

# The Bundaberg District Canegrower

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## Top Five (5) Issues We Have Been Working On

1. Pre season planning and receiving industry updates.
2. Reviewing QCA Draft electricity tariff pricing for 2025-26.
3. Providing representation on groundwater and surface water matters.
4. Preparations for 2025 soybean harvest and pricing contract arrangements.
5. Progressing work on Right to Farm guidelines.

## Chair's Update

After good rain and growing conditions in January the weather turned dry during February and three-quarters of March. To top it off a cyclone went passed us and the following super dry westerlies it created didn't do the crop any good although last week has seen some good soaking rain with a few storms embedded in it. I think most people have received close to 150mm over the weekend plus more during the week.

This, with the current warm weather, will see the crop keep growing and fill out. There was obviously quite a blow associated with the rain resulting in a fair amount of lodging occurring.

Season start date has been set for crushing of preseason cane to kick off on 19 May with Bundaberg Sugar's cane, including one (1) week of organic, then proceed into the core season start on either 9 or 16 June with a final decision yet to be made. The estimate currently sits at 1.315million tonnes and with the maintenance and improvement projects over the slack, we hope to see our crop crushed in a timely manner.

Harvesting groups should be all but sorted with a 21 April deadline for group changes. Estimate letters have been sent to growers and are due on 11 April.

The Federal Election has been called for Saturday 3 May. We have met with LNP Candidate for Hinkler, David Batt and will meet with other candidates as requested to hear their political party promises and hope that agriculture hasn't been forgotten again. Politicians say they want Australians to eat local and that they support our farmers, well it is long past time for them to put their money where their mouths are. It's hard to understand why agriculture is consistently taken for granted, but I

think it has to do with our history of remarkable adaptability. Somehow, we just keep on producing, albeit with shrinking returns and despite the multiple barriers thrown in the way by more red and green tape and regulations.

We welcome the preliminary view of the Attorney-General that the Fox Resources MDL3040 application is not in the public interest. We continue to monitor this situation and provide feedback to Government where required.

24 March saw the CANEGROWERS election nominations close and we have been informed that there will be no election required with current Directors all willing to put their hand up for another three (3) year term.

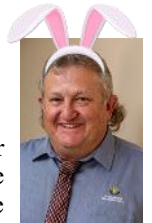
The awards night was held on Friday 21 March at The Waves with another great turn out and I would like to congratulate all our award winners on their achievements for the 2024 Season. A big thank you also to the many businesses who sponsor the event. Further details can be found on page 8.

Sugar Services will be holding a Harvest Breakfast on 1 May at The Waves, members of Sugar Services will receive an invite in the mail shortly and I encourage you all to attend.

At the time of writing, Oreco payments remain unpaid and we are actively following this up on behalf of growers.

I hope you all have a safe and happy Easter.

**Mark Pressler**  
Chairman



**Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Ltd Newsletter**

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# 2024 Season Indicative Advances Program

Based on QSL reports 28 March 2025

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	<b>-\$21</b>	\$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	\$16	\$570	80.0%
19 Feb 25	\$28	\$598	85.0%
19 Mar 25	\$21	\$619	87.5%
16 Apr 25	\$20	\$639	90.0%
21 May 25	\$17	\$656	92.5%
18 Jun 25	\$18	\$674	95%
By 31 July 25	\$36	\$710	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 \$708/t IPS as of 28 March 2025.

*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](http://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.



## QSL Direct Futures Pricing

For those growers wanting to do forward pricing please contact QSL to update your declaration for the futures season required. To price sugar using futures you must have an active cane supply agreement for that season. Your forecast crop and CCS for the future season is required to calculate your GEI sugar declaration.

**For further information contact Glenn Harris - 0409 601 349.**

## Schedule 4 Approved Variety List - 2025 Season

SRA38 <sup>db</sup>	Q240 <sup>db</sup>
SRAW33 <sup>db</sup>	Q238 <sup>db</sup>
SRA29 <sup>db</sup>	Q235 <sup>db</sup>
SRA20 <sup>db</sup>	Q232 <sup>db</sup>
SRA19 <sup>db</sup>	KQ228 <sup>db</sup>
SRA11 <sup>db</sup>	Q208 <sup>db</sup>
SRA4 <sup>db</sup>	Q200 <sup>db</sup>
SRA2 <sup>db</sup>	Q188 <sup>db</sup>
Q252 <sup>db</sup>	Q183 <sup>db</sup>
Q249 <sup>db</sup>	Q151
Q247 <sup>db</sup>	Q138
Q245 <sup>db</sup>	Q124
Q242 <sup>db</sup>	

## Remote Pilot License Training (Drone)

SmartAg QLD are offering a 50% subsidy for Remote Pilot License Training. This program is a combination of Virtual Classroom and on field, face to face activities to finalize practical competencies and a flight test. Once successfully completed you will obtain a Remote Pilot's License.

