 1 Mill and recalibrate the NIR to No. 2 Mill to complete the end of the season, this was a very good outcome. Auditors have been kept busy overseeing operations of the lab and applying corrections where necessary due to some extended cut-to-crush times.

Next year's tentative estimate of approximately 1.3m tonnes is going to take a bit more to handle within the designated 23 weeks for crushing per the Bundaberg Collective Cane Supply Contract. We will be working closely with Bundaberg Sugar representatives

to try to facilitate the best outcome for all parties involved. To get the crop crushed within the 23 weeks, growers and harvesting contractors will also need to play their part on what could be another record crop in 2025.

The price has rallied again with some excellent prices being achieved, if any growers need help with the QSL Direct app and pricing strategies, please call Glenn Harris on 0409 601 349 and he will help answer any questions.

There have been some delays with Oreco payments and instalments will be paid upon receipt from Oreco. Interest due on the late instalments will be charged according to the Agreement.

In November, briefings were provided to Jamie Gorry, DPI Rural Economic Development Director – South Region, Tom Smith MP, Member for Bundaberg and Stephen Bennett MP, Member for Burnett to provide current views of the Bundaberg Sugar Industry in respect to matters including biosecurity, Reef Regulations, research funding, right to farm and the economic importance of the sugar industry. More information can be found on page 10.

Michael Turner has finished work and will be on extended leave prior to retirement, we wish Michael a happy retirement filled with many adventures and special memories. David Dowson is available on 0429 334 553 for any Sugar Services related matters.

Soybeans are an option for planting at the moment with the planting window for A6785 closing around Christmas time, however there are other varieties suitable for planting later whether they be for grain production or just fallow crop. Contact Matthew Leighton if you have any questions.

Bundaberg CANEGROWERS office

will be closed from 5pm, Friday, 20 December until 8:30am, Thursday, 2 January 2025. If you require assistance during this time, please contact myself or Tanya Howard on 0409 485 154.

Finally, on behalf of the Board, myself, and staff I would like to wish everyone a happy, safe and joyous Christmas and a happy new year.

Mark Pressler
Chairman



Mount Rawdon Pumped Hydro Project Update

*Cane fire room,
The Railway Hotel,
North Bundaberg*

*Thursday,
16th January 2025*

5pm

Andrew Horvat of Evolution Mining will provide a project update and will be available to answer any questions following the presentation.



Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Ltd Newsletter

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Website: www.bdbcanegrowers.com.au

2024 Season Indicative Advances Program

Based on QSL reports 29 November 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%
11 Jul 24	\$0	\$399	65.0%
17 Aug 24	\$0	\$399	65.0%
14 Sep 24	\$17	\$416	65.0%
16 Oct 24	\$32	\$448	70.0%
20 Nov 24	\$77	\$525	72.5%
18 Dec 24	\$29	\$554	77.5%
15 Jan 25	\$18	\$572	80.0%
19 Feb 25	\$18	\$590	82.5%
19 Mar 25	\$36	\$626	87.5%
16 Apr 25	\$18	\$644	90.0%
21 May 25	\$18	\$662	92.5%
18 Jun 25	\$18	\$680	95%
By 31 July 25	\$35	\$715	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 an estimated combined QSL Harvest and US Quota pool value of \$715/t IPS as of 29 November 2024.

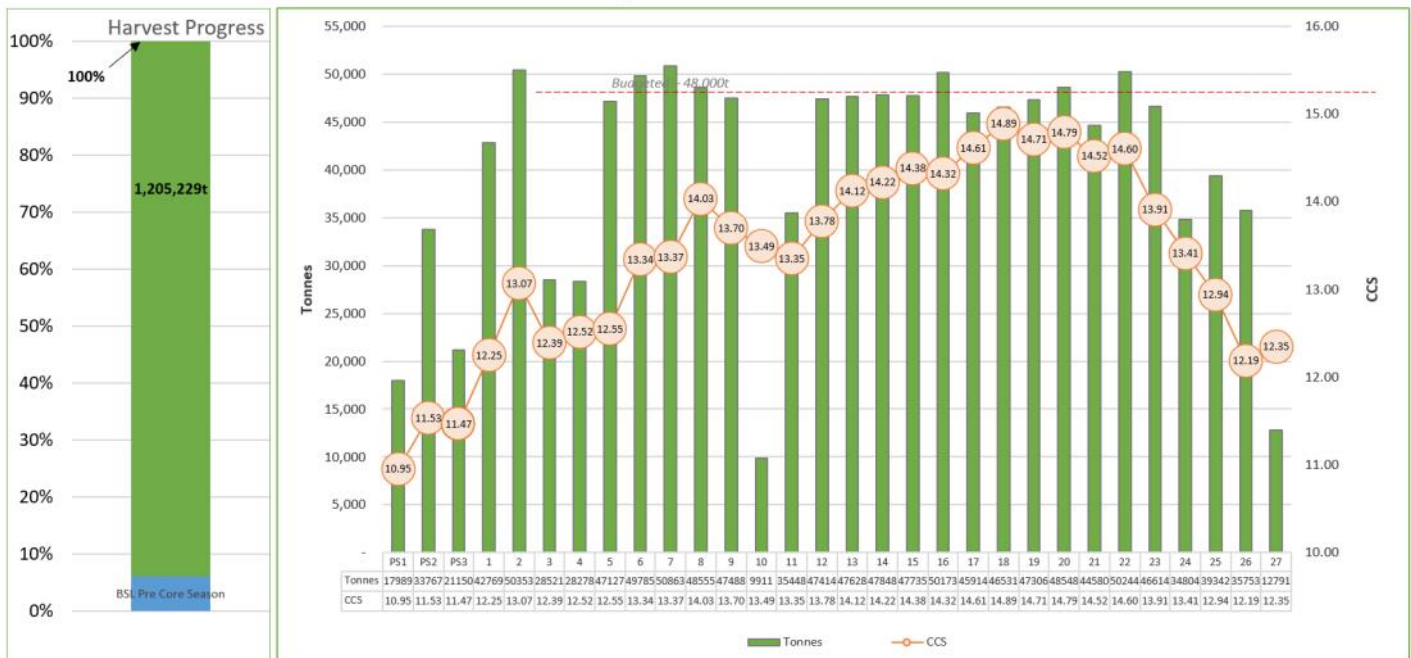
Note: The 'Applicable From' payment dates listed below may differ from your own payment dates due to your local milling arrangements and bank processing times.

