

Chair's Update

How uncomfortable was the weather in the lead up to the storms and rain that we received in the middle of February. Most places received some most welcome falls between 60 – 120mm and irrigators have been rewarded with some excellent growth since. With the price where it is, it can be difficult to motivate yourself to get into irrigating, however if fertiliser has been applied you really need to water it.

The ICE11 price has kept crashing and the Aussie dollar has been going up so we are being dealt with a double whammy. From reports, the ICE11 should level out but the dollar could keep appreciating. This places forward pricing in the spotlight as there were some very good opportunities to help cushion this drop in the market.

Don't get me wrong though, even the professionals get it somewhat wrong, this being said keep an eye on the price daily and if you need some help, please get in touch with Glenn Harris our Southern Region QSL Grower Rep.

Beginning for the 2026 Season, Bundaberg growers will see an adjustment to the starting Advance rate and program structure for the 2026 Season. More information can be found on the insert included with this newsletter. If you have any questions, contact Tanya or Glenn.

I would like to welcome our newest Sugar Services staff member Lily Schipper to the position of Field Officer. One-eye Sett propagation is well underway with Matt Leighton and Tanya getting on with the job and Lily has commenced in time to assist.

Michael Turner has also returned on a casual as-needed basis and Michael

will also be available to train Lily in her new role.

SRA47 finally got the green light for release so please watch this variety, it may not be for everyone, but it will give us some choice alongside another newly released variety, SRA44^o.

We extend our best wishes to Micheal Green as he moves on to his next chapter, with that BSL have been conducting interviews for a replacement Cane Supply Manager. I would like to thank Micheal for the positive effort and changes that he instigated whilst in the role. When a new Cane Supply Manager has been appointed, we will schedule a meeting to discuss 2026 Season transport arrangements and options for improvement. We want to ensure our next crop is harvested in a timely manner and we achieve an outcome that is fair for all growers.

The Grain in Cane Co-op has decided that 2026 will be their last season, this will be unfortunate however due to low throughput and high fixed costs, it is no longer viable to continue operations.

Tickets are now on sale for the Bundaberg Sugar Industry Dinner and 2025 Season Awards being held on Friday 27 March. This is a great night to celebrate the achievements of the past season and I encourage you all to attend. Please call the office to book your tickets.

Harvesting Group Arrangements

The Collective Contract stipulates the following arrangements for grouping:

8 Grouping

8.1 Formation.- The Mill Owner shall provide an indication of the likely modes of crush for the coming Season in writing to Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Ltd by the 14 April. Applications by a Grower to join a harvesting group must be received by the Mill Owner by the 21 April of each year and the Mill Owner must advise the grower by the 5 May of that year of the Grower's new Delivery Point to ensure the efficient and economic operation of the Mill transport system.

Growers who have been advised of a new Delivery Point shall notify the Mill Owner by the 15 May if they will accept the new Delivery Point. In the absence of any Application to the Mill Owner from a Grower prior to 21 April, and any notification of acceptance of a Delivery Point by a Grower to the Mill Owner prior to 15 May for those growers advised of a new Delivery Point, the Grower's membership of their harvesting group shall be deemed to be the same as the previous season. ■

Mark Pressler
Chairman



Top Five (5) Issues We Have Been Working On

1. Reviewing arrangements for 2026 Season harvesting, transport and analysis;
2. Undertaking soil tests, analysis and assisting with N & P Budgets;
3. Reviewing 2025 end of Season reports and recommendations;
4. Preparations for 2025 Season Sugar Industry Dinner and Awards on Friday, 27 March;
5. Preparations for 2026 Soybean Season.



2025 Season Indicative Advances Program

Based on QSL reports 30 January 2026

Applicable From	Uncommitted Pool Advance (AUD/tonne IPS)		QSL Standard Advance Rate
	Payment Date	To	
Initial	\$0	\$403	65.0%
16 Jul 25	-\$38	\$365	65.00%
20 Aug 25	\$0	\$365	65.00%
17 Sep 25	\$0	\$365	65.00%
15 Oct 25	\$14	\$380	70.00%
19 Nov 25	-\$31	\$349	72.50%
17 Dec 25	\$32	\$381	77.50%
21 Jan 26	\$6	\$386	80.00%
18 Feb 26	\$8	\$395	82.50%
18 Mar 26	\$24	\$419	87.50%
15 Apr 26	\$12	\$431	90.00%
20 May 26	\$12	\$443	92.50%
17 Jun 26	\$24	\$467	97.50%
By 31 July 26	\$12	\$478	100.00%

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 \$478/t IPS as of 30 January 2026.

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.

SRA Roadshow Strategy Session in Bundaberg: 27 March 2026



SRA will be holding a consultation meeting in Bundaberg for the SRA Strategic Plan 2026-2031.

These sessions will be held across all districts in March 2026 and are a key opportunity for growers, millers and other stakeholders to have a say in the proposed strategic direction for SRA over the next five years; to understand the challenges and opportunities ahead; and to contribute your perspective to the Strategic Plan.

Each session will be facilitated by R&D strategy expert, Mr Andrew Baxter, who brings extensive experience in organisational strategy and stakeholder engagement.

The session will include the following:

- Discussion on industry trends, risks and growth opportunities
- Idea generation for a new SRA strategic direction
- Open forum for feedback from all participants.