If you are interested in obtaining a Remote Pilot License, please email your name and contact number to [reception@bdbcanegrowers.com.au](mailto:reception@bdbcanegrowers.com.au) or call the office on 4151 2555. ■



## Disaster Assistance Grants Available

Growers should be aware that if they have suffered any damage to their property from rainfall between 1 March and 16 March they are able to apply for assistance up to \$25,000 from QRIDA provided they qualify under the guidelines. The guidelines state eligible people must be primary producers who earn more than 50 percent of their income and spend more than 50 percent of their time on the farm. Growers must also be eligible for the cost of the repairs if they are leasing the farm from another entity. While most of the guidelines are similar to past events, there are some

changes which mean growers should read the guidelines and the quick guidelines. One change is that the photos must be submitted as a jpeg image so that metadata such as date of photo, and GPS points can be confirmed. Another is that if a grower has lost plant can they are able to make a claim for several components of replanting that cane including fertiliser, chemicals and the cost of plants.

**For full details of the guidelines and what must be provided with the application form growers, should**

**visit the QRIDA website <https://www.qrida.qld.gov.au/program/exceptional-disaster-assistance-recovery-grants-tropical-cyclone-alfred-and-associated#producer-tab> or collect them from Bundaberg CANEGROWERS reception. If growers want assistance with completing the application they can contact Matt Leighton on 0437 084 035 and he will arrange a time to visit the farm. ■**

## Harvesting Contractor Agreements

... by Chris Cooper, CJ Cooper & Associates

### Written or verbal agreements

Whenever a grower engages a harvest contractor there is a contract agreement made between the parties. This contract may be written or verbal, or a bit of both. But while verbal or handshake agreements are just as binding as written agreements, they are not without problems. For a start, with a verbal agreement some important terms that govern the relationship may not be discussed.

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

It is for these reasons that CANEGROWERS strongly recommends that growers and harvesting contractors document in writing the agreement they propose to enter. The written agreement should cover the essential and important

terms of the agreement. Whilst oral agreements are and enforceable, there is considerably more scope for dispute and disagreement if there is not a written record of what has been agreed. A written agreement can clearly set out the expectations of the grower and the contractor.

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

Similarly, a contract harvesting operation is a significant business investment with large sums of money tied up in expensive machinery. A reliable harvesting sector is essential for growers to operate their own farming business. Co-operation between the grower and the contractor can help minimise harvesting losses and improve

efficiency.

### Sample agreements

A sample contractor harvesting agreement is available from all local CANEGROWERS offices.

If a full written agreement seems too involved, consider using at least basic contractor acknowledgment, a sample of which is also available from your local CANEGROWERS office.

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



## Reimbursement of Burnt Cane Deduction

The Collective Agreement has a clause which enables reimbursement of the burnt cane penalty, i.e.

10.5 Where the Grower makes a written application to the Mill Owner for reimbursement of the burnt cane deduction and it is the Mill Owner's opinion that the cane was burnt in order to improve cane quality or increase productivity, the Mill Owner shall reimburse the burnt cane deduction for cane delivered on or before the second day after burning of 9.8 cents to the Grower.

If you wish to claim reimbursement you need to apply to Bundaberg Sugar in writing each season.

You may wish to use the pro forma shown below or collect one from reception.

**Bundaberg CANEGROWERS' members can contact Matt Leighton or Tanya Howard on (07) 4151 2555 for assistance. ■**

Cane Supply Superintendent  
Bundaberg Sugar  
PO Box 500  
Bundaberg

Email: [mjgreen@bundysugar.com.au](mailto:mjgreen@bundysugar.com.au)

Dear Sir,

I / We wish to be reimbursed burnt cane deductions for blocks ..... on farm number / s ..... because (insert reason eg. trash causes water logging and rots the stool)

Signed

.....