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 Loyalty Bonus, GST, allowances, deductions or any other adjustments incurred by the grower or passed on by their miller.

Accelerated Advances

Accelerated Advances Program participants receive 90% of their eligible products' indicative value by December each year. Under this scheme, Advance rates paid for tonnages in these products remain at 90% from each season, reverting to the QSL Standard Advance Rate from the subsequent May payment.

Crushing Statistics – 2024 Season



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

Training Opportunities



The SmartAg Queensland project continues to go from strength to strength having delivered training to more than 920 farmers across Queensland since June 2024. QFF, alongside peak body members and delivery partners Cotton Australia, CANEGROWERS and Queensland Fruit & Vegetable Growers, have delivered priority training to the cotton, cane and horticulture sectors across Queensland.

Course	Date	Price (after SmartAg subsidy applied, all prices subject to change)
Forklift Training	4 - 6 February 2025 11 - 13 February 2025 18 - 20 February 2025 25 - 27 February 2025	\$187.50
Pilot/Escort Training	26 February 2025	\$162.50
Chemical Safety Training	29 January 2025 31 March 2025	\$108.75
Haulout Essentials - Southern Region	April/May 2025	TBA

Chemical Safety Training

SmartAg QLD have agreed to subsidise training costs by 75%. Country Co Training provide a full-day course (with some pre-course work) at an ordinary cost of \$435 or \$108.75 after the SmartAg subsidy is applied for eligible participants.

Pilot/Escort Course

SmartAg QLD have agreed to subsidise 75% of the cost of a pilot/escort course where you will receive a Statement of Attainment in TLIC3010: Pilot or Escort Oversized and/or Over-Massed Loads, Level 1 Pilot. This will allow you to apply to TMR to start the process to obtain your level 1 authorisation. By completing this course growers will be able to move over size over mass agricultural vehicles without the requirement for roadside signs and create better flexibility for the business.

Forklift Training

SmartAg QLD have agreed to subsidise eligible forklift training by 75%. Strategix provide a three-day course in Bundaberg at an ordinary cost of \$750 or \$187.50 after the SmartAg subsidy is applied for eligible participants. At the completion of this course the successful applicant will receive an unrestricted class LF High Risk Work Licence and will be able to operate high reach and counterbalance forklifts but not order pickers or other high risk vehicles (flyer attached). As this is deemed a High Risk Work Licence participants must be at least 18 years old and will require 100 points of I.D including Photo I.D. Previous driving experience is preferred but not required.

Note: It is illegal to operate a forklift in Qld without a licence. Forklift and tractors with vertical lift forks on either the front or rear of the machine require operators with suitable High Risk Work Licences. Anyone who is using a tractor with vertical lift forks needs to have a High Risk Work licence even if the machine has an implement on the back and the rear implement is being used.

If you or your employees are interested in undertaking any of the training listed above, please contact the office on 4151 2555 or by email to bdb_office@bdbcanegrowers.com.au with participant details including full name, address, date of birth, phone number, email address and invoicing details. These details will be passed on to the relevant training organisation to ensure you receive the subsidy upon enrolment.

Further dates will be made available as training organisations announce future course dates. ■

CANEGROWERS unveils new transport guide

CANEGROWERS has launched the 2024 Sugarcane Transport Load Restraint Guide, an essential tool created in partnership with the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR).

This industry-specific guide aims to enhance road transport safety and streamline compliance for sugarcane growers and transport operators.

The new resource addresses a long-standing need for updated and practical advice tailored to the sugarcane industry. It equips operators with the knowledge to ensure safer, more efficient transport practices.

CANEGROWERS Chairman Owen Menkens praised the initiative, emphasising its role in improving safety and providing clear guidance for

growers and contract harvesters navigating transport challenges.

Copies of the 2024 Sugarcane Transport Load Restraint Guide are available at Bundaberg CANEGROWERS reception, or by visiting www.canegrowers.com.au/information-hub/publications/transport-guide. ■



Electrical Safety Update

Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ) will be conducting a compliance campaign in the agriculture industry from January 2025. This statewide campaign will focus specifically on the hazard of electrical powerlines to reduce the risk of workers or plant coming within an unsafe distance of electrical powerlines with a particular focus on maintaining exclusion zones.

Working near powerlines is a serious risk - touching them or straying into an exclusion zone around them can result in an electric shock which can be severe and even fatal. Therefore, farmers, contractors and individuals operating machinery near these lines need to be aware of the serious risks they pose.

In the sugar industry growers and harvesting contractors get complacent about operating around powerlines as the cane harvester is often over 5m in height when operating. This can be at the same height as the powerlines and make it impossible to have a 3m exclusion zone around the powerline. Other areas where there is increased exposure to powerlines include along the edge of paddocks, sidings and near pump sheds.

All growers and workers in the agricultural industry should have a good practical understanding of the electrical safety laws and use safe work practices. There are many resources available to use as part of an electrical safety plan at www.worksafe.qld.gov.au.

This compliance campaign will focus on

the safety of workers and others in the agriculture sector from electrical hazards by ensuring businesses meet the requirements of Queensland's electrical safety laws. The WHS inspectors will **conduct audits** of farms to assess management of electrical risks and safe work practices near powerlines. There will be a **focus on critical areas**, including hazard identification, safe systems of work, avoidance of exclusion zones, training and emergency planning. Unfortunately, as well as warning and improvement notices they will be fines handed out for failure to comply with essential parts of the electrical safety act and relevant regulations.

To prepare for the upcoming inspections growers need to have conducted a **risk assessment** of their property which may include:

- identifying and assessing powerline locations entering and crossing your property
- measuring and recording the height and reach of machinery and equipment or activities which might enter an exclusion zone
- consulting with your local electrical entity and requesting safety advice before the work commences (i.e. during the work planning phase and continually each season as conditions may change). Some of the permits only last 28 days before another is needed due to the everchanging weather conditions and its impact on the powerlines
- eliminating or minimising risks of straying into an exclusion zone—documenting site-specific risk assessments and developing safe

systems of work that ensure a safe distance from powerlines is maintained (stay outside the exclusion zone)

- implementing, maintaining and reviewing risk control measures to ensure they work effectively (ongoing process that should be implemented each day and season after season)
- consulting, inducting, informing and training workers and contractors in the safe systems of work including emergency plans and rescue procedures.

While this campaign is focused on powerlines and power poles growers are reminded that pump sheds and work sheds also have electrical hazards and these areas need to also be compliant. It starts with a safety switch on the switchboard, keeping extension leads off the floor and free from damage and checking power tools and leads are free from damage each day. For growers with maintenance trucks a portal Residual Current Device (RCD) is also recommended between the generator and the power tool to assist in operator safety.

Find out more about the WHS Compliance and Field Services Proactive Compliance Program 2024-2027 and the plan for safer workplaces in Queensland.

Visit WorkSafe.qld.gov.au for more information or contact 1300 362 128 for additional guidance. ■

Tips to keep businesses safe and secure this holiday season

If you are enjoying a break over Christmas, it's important to leave the business premises in the best condition possible to help avoid theft, reduce risk and secure the premise in case mother nature has any surprises in store.

Secure Access

Lock up all entry points including gates, doors and windows to prevent unauthorised entry.

Store Chemicals Safety

Lock up hazardous substances to prevent leaks and make sure processing procedures have been completed.

Secure Outdoor Areas

Close awnings, umbrellas and ensure outdoor furniture is secured properly or stored inside. Clean gutters and trim trees to limit bushfire/cyclone exposure.

Power Down

Turn off and secure equipment to eliminate electrical hazards and energy waste. Avoid leaving batteries charging like power tools and e-bikes.

Fire Safety Checks

Clear fire exits, test fire alarms and ensure fire extinguishers are in place.

Insurance

Check you insurance is up to date, including any new purchases, buildings and modifications have been added to your policy throughout the year.

General Risk Mitigation

Dispose of rubbish and ensure outdoor bins are not located next to buildings to prevent fire or unwanted access. Collect mail and packages to avoid premise looking unattended. ■



Planning for soybeans

With the current wet weather following the completion of the harvest making for excellent growing conditions for cane, it is making it harder to prepare ground for soybeans. Luckily there are several varieties of soybeans with different planting windows to the more commonly planted A-6785.

If a soil test has not been taken and the paddock did not have lime applied in the last fallow it is likely that soybeans will require lime at 2.5 tonnes per hectare to manage the soil pH. Acidic soil can lead to manganese toxicity for soybeans and can restrict growth as well as the nodulation of the soybeans and therefore the fixation of nitrogen.

Whether being grown for green manure or grain, either Hayman[®] or Kuranda[®] will be suitable for planting in January

with Kuranda[®] having a slightly longer window into February. When growing for grain Hayman[®] is the preferred variety from marketers due to its ability to make high quality tofu as well as most other markets. Kuranda[®] which was popular a couple of years ago due to higher yield potential, especially in the Burdekin region, is limited to the flour market and if contracts are not secured early it may be only suitable for stockfeed use.

If the weather continues to stay wet the soybeans will require some fungicide sprays and regular monitoring for grub pressure on the young plants. If grub control is required, growers are reminded to go with “soft” chemistry so that pests such as aphids do not flare up.

The soybean market at the moment is

soft due to large crops in the USA and a large plant in both Brazil and Argentina after delays due to drought conditions.