# SUGAR INDUSTRY AWARDS 2024 SEASON

Mark and Brad Piper of MGBJP Pty Ltd were announced as the District Champion at the annual Bundaberg Sugar Industry Productivity Awards held at The Waves on Friday, 21<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

Director of Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited, Mr Michael Cavallaro congratulated the Piper's whose Bundaberg farm took out the top award for the night—Formatt Machinery's District Champion with a three year average of 15.55 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 2024 crushing season.

Director of Bundaberg CANEGROWERS, Mr Dean Cayley, 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.

Ryan Dingle was recognised as a Young Industry Achiever. Ryan worked in the day-to-day operations of the family farm before starting his own agricultural contracting business and finally purchasing the family cane farm, taking over management of the farm and changing the farm layout to increase tonnes produced. This was proven successful in the 2024 season with the farm averaging 130 tonnes of cane per hectare.

Graham McCracken has been a stalwart of the local agricultural industry and next year sees Gaham contributing 60 years as a second generation businessman of irrigation expertise in service, design and manufacturing. His knowledge of local properties and their irrigation challenges, and the support he has provided to local growers saw Graham awarded the Contribution to Productivity Award.

Maurice and Barbara Chapman were acknowledged for their extraordinary partnership whose dedication to growing sugarcane led them to receiving an award for 60 Years of Excellence in Sugarcane Farming after having supplied Millaquin Mill for 60 seasons.

A total of 20 Award winners were announced in 16 categories.

Further photos can be found on the Bundaberg CANEGROWERS website - [www.bdbcanegrowers.com.au](http://www.bdbcanegrowers.com.au).



# Workplace Health and Safety:

## Fatal incident during cane harvesting operations

**WARNING:** May contain distressing content to some readers.

In a recent farm incident in North Qld, two heavy vehicle cane haulage trucks collided, which resulted in the fatalities of both drivers. Early inquiries indicate that both vehicles were carrying out cane harvesting operations when they collided on an unsealed road. Investigations are continuing.

### IMPORTANT:

These findings are not yet confirmed, and investigations are continuing into the exact cause.

### Safety issues

Rural mobile plant and vehicles are a major cause of death and serious injury for workers on farms.

Farm vehicle operators, passengers and bystanders are all at risk. A sugar cane farm can be a potentially hazardous workplace, particularly during the harvesting season when large rural plant (e.g. cane harvesters and haulout vehicles) are operating in close proximity to each other and people on the ground.

Cane harvesting and haulout operations can be affected by a range of hazards and conditions including, but not limited to:

- sloping terrain
- restricted visibility when in close proximity to railway lines
- poor visibility - dust, fog, mist
- varying on-farm road and headland conditions
- wet farm conditions - wet slippery conditions increase braking distances. Boggy ground conditions that increase hazards with additional vehicles and personnel in the field carrying out towing or pushing operations
- night time operations
- public road conditions
- other hazards for example, irrigation hydrants, culverts, banks, power poles and Psychosocial hazards, such as isolated work and fatigue, are common in the rural industry and can increase the risk of incidents when operating rural plant.

Fatigue can be caused by factors that may be work-related, non-work related or, a combination of both and can build up over time.

### Ways to manage health and Safety

Effective risk management starts with a commitment to health and safety from those who manage the business. If an incident occurs, you'll need to show the regulator that you've used an effective risk management process. This responsibility is covered by your primary duty of care in the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*.

Use the hierarchy of controls to help decide how to eliminate and reduce risks in your place of work. The hierarchy of controls ranks types of control methods from the highest level of protection and reliability to the lowest. It's a step-by-step approach to eliminating or reducing risks. You must work through the hierarchy of controls when managing risks, with the aim of eliminating the hazard, which is the most effective control.

### Possible control measures to prevent similar incidents

#### *WHS Regulation and Rural plant Code of Practice 2024*

The Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (WHS Regulation) includes specific duties for persons conducting a business or undertaking (PCBUs) that involve the management or control of plant, including rural plant. Effective control measures for rural plant associated with cane harvesting are often made up of a combination of controls.

The Rural plant Code of Practice 2024 (the Code) commenced on 23 September 2024 and replaces an earlier version from 2004. It provides guidance on working safely with rural plant including trucks used to transport produce to help reduce the risk of injuries and fatalities. The Code provides guidance to the agriculture sector to meet its work health and safety obligations.