The Grain in Cane Co-op has secured some multigrade contracts with the Edible 1 quality at \$800 per tonne. Some growers who got in earlier have higher price contracts, though these have well and truly gone from the marketplace now. The biggest impact from the good global supply of soybeans is in the full fat market due to imported soy meal competing with local full fat soybean meal.

If a grower is looking to plant soybeans and is looking for some advice they can contact Matt Leighton on 0437 084 035 or 4151 2555. ■



Chlorpyrifos deregistered in sugarcane and most other crops

The APVMA has confirmed that many uses of chlorpyrifos in agriculture are no longer supported, including all uses associated with sugarcane from 30 Sep 2024. This decision means that Chlorpyrifos in all its different names such as Lorsban will be deregistered for use in most cropping scenarios.

Some growers may have noticed that they have not been able to purchase additional product as part of the twelve (12) month phase out period. The phase out period of one (1) year means that product on hand (ie, already in the shed)

can be used until 30 Sep 2025. After that period it will no longer be able to be used. Any product remaining after this period should be able to be disposed of free using ChemClear, generally for two (2) years post full deregistration before growers will need to pay for disposal.

The removal from market was expected given that chlorpyrifos is very toxic to aquatic organisms and is relatively mobile in the environment. In the pesticide management tool for chemical use in GBR catchments, chlorpyrifos has a higher risk to water quality and the

environment than many other active ingredients in common use. There were also concerns for human health due to the exposure risk when mixing, when using and when entering the paddock post application.

There are alternative products available with wireworms in plant cane being controlled by bifenthrin and fipronil and armyworm by permethrin and trichlorfon. Growers should seek specific advice on alternative products from Bundaberg Sugar Services or chemical resellers. ■

Spray drift reduction

Spray drift is a risk every season, and right now is no exception. With the completion of the harvest growers will begin weed control, especially in ratoons. Spray drift is the physical movement of the water droplets, with the chemical mixed within the droplet, away from the target area onto areas not requiring weed control.

The risk of spray drift can be mitigated by ensuring that the applicator is trained and licenced, all label instructions are followed closely, and the spray

applications are carried out according to best practice and in the right conditions. Most small crops are particularly sensitive to spray drift from Group 4 herbicides (phenoxy herbicides including 2,4-D) and any adverse incidents have a financial impact on growers.

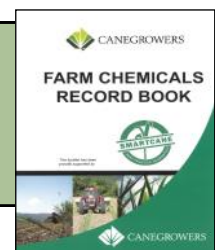
2,4-D has some large buffer zones, especially when applied over the top of a crop. These do reduce in sugarcane when applied by droppers or Irvin spray legs below the canopy height. Growers

also need to abide by the nozzle type and resultant spray quality to minimise drift. There are products available that assist in reducing spray drift including LI 700 or Dropzone.

The most important thing is to read the label of the products being used and to monitor and record the weather conditions when spraying. If growers are looking for a book to aid in record keeping there are some books available in reception at Bundaberg CANEGROWERS. ■

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 or bdb_office@bdbcanegrowers.com.au



Fertiliser use and GHG emissions being minimised on-farm

As the world moves to a low carbon economy, additional scrutiny will be placed on agriculture of all types to reduce greenhouse emissions. Some of this will come from alternative fuel for vehicles while other methods will be developed for animals and cropping. Research has demonstrated that in a cropping scenario the main way to reduce carbon emissions (or greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions) is via nitrogen fertilisation and specifically denitrification and the creation of nitrous oxide which has a warming potential 273 times that of carbon dioxide (CO₂).

The research, undertaken by Incitec Pivot Fertilisers (IPF), studied the impacts of the nitrification inhibitor dimethyl pyrazole (DMP), eNpower®, in reducing nitrous oxide (N₂O) emissions from nitrogen fertiliser. Addressing nitrous oxide emissions is not only crucial for mitigating climate change but also presents opportunities for reducing

fertiliser costs and increasing agricultural productivity.

Results showed N₂O equivalent GHG emissions (kg/ha) more than halved over 36 days as a result of applying eNpower on Easy N applied soil, compared to just using Easy N.

N₂O is lost from the soil under high moisture conditions where bacteria use nitrate nitrogen as an oxygen source. This process, known as denitrification, can also result in significant nitrogen losses in the form of dinitrogen. Aside from contributing to GHG, denitrification also denies crops and pastures valuable nitrogen potentially impacting farm production and quality.

Several strategies can be employed to reduce nitrous oxide emissions in agriculture. These include minimising nitrogen fertiliser use, implementing crop rotation and precision agricultural systems, and using nitrification inhibitors.

2023 research undertaken as part of the Australian Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Nitrous Oxide Research Program demonstrated that N losses could be reduced without sweet corn yields being penalised, indicating extra costs associated with nitrification inhibitors could be offset by reduced fertiliser application rates (Muller, De Rosa et al, 2023).

Research conducted in the sugar industry by Wang et al (2016) showed DMP decreased annual fertiliser-induced N₂O emissions by approximately 83%.

Given that growers may be asked by banks, fertiliser suppliers, and possibly Bundaberg Sugar and other large businesses to report of their GHG emissions from mid 2025 this information may be useful for this and when developing N & P budgets with agronomists. ■

Drum Muster and fertiliser bag recycling update

As growers start to collect fertiliser bags and empty chemical drums it is important to know where growers can drop these empty containers so that they are recycled and don’t end up in landfill or just sitting around the farm. Unfortunately, the opening times for the smaller regional waste disposal centres continue to reduce.

Drum Muster

The locations where triple rinsed chemical drums are able to be disposed of include the following Bundaberg Regional Council waste disposal centres:

Qunaba	7 days	8.30am to 4.30pm
South Kolan	Saturday	8am to 12 noon
Meadowvale	Wednesday, Friday, Saturday & Sunday	9am to 2pm
Tirroan	Monday to Saturday	7.30am to 12 noon 11am to 2pm
Avondale	Sunday	8am to 12 noon

There is also a limit of 75 drums per visit to the waste disposal centre.

For the disposal of an unlimited number of drums, or to get them collected, growers can contact Bundaberg Recycling – Impact make your mark. This site is at 46 University Drive, past the waste facility, and is open from 8am to 4pm Monday to Friday. To enquire about getting an on farm collection contact Bundaberg Recycling on 4155 3411.

Big Bag Recovery

Big Bag Recovery program is a scheme where approved brands of bags can 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.

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 <https://www.bigbagrecovery.com.au/#brands>. Non approved brands such as Koch will incur the \$5 per bag disposal fee.

To prepare for disposal the Bundaberg Regional Council online disposal booking form needs to be completed with a date and time, preferably providing at least 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 <https://www.bundaberg.qld.gov.au/waste-recycling/waste-recycling-programs/8> ■

2025 CANEGROWERS Elections – who can nominate and who can vote

... by Chris Cooper, CJ Cooper and Associates



The CANEGROWERS three (3) yearly elections will take place in April 2025. The following will provide information on who can nominate and stand for election as a grower director and who can vote in the election.

Who can stand for election

The constitution of Bundaberg CANEGROWERS clearly sets out who can stand for election. Only a current Member can stand for election and hold a position as a Director. A candidate's nomination must be supported by two (2) supporters.

Who can be a member

CANEGROWERS is a member only organization. Only Growers can be members of CANEGROWERS. A Grower is defined as a person or entity who supplies sugar cane to a Mill. CANEGROWERS policy is that a person or entity supplies to the Mill if they have a cane supply agreement (CSA) with the Mill. So, to be a Member of CANEGROWERS a person or entity must supply sugar cane to the Mill with a CSA and apply for and be admitted as a Member. Usually, the Member is also identified by an ABN.

What are the types of Member structures

A farming business can have a variety of structures. For CANEGROWERS purposes there are really three (3) types of structures:

1. The grower might be an individual person; or
2. The grower might be a partnership of two or more individual people; or

3. The grower might be a company, a trust or some other type of corporate entity.

In the case of 1, the individual person who supplies cane to the Mill, and the person who has a CSA with the Mill, is the Member. The person is a Member in their own personal, individual right. Only this person can stand for office as a Director.

In the case of 2, the farming business is conducted by a partnership, and it is the partnership that supplies cane to the Mill and has a CSA with the Mill. It is the partnership that is the Member. Even though there is more than one individual person involved in the partnership, only one of the partners has the right to stand for election. It is the person who is listed first in the partnership name that is the person allowed to represent the partnership and stand for office.

However, if all the partners agree, they can appoint, using the authorized representative form, a different partner than the first named if they so decide.

In the case of 3, a corporate entity supplies the cane to the Mill and the corporate entity has a CSA with the Mill. It is the corporate entity that is the Member. The corporate entity can nominate an individual person to be an authorized representative of the corporate entity by lodging the appropriate form with the local CANEGROWERS office. The person nominated must be connected to the entity, such as an officer (who can be a director, secretary or someone heavily involved in the management and decision making for the entity), a

shareholder or beneficiary depending on the nature of the corporate entity. The duly appointed authorized representative can represent the entity and stand for office as a Director.

Who can vote in the election

It is the Member who is entitled to vote in the election. A member has one vote in the election. The voting right is tied to the membership so in the three (3) cases above:

- An individual Member's vote is exercised by the individual;
- A partnership Member's vote is exercised by the first named partner, unless the partners lodge an authorized representative form nominating another partner to exercise the vote.
- A corporate entity's vote is exercised by the person who is nominated, by lodging of the membership form or authorized representative form, with CANEGROWERS.

It is essential for members to ensure their membership is correctly described in the CANEGROWERS membership register. It is also important to ensure that for corporate entities and potentially some partnerships, that valid and up to date authorized representative forms are lodged with CANEGROWERS.

If proper authorized representative forms are not up to date, the right to nominate and/or stand for election, and the right to vote might be lost.

For further information please call Tanya Howard on 4151 2555. ■

WorkCover Update

A new requirement to provide workers and employers with an information statement on their rights and responsibilities in the workers' compensation scheme commences on 1 January 2025.

An employer must give a worker an information statement before or as soon as practicable after the worker

commences employment.

An insurer must give a worker and employer an information statement as soon as practicable after a workers' compensation claim is lodged.

The information statements will explain workers' compensation rights and responsibilities and clarify common

myths (for example, around a workers' choice of treating doctor).

The Workers' Compensation Regulator is developing information statements in consultation with key stakeholders and we will have copies at reception as soon as they are available. ■

WorkCover
QUEENSLAND

A Lifetime of Dedication to the Sugar Industry

In a remarkable career spanning over several decades, Heather Best has left an indelible mark through her commitment and service to the Sugar Industry. Heather's earliest memory of the Sugar Industry is as a young girl living on a cane farm at Manoo near Sharon and, after finding out about the cane-testers course, she successfully completed the course in 1966 and was posted to Mulgrave Mill at Gordonvale.