### Control measures

There is often more than one business or undertaking at a workplace and each may have responsibility for the same health and safety matters, either because they are involved in the same activities or share the same workplace. In these situations, each duty holder should exchange information to find out who is doing what and work together in a cooperative and coordinated way, so that risks are

eliminated or minimised as far as is reasonably practicable.

Before operating rural plant such as farm machinery and haulout vehicles, the person with management or control must ensure:

- the machine or vehicle selected is right for the task, safe to operate and fitted with suitable safety features (such as seat belts, horn, reversing beeper, rotary flashing light). Any vehicle used on the road must comply with the relevant Department of Transport and Main Road's (TMR) road safety legislation,
- the manufacturer's operating instructions have been read and are followed,
- any environmental risk factors – ground conditions, terrain, weather (including seasonal changes) have been considered and assessed,
- that maintenance and inspection of the plant or vehicle is carried out by a competent person in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations,
- operators and drivers have been verified as competent to operate the plant or vehicle with consideration given to the environmental factors (untrained or inexperienced workers should not operate the plant or vehicle, particularly in unfamiliar or high-risk terrain or for unfamiliar tasks),
- drivers and operators use seatbelts and adopt safe driving methods including adherence to any farm or area specific speed limits, never operating the vehicle beyond its rated capacity (Gross Vehicle Mass - GVM) and taking regular breaks in line with relevant heavy vehicle legislation requirements,
- workers who drive road registered vehicles hold the appropriate type of license to drive that vehicle, irrespective of whether the vehicle is operated on a public road or farm,
- information, training, instruction or supervision necessary to control the risks associated with the machine or vehicle is available,
- training programs are practical and hands on and consider the particular needs of workers such as literacy levels, language barriers, work experience and specific skills required for safe use of the vehicle, thereby ensuring worker training, experience and competency aligns with the requirements and complexity of the task, and a suitable means of communication (for example,

(Continued on page 6)



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two-way radio) is used.

- PCBU's must first consider controls that most effectively eliminate the risk or, where not reasonably practicable, minimise the risk. The risk of large rural plant (cane harvesters and haulout vehicles) colliding by operating in close proximity to each other and people on the ground may also be minimized by implementing administrative controls including systems of work.

Fatigue management is a shared responsibility between management and workers, as it involves factors both inside and outside the workplace. Preventing and managing fatigue-related risk in the workplace provides guidance on how to identify, manage and control fatigue, to make sure health and safety risks are avoided at work.

Fitness-for-work assessments are a useful tool to help ensure that all workers are in a state of health compatible with their job requirements.

Fitness-for-work assessments may be appropriate in the following circumstances:

- *Pre-placement*: to determine if the prospective worker is physically capable to do a specific task safely, or work in a particular work environment.
- *Prior to a worker taking on a new position/responsibility*: to determine if the worker is physically capable to do a specific task safely, in relation to a change in work location, work hours, physical demands or exposure.
- *Assessment related to a specific task or work environment*: to determine if a specific change to the worker or work environment affects the ability of the worker to safely perform a specific task or work in a specific environment. Details of any fitness-for-work assessment should be treated as confidential.

## Traffic management

PCBU's have a requirement to manage the risk of powered mobile plant colliding with persons or other plant. Many machines such as harvesters, and module trucks used to transport produce like cane, cotton and bail during harvesting or during in-field operations are potentially hazardous. For example, when large machines are operated close to each other and to people on the ground.

A traffic management plan documents and helps explain how risks will be managed at the workplace. Consultation with workers may involve providing information about the plan as well as the procedure that will be implemented for monitoring and reviewing it over the

course of the farm harvesting operations. Everyone affected by the plan must understand it and follow it. Farm specific in-field traffic management measures should include but are not limited to the following:

### Farm map

An accurate farm map should be provided to workers and contractors, or anyone who operates machinery on the farm. For example, using different bright colours to identify different hazards. Include photos to clarify the details on the farm map. The farm map should identify the following hazards:

- rail lines (state rail or local sugar mill) and crossings,
- delivery points, roadways (sealed and unsealed),
- waterways and drainage channels, powerlines, poles and stay wires and underground cabling,
- boundary fences or markers, and irrigation pumps, pipelines, outlets.