At that time, the method used for separating the growers' cane was the Strugnel Wheel, a brass (marble size ball) at the start and end of the rake of cane. Another tracking system in use was the ball and chain method. This method of tracking was able to be seen beside the carrier at Bingera Mill. In 1969 Heather married a loco driver and could no longer be a cane-tester due to the policy at the time and Heather went to work as an analyst at Mourilyan Mill. At that time the juice was collected in cans beside No 1 Mill and carried across (with lids on) to the lab and cane was harvested as whole stick cane.

When Heather's family moved back to Bundaberg, she worked at Millaquin Mill as a Cane Analysis Auditor. At that

stage everything was recorded manually.

Eventually Bingera and Millaquin both adopted the density meter for the Brix reading and this method was used until Bingera Mill closed and the NIR was installed at Millaquin.

Heather first became aware of the new system of analysing juices when posted to Maryborough mill as an auditor. Mill management had installed an NIR and that ran parallel to the manual system. Having spent a few more seasons at Bingera and Millaquin with the traditional method Heather undertook further study through the Tafe in Mackay to become an auditor for the new NIR system installed at Millaquin.

Heather recently stepped back from her role as a Cane Analyst Auditor although her passion and support for the industry continues. We express our deepest gratitude for Heather's years of exceptional service. ■



CLASSIFIED & JOB ADVERTISEMENTS

As a free service to financial members, small suitable classified & employment advertisements of up to thirty (30) words only will be printed.

Advertisements will be accepted from non-members, charged at \$11 per seven (7) word line or part thereof.

Contact

Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Office on telephone no. 4151 2555 or email bdb_office@bdbcanegrowers.com.au.

CLASSIFIEDS

FOR SALE

Ford 5000 with blade, \$12,000 incl GST.
Bonel 2t belt spreader, \$5,500 incl GST.
Trash incorporator, \$6,600 incl GST.
3-point linkage offset 16 plate, \$1,800 incl GST.
David Brown 990 with loader, \$9,900 incl GST. Phone 0419 577 110

Get ready for the upcoming disaster season

The Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (QRIDA) is urging Queenslanders to prepare for a challenging disaster season this coming summer. With forecasts predicting above-average temperatures over the next few months, stormy weather could be experienced more frequently than usual state-wide.

QRIDA's Manager of Disaster and Drought, Sheree Finney encourages Queensland primary producers and business owners to make preparations now and to be aware that financial assistance may be available from QRIDA following a disaster event.

"Now is the time to carry out property maintenance, make emergency and evacuation plans, and prepare your emergency kit to give your enterprise the best chance of survival through the disaster season," says Ms Finney.

QRIDA has provided a handy checklist to help you prepare your enterprise for

disaster season:

- Know that your local QRIDA Regional Area Manager is Mark Barrett
- Reduce potential hazards on your premises
- Pack your emergency kit and store it in an accessible location
- Plan alternatives for loss of power, access, or communication
- Check your home and business insurance is up to date and fit for purpose
- Create physical and digital backups of important data and documents

Ahead of disaster season, it is important to know who to contact if financial assistance becomes available following a severe weather event. QRIDA has 11 Regional Area Managers across the state who can help producers, businesses, and organisations impacted by a disaster.

"QRIDA's Regional Area Managers are absolute specialists in times of disaster. They each know their region inside and

out. They are there to help Queenslanders understand how to access financial assistance, eligibility criteria, and the application process," says Ms Finney.

For more information on the availability of financial assistance from QRIDA following a disaster event, visit QRIDA's website and social media channels, or contact Bundaberg CANEGROWERS on 4151 2555. ■

Checklist to prepare your business for disaster season

- Know who your local QRIDA Regional Area Manager is
- Pack your business emergency kit and store it in an accessible location
- Plan alternatives for loss of power, access, or communications
- Check your insurance is up to date and fit for purpose
- Create backups of important data and documents



Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Ltd

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
04/11/2024	Bundaberg Regional Ratepayers Association	To represent members	Tanya Howard
05/11/2024	Energy Qld Customer Council	To represent irrigators	Dale Holliss
11/11/2024	District Manager's meeting	To receive updates	Tanya Howard
13/11/2024	Strategix Training	To arrange forklift training	Tanya Howard
13/11/2024	Tom Smith MP, Member for Bundaberg	To represent members	Mark Pressler Dean Cayley Anna Attard Sam Ford Michael Cavallaro Tanya Howard
14/11/2024	SRA Southern Region monthly update	To represent members	Tanya Howard
18/11/2024	District Director briefing	To receive update	Mark Pressler
19/11/2024	Regional Business HQ	To represent members	Tanya Howard
19/11/2024	Jamie Gorry, DPI	To represent members	Mark Pressler Tanya Howard Matthew Leighton
21/11/2024	Stephen Bennett MP, Member for Burnett	To represent members	Mark Pressler Dean Cayley Anna Attard Tanya Howard Dale Holliss
26/11/2024	Paradise Dam Reference Group	To represent irrigators	Tanya Howard Dale Holliss
27/11/2024	Bundaberg Sugar Industry Dinner & Awards Committee	To begin arrangements	Anna Attard Tanya Howard
09/12/2024	District Manager's meeting	To receive updates	Tanya Howard
17/12/2024	Bundaberg District Groundwater Area Advisory Committee	To represent irrigators	Tanya Howard

Take five to talk it through ...

- **Lifeline:** Free 24hr phone crisis counselling, online chat counselling every night, chat by text also available. Phone **13 11 14**, visit www.lifeline.org.au or find them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/LifelineAustralia/
- **Rural Aid** counsellors offer free, confidential support to farmers and their families. Counselling Intake Line - **1300 175 594**. www.ruralaid.org.au/counsellors
- **MensLine Australia:** Phone and online counselling available www.mensline.org.au or call **1300 78 99 78**. Considers men's mental health, tips to support a mate.
- **Grapevine Group** offer an app, and resources to support others you may see having a rough trot, or for people needing support www.grapevinegroup.org.au
- Talk to your **GP** for referral to public and private counselling services
- **Resources and advice** to help others and yourself: ruok.org.au; www.areyouboggedmate.com.au



21 November 2024

Briefing for Mr Stephen Bennett MP, Member for Burnett

Integrity of Science - At the bottom of many issues impacting agriculture, fisheries, and forestry is scientific evidence that is poorly quality-assured and likely wrong. It is almost impossible to win these debates while low-integrity science evidence remains unchallenged, and unchallengeable. For example, if “The Science says” agriculture or fishing is killing the Great Barrier Reef – then agriculture or fishing must be restricted or banned. But is “The Science” genuine quality-assured evidence?

One possible solution would be to set up a Science Integrity Unit (SIU) within the proposed new Queensland Productivity Commission to implement processes to support integrity of scientific evidence in policy making.

Support for this concept has been forthcoming from a range of Ag, Food and Fibre industries and tourism. All these industries are affected by scientific evidence, which may not have undergone sufficient quality assurance, having a substantial impact on economic productivity.

A science integrity unit within a Productivity Commission would be a significant innovation.

There is little doubt that there is a groundswell of opinion, especially in regional areas, that science integrity is impacting economic productivity and there is considerable community support for measures to improve the situation.

Reef – The Queensland Government should acknowledge that the receiving waters for the Burnett, Kolan, Elliott, Burrum, Gregory and Mary Rivers are the Great Sandy Straits region and corresponding Marine Park, and not the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. The coral monitoring in the region is being conducted by the Gidarjil Land and Sea Rangers and is focussed on the near shore and inshore coral reefs. The majority of the surveyed reefs are outside of the GBRMP however there are some within the GBRMP as surveyed reefs north of Baffle Creek are inside the GBRMP. Something similar occurs for the seagrass monitoring with 2 sites in the GSSMP and one site in the GBRMP.

The Paddock to Reef (P2R) model is not suitable for the Burnett Mary region when it comes to farming practices and identifying priorities for nitrogen reduction. The farming practices in the model are in relation to how to reduce N loss in the sugar industry. The model fails because it does not recognise N sources from other crops well (with 124 different crops in the region it is a large shortcoming), it does not know what to do when sugarcane is reduced significantly from the region (there was over 10,000 ha of land growing sugarcane in 2017 that was not growing cane in 2022) some of the land went to houses, the majority to other crops but only sugarcane was regulated during that time. Those lost 10,000 ha and the fertiliser not applied to them was never accounted for. Given the model is not suitable for the region it should not be used without significant updates. We request your support for the region to be removed from the regulations.

Water - Bundaberg CANEGROWERS was part of a consortium that estimated the cost of inaction on Paradise Dam would be approximately \$2.4 billion over the next 30 years.

To ensure the wellbeing and development of the Bundaberg Irrigation Area, the Queensland Government must protect the nominal allocations associated with Paradise Dam and ensure that Paradise Dam is rebuilt.

Electricity - Australian agriculture’s viability and export competitiveness is being negatively impacted by massive increases in electricity prices which have occurred over the past decade. Powerful energy sector interests continue to dominate processes and existing energy consumer representative bodies lack the specific and technical expertise and focus required to represent the needs of rural energy users.

We have led the electricity campaign and have had some large wins on behalf of all irrigators in Qld.

Tariff 34 as well as the announcement of Tariff 22C has been welcomed although there is still further work to be done to support Food and Fibre production including the amendment to the small customer threshold (from 100MWh to 160MWh).

The current small business customer threshold in Queensland is 100MWh as set by the Queensland Government. This consumption threshold catches many small ‘mum and dad businesses’ in the manufacturing and primary productions sectors. This low threshold (of 100MWh) will apply to more small business as we are encouraged to electrify transport operations amongst other activities.

Advice from Electricity Consumers Australia and Energy Queensland is that revising the small customer threshold is a Queensland Government decision (Governor in Council).

Biosecurity – or as growers see it the lack of Biosecurity offered around the State. Monitoring the expansion of new pests and diseases across the State does not help in a biosecurity outbreak, or ongoing concern. It seems that Qld Biosecurity is more about soaking up the federal government or other state’s money as part of the response without an outcome. Since Imported Red Fire Ants have been in Qld we have supposedly been eradicating them and what we see is an on average increase in the boundary each year, by about 5km, not a reduction which you would expect during an eradication program.