Specific operational procedures may need to be followed. For example, negotiating angled headlands where there is less visibility and greater difficulty in maneuvering. Consultation should be undertaken between workers to ensure that equipment can be maneuvered safely in such situations. The traffic management plan should also ensure:

- It is clear to all farm machinery operators, haulout drivers and others as to who has right of way across the farm.
- Speed limits are clearly signed and followed. The speed limit applies to all farm machinery and vehicles, without exception.
- Any traffic directions used, such as 'stop' and 'one way', are clearly signed and followed.
- Any exclusion zones for farm machinery or pedestrians are clearly marked.

### Pre-operational site briefing

The harvesting and haulout crews should familiarise themselves with routes and any associated hazards and control measures prior to the farm harvesting operations commencing. One method of providing this information to workers is by means of a farm map. Fatigue management should be addressed, and the daily briefing should also include what to do in the case of a spillage, breakdown or accident.

### Daily pre-start meeting

Effective communication methods should be established between the harvester driver and haulout crew who are operating and maneuvering their

machinery and vehicles in close proximity. Communication between harvesting crews should be done by means of a UHF/VHF radio or similar method.

Allocating specific time to conduct daily pre-start meetings or briefings while ensuring workers have sufficient time to perform any necessary safety checks prior to commencing work (such as pre-start checks of equipment).

### Routes

Harvesting and haulout crews are to be provided with routes for the harvesting operation to be carried out on the farm.

- The route to be taken from the harvesting operation to the delivery siding must be identified. Use different routes, where practicable, for entering and exiting the siding.
- Haulout operators hauling out full bins should take a different route to the operator hauling empty bins to and from the siding. Use of water to suppress dust on routes to prevent it from becoming airborne (e.g. using water tankers, static sprinklers and other watering methods).

### Sidings and delivery points

A delivery point is a shared workplace. All persons involved with activities at a siding have duties to ensure that the way they undertake their activities does not pose a risk to themselves, workers or others. The Cane rail safety supplement to the Sugar Industry Code of Practice provides guidance about siding and delivery points for cane harvesting.

Employers must have first aid arrangements and plans in place to deal with emergencies in the workplace. All workers should be familiar with the emergency procedures for their place of work. Any remaining risk must be minimised with suitable personal protective equipment. For example: hard hats, steel cap boots, and high visibility vests.

Administrative control measures and PPE rely on human behaviour and supervision. If used on their own, they are least effective in minimising risks. The control measures you put in place should be reviewed regularly to make sure they work as planned. WHSQ's onsite traffic management self-assessment tool may assist with the development of a traffic management plan. SafeWork Australia also provides a general guide to workplace traffic management

More information can be found at [worksafe.qld.gov.au](http://worksafe.qld.gov.au)

# RESULTS

**J & R McCracken Highest Actual CCS Sample -**  
RJ & Mrs JE Zunker

**Cheshire Machinery Harvesting Contractor Award for Best Harvesting Efficiency and Most Reliable Performance -** STH Contracting Pty Ltd

**Wilson's Industrial Sales Best Farm Presentation For Harvesting-**  
Mr SA Algeo

**Gro-Sure Award for Contribution to Productivity -**  
Graham McCracken

**Nufarm Award for Service to Industry -**  
Ron Crouch

**Sunwater Young Industry Achiever Award -**  
Ryan Dingle (*Pictured*)

**Ergon Energy Inspiring Female Leader Award -**  
Leone Aslett (*Pictured*)

**Incitec Pivot Cane Growing Excellence - Farms Up to and including 60 ha -**  
Racmac Pty Ltd (*Pictured*)

**Incitec Pivot Cane Growing Excellence - Farms larger than 60 ha -**  
RM Dingle (*Pictured*)

**RDO Equipment Closest Percentage Estimate to Actual Tonnage -**  
CM & Mrs LF Townson

**Wide Bay Drones Award for Highest Tonnes Sugar Per Harvested Hectare -**  
Redtrail Pty Ltd ( No.1) 17.58 ts/ha

**Waterfind Award for Most Sustainable Yield for the Past 3 Seasons -**  
Milworth Pty Ltd 105.5 tc/ha (*Pictured*)

**Bundaberg Distilling Co High Sugar Producer Awards -**  
WR & AJ Baldry (No.1) (*Pictured*) 17.55 ts/ha  
RL & Mrs. MR Lines 17.29 ts/ha  
Mr SA Algeo 16.65 ts/ha  
RM Dingle (No.1) (*Pictured*) 16.44 ts/ha  
Mrs EM & Mr SR Taske 16.01 ts/ha

**Formatt Machinery District Champion -**  
MGBJP Pty Ltd-15.55 ts/ha

**50+ Years – Evelyn Taske**

**60 Years of excellence in Sugarcane Farming-**  
M & BJ Chapman (*Pictured*)





## Soybean Update

Locally the soybean crops are looking good and have held up to the wet weather particularly well. There has been some lodging of the larger crops but other than that they should be able to be harvested in May and June, depending on planting time.