If fire ants were in Bundaberg the consequences would be extremely large. These start with an impact to the marine turtles when

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laying eggs and when these eggs hatch. Moving to agriculture the impact would be to the sugar industry due to restrictions of baling and selling trash, both on farm direct to customers and through Oreco who supply cane trash to Bunnings which sell this trash nationally. Impacts to other crops grown on the multi species integrated farming systems that have sugar cane would be sweet potatoes (80% of national crop), macadamias (55% and increasing of national crop), strawberries, potatoes, ginger, turmeric, garlic, watermelons, rock melons, other melons, peanuts, zucchinis, hay, lettuce leaves, pumpkins to name a few. These crops have direct contact with the ground for the harvested produce. For crops where the crops are grown in the soil though the produce bins contact the soil, include avocados (30% of national production), tomatoes, chillis, capsicums, pineapples, cucumbers, mangoes, lychees, soybeans.

The response to Fall Army Worm was swift but ineffective. It is acknowledged that it is hard to control an insect that can fly up to 600km over several days, it just seemed it was let go and allowed to establish where it wants and left for farmers to deal with. This has led to a reduction of sweet corn and popcorn grown in the region and an impact on a range of crops such as soybeans and a range of horticultural crops.

Local Government - There is no statutory constraint on local governments' power to determine rate changes, and under the *Local Government Act 2009* local government is granted a discretionary power to levy "special rates and charges". The visibility of local government budgets is also limited under the *Right to Information Act 2009*. This has created an unsustainable system which provides local government with unfettered powers and the ability to effectively plug budget gaps through rising rating revenue on select industries.

The Queensland government's 'Guideline on equity and fairness in rating for Queensland local governments' sits alongside the legislative framework. It outlines the fundamental principles local government should apply in their decision-making process including equity, fairness and predictability.

Compliance with the guideline, however, is not mandatory.

External scrutiny of local government rates is common practise in most of Australia's other states and territories and oversight measures have proven effective. A report by the Queensland Audit Office into managing local government rates and charges found that 'other states have some limits on the extent to which they can set and increase differential general rates and use minimum rates. Queensland does not'.

This would provide greater predictability in the rates determination process for our members and increase the transparency of the Bundaberg local government budget.

Right to Farm / Property Rights – In terms of gross value added, employment and business numbers, the Bundaberg local government area has a much greater reliance on agriculture (approx 13 per cent) than Queensland as a whole (approx 3.4 per cent).

This reliance on agribusiness means that any negative impact on our farmers' ability to generate and market the crops and products they produce, has a much greater impact on our community than in other areas.

We have instances where significant areas of land are becoming un-farmable because of urban encroachment and other land use issues. Growers are continually being harassed about burning, not burning (trash), dust, chemical complaints, and noise etc. In most cases these complaints are vexatious.

Bundaberg CANEGROWERS seeks to have farmers' 'right to farm' protected by *legislation*. The 'right to farm' relates to a cane farmer's free ability to carry out lawful agricultural activities without undue objection, harassment or complaint from neighbours or other land users.

It is imperative that 'Right to Farm Guidelines' and supporting local laws be developed to support and protect existing farming operations as well as attracting agricultural investment and to ensure the long-term future of irrigated agriculture in the Bundaberg region.

Mining - Agriculture plays a critical role in our economy and as a region we need to ensure its continued success. Bundaberg CANEGROWERS has a proud history of representing sugar cane growers for more than 100 years and Bundaberg region farmers are committed to our community, are a major provider of jobs and integral supporters of the economy as well as provide food security for all Australians.

Bundaberg CANEGROWERS is opposed to any mining activity on farmland and is concerned that the proposed coal mine, and any future proposals, will threaten prime agricultural land and vital water supplies.

Special Disaster Assistance Recovery Grants - During the latest Disaster Recovery effort including there was some significant changes to past grant programs that make it more difficult for growers in their recovery efforts. The definition of eligible primary producer varies between QRIDA grants and programs. Using the same guidelines a local grower was rejected for recovery grant although has a Primary Producer First Start loan with QRIDA.

We would like to flag our concerns that the grant process is becoming overly prescriptive at a time when growers are stretched both physically and mentally whilst recovering from a natural disaster.



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Economic value of Industry – In 2019 the sugar industry put together a report of the contribution of the sugar industry to the economy of Queensland and analysis showed that... *cane growing itself contributes in the order of one-half billion dollars of value added (i.e. the earnings of cane growers and workers) directly to the Queensland economy and indirectly its total economic contribution is around \$1.1 billion. Considering that sugarcane growing is the primary industry that underpins all the associated economic activity it can legitimately be claimed that one dollar of economic activity in cane growing brings forth an additional \$6.40 in economic activity elsewhere in the economy.*

Figure 6. Breakdown of full economic contribution from \$1 sugarcane growing value added



Source: QEAS estimates based on Lawrence Consulting (2019) and other sources.

The large additional economic contribution of sugarcane growing is via its backward linkages to its own suppliers (e.g. of fertiliser, herbicide, etc.) and its forward linkages to mills, refineries and the sugar terminals which export the sugar. Indeed, the vast majority of sugar produced in Queensland is exported, some 4.32 million tonnes, mostly of unrefined sugar, as is a large amount of the molasses by-product.

A copy of this report is available on our website – www.bdbcanegrowers.com.au.

Mark Pressler
Chairman

Dean Cayley
Director

Michael Cavallaro
Director

Sam Ford
Director

Anna Attard
Director



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



The Bundaberg District Canegrower

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