With all the rain it is extremely hard to get on the ground to check the crops, however experience has shown that there will be pod sucking bugs in the crops and possibly more Green Vegetable Bugs (GVB) than Red Banded Shield Bugs (RBSB), which is both good and bad. It is bad to have GVB in the crop however as they are

easier to kill than RBSB, it is a good thing. Preferred insecticide for control is Shield @ 250 ml per hectare with salt @ 500g/100L of water, however if it is unavailable, options such as Decis Options @ 500ml/ ha or Skope @ 320ml/ha may be considered. Skope has a long harvest withholding period of 6 weeks and so care needs to be taken to ensure harvesting can occur on time.

With late planting of the later maturing varieties there does not seem to be high levels of Soybean anthracnose and target spot compared to previous years, however the wet conditions experienced in the last couple of weeks may provide



the conditions for the disease to impact the plants and cause yield losses. Once the leaves and plants are covered by the diseases there is little that can be done as the badly infected leaves drop to the ground. If the infection levels remain light the disease can be controlled by the use of fungicides like Veritas Opti which has a permit for use in soybeans.

There does not seem to be enough reports at the moment of widespread damage to the crops in the northern rivers of NSW to increase the price. However as always it is a watch this space as continued wet weather can lower yields and impact quality. ■

## Training Opportunities



The SmartAg Queensland project continues to go from strength to strength having delivered training to more than 1000 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	Subsidy
<b>Forklift Training (Strategix)</b>	22 - 24 April 29 April - 1 May	50%
<b>Forklift Training (ASTA-Formal Course Work)</b>	17 April 19 May 17 June	50%
<b>Pilot/Escort Training</b>	TBA	50%
<b>Chemical Safety Training</b>	27 May	50%
<b>Truck Training and Licensing</b>	Contact Bundaberg CANEGROWERS	75% off MR, HR, HC 50% off MC
<b>Remote Pilot License Training</b>	Contact Bundaberg CANEGROWERS	50%

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](mailto: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. ■

## Farm Management Grants help plan for risk

If you are looking to build the resilience of your farm business, you may be able to access a Farm Management Grant to offset the professional advice costs associated with activities such as:

- preparation of a Farm Business Resilience Plan (required for QRIDA drought loan and grant applications)
- succession planning
- preparing for biosecurity, climate, weather (including drought) and

risks assessing workplace health and safety.

### Assistance available

A 50% rebate, up to \$2,500, on cost of professional advice to help eligible primary producers prepare for risks identified and the preparation of a Farm Business Resilience Plan.

Eligible primary producers may be able

to use a Sustainability Loan or Drought Preparedness Grant from QRIDA to implement activities identified in their Farm Business Resilience Plan.

**For more information about Farm Management Grants, including eligibility criteria and the application process, visit the QRIDA Farm Management Grants webpage or contact your local Regional Area Manager on 1800 623 946. ■**





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
12.02.25	Farm Inputs Research Committee	To receive updates	Tanya Howard
20.02.25	CANEGROWERS Load restraint Webinar	To receive updates	Matthew Leighton
24.02.25	Regional Business HQ Board	To represent members	Tanya Howard
28.02.25	SRA Southern District Plan Activities review 2025	To receive updates	Tanya Howard
03.03.25	Sugar Industry Dinner and Awards committee	To progress arrangements for awards evening	Tanya Howard
05.03.25	Bundaberg Regional Ratepayers Association	To represent members	Tanya Howard
06.03.25	Monthly SRA Update	To represent members	Tanya Howard
17.03.25	Monthly District Manager Meeting	To receive updates	Tanya Howard
18.03.25	Coastal Burnett Groundwater Area Advisory Committee	To represent irrigators	Dean Cayley Matthew Leighton Michael Cavallaro Tanya Howard
21.03.25	Licella SAF Project Briefing	To receive updates	Dale Holliss

### 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](mailto:bdb_office@bdbcanegrowers.com.au).

### JOBS BOARD

#### Looking for Haul out work

Gary White, former dairy farmer for 45 years, tractor experience. Ph 0428 551 316

#### Looking for Cane Production/ Haulage

Merlyn Stewart, Field work/ Cane Cutting experience, 30 Years wheel tractor farm work + Contract slashing. Extensive experience with cattle. Qualifications: LRO Ro, Car, Tractor. Ph: 0427 135 695 Email: [Mjstewart.Rsz@gmail.com](mailto:Mjstewart.Rsz@gmail.com)

## Farm Theft: Effective Strategies for Farmers

We are continuing to hear reports of the theft of machinery, farm vehicles and equipment from around the Bundaberg region. Whether it's opportunistic individuals or organised groups targeting your farm, theft can cause significant financial losses. One of the most effective ways to prevent theft is by creating strong physical barriers such as sturdy fences and gates around sheds, installing locked yards to store plant and machinery and restrict unauthorised access.

Technological solutions can help you monitor your sheds and storage yards and prevent theft. Installing security cameras around the farm can deter potential thieves and modern cameras with night vision and motion detection

can alert you to suspicious activity.

Thieves often operate at night to avoid detection and installing solar-powered lights around the farm to illuminate dark areas and keeping the area clear of unnecessary bushes or obstacles that may provide hiding spots can also deter thieves. The current round of thefts has included the thieves breaking into fenced areas to steal cars. This means that more than one level of deterrent is now required to deter the thieves.

It's also suggested you share contact details with neighbouring farms and monitor each other's property, register all theft incidents with police and ensure you have adequate insurance cover. ■

### CLASSIFIEDS

#### Wanted

Cane Trash Extractor  
Ph: 0412 634 005

#### Wanted

Bundaberg cane grower looking for land to lease.  
Ph: 0403 200 805

# Scientific basis for excluding the Burnett/Mary catchments from 'Reef Regulations'

## Executive Summary

The *Environmental Protection (Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2019*, was designed to apply to Great Barrier Reef river catchments. However, the legislation does not stipulate a geographical, or scientific property of a catchment that defines it as being a "Reef river catchment." Instead, Reef catchments are "prescribed by regulation"<sup>[1]</sup>.

The government in 2019 prescribed the Burnett and Mary Catchments as Reef catchments without presenting any scientific reasoning despite the following objections.

- The Burnett and Mary rivers do not discharge into, or anywhere near, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.
- The closest coral reef (in the Capricorn-Bunker sector) is 75 km north of the Burnett mouth, and 120 km from the Mary mouth.
- The East Australia Current (EAC), runs predominately southwards,

taking river discharge predominantly away from the Great Barrier Reef.

- The Capricorn Bunker Sector of the Great Barrier Reef, which is nearest to the Burnett/Mary mouths, is flushed by the huge quantities of water in the East Australia Current (EAC) – quantities that completely dwarf the Burnett/Mary flows.
- The water flow of the Burnett River for an entire year is equivalent to just two minutes flow of the EAC. And the EAC direction is largely taking river discharge southwards.
- Sediment: The nearest reefs to the Burnett/Mary are bathed, continuously, in sparkling blue waters of the Pacific Ocean. There is effectively zero sediment on these reefs indicating zero impact from rivers.
- Nutrients: The Capricorn eddy, which is often embedded in the EAC, upwells vast amounts of deep, nutrient-rich, water to the Capricorn Bunker Reefs. This eddy delivers up to ten times as much nutrients as the Burnett

River, and very close to the reefs, rather than over 75 km distant for the Burnett. In addition, recycling of nutrients on the sea bed is around 100 times the discharge of the Burnett.

- Pesticides: Pesticides are in unmeasurably small concentrations on the entire main reef matrix of the GBR where 99% of the corals exist.

The worst facet of this issue is that no evidence has ever been advanced for why the Burnett/Mary catchments were defined as reef catchments in 2019. A useful step forward would be to invite the relevant science and management institutions to produce evidence for why the inclusion might be continued. This would provide a useful basis for a genuine scientific debate that would be valuable for the government to consider possible changes to the catchments prescribed, by regulation, as reef catchments.

**Please contact the office on 4151 2555 for a full copy of this report. ■**



Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Ltd

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

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The Bundaberg District Canegrower

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