1pm - 3pm

Friday 27 March 2026

Brothers Sports Club

130 Takalvan St, Bundaberg 4670

(Refreshments provided)

RSVP essential prior to the event -

<https://bit.ly/3MOqqWR>.

Sugar Industry Dinner 2025 Season Awards

Friday, 27 March 2026

The Sails Function Room at The Waves Sports Club

Tickets on sale now



Drought Preparedness Grant

Primary producers can now apply for a grant of up to 25 per cent of the cost of purchasing, upgrading and installing permanent capital infrastructure.

Applicants may receive a maximum cumulative amount of \$50,000 in assistance, either through a single application or multiple applications. This total includes any grants previously received under the Drought Preparedness Grants Scheme 2021-2024 (closed) as well as the current scheme.

The grant aims to assist producers with the cost of projects that will establish or improve existing permanent capital infrastructure, and to carry out drought preparedness activities identified in their Farm Business Resilience Plan.

Examples of projects include (but are not limited to):

- water infrastructure including pipes, water tanks, water troughs, dam construction, drilling a working

bore, water conservation infrastructure and water pumps

- storage, mixing and feeding out equipment for grain, fodder, molasses and other supplements
- grain storage and equipment that improves the ability of the grain growing business to manage drought reasonable freight components to purchase and install equipment or infrastructure
- consumables including fuel for own machinery used in relation to the drought preparedness project and costs or non-salaried employees' costs directly associated with implementing the drought preparedness project.

A QRIDA Sustainability Loan may be used as the co-contribution to the Drought Preparedness Grant for implementation activities.

To be eligible for the Drought Preparedness Grant, the project will:

- involve the purchase, upgrade or installation of permanent capital infrastructure
- improve the ability of the primary production business to prepare for, continue to operate in, or recover from, drought conditions
- be a drought preparedness activity listed in your resilience plan for the primary production business and not have already commenced the project before the assistance is approved. Deposits (generally payments of up to 50% of total costs) may be paid for the purchase of materials or engaging contractors up to 90 days before the approval of assistance.

For further information, including eligibility requirements, visit <https://www.qrida.qld.gov.au/program/drought-preparedness-grants> or contact the office on 4151 2555. ■

Information about the Environment Protection Reform Bill

Late in 2025 the Federal Government passed the Environment Protection Reform Bill 2025 and it has some changes in it that may affect some growers, especially those who have native vegetation on the property or those that neighbour a creek or river. There is still some clarification required for some parts of the Bill, especially for agriculture, however the changes mostly reflect the current Qld laws with differences to be aware of.

The key parts to the bill for agriculture are:

- Clearing within 50 metres of a watercourse, wetland or drainage line in the Great Barrier Reef catchment no longer has a "continuing use" exemption. There

is reasonably detailed mapping of a watercourse, wetland and drainage line on the Qld Globe website.

- Clearing vegetation that has not been cleared for at least 15 years now requires assessment if it may have a significant impact on Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES). This means clearing at risk ecosystems, areas that have endangered animals or plants will be prohibited if the vegetation is more than 15 years old.
- Forestry operations remain exempt from the 15-year rule.
- The Federal "water trigger" for coal and gas projects remains in place.
- The definitions for both significant

impact and unacceptable impact have been tightened, with language such as "likely" replaced with "will," increasing the threshold for risk.

This legislation does **not** automatically prevent clearing, but it changes the consequences for clearing in areas where there are MNES or where the clearing falls within the 15-year definition.

The key unknown at this stage is how this will work with the Category X, white zone, on existing PMAV's in Qld. Will the category X area be exempt from the 15 year clearing rule? Agricultural lobby groups are awaiting the answer to that last question. ■

Reminders of Reef Regulations

Growers are reminded that they need to continue to comply with the various phases of the Reef Regulations. There may be some changes made later in the year, however until this occurs growers need to continue to comply with the current Reef Regulations and be prepared for compliance checks from March until July.

To comply with the Reef regulations growers need to do the following:

Have a soil test taken within 12 months of planting cane or applying fertiliser to that cane paddock for the first time. The soil tests do not need to be of every block planted however a representative of all soil types to be planted must be soil sampled.

Record all fertiliser applications within 3 days of applying fertiliser providing information such as date of application, fertiliser blend name, fertiliser blend

analysis, rate applied and how it was applied.

Create or engage a suitable person to create a Nitrogen and Phosphorus (N&P) budget that calculates from the soil test results the total amount of nitrogen and phosphorus that can be applied to the farm. This is the basis for the fertiliser blend and rates that can be applied. ■

CANEGROWERS Cost of Production Tool

CANEGROWERS has developed an easy-to-use portal to help you calculate your cost of production.

Cost of production, measured in \$AUD per tonne, is an indication of the expenditure required to produce each

tonne of sugarcane. Knowing your cost of production and potential revenue will help you make informed business decisions, set production and business goals to increase farm profitability and it can assist with marketing and forward pricing decisions. The Cost of

Production Tool can be accessed in the Member Resources portal at www.canegrowers.com.au.

If you require assistance please contact the office on 4151 2555. ■

Bundaberg Regional Council Rates Support

The following advice may assist growers impacted by the recent decline in sugar prices. Ratepayers having difficulty paying the current rates and charges can enter a payment plan with Council to clear the debt prior to the issue of the next rate notice in July 2026.

Requests can be made by using visiting <https://www.bundaberg.qld.gov.au/Residents/Rates-and-property/Difficulty-paying-rates>.

The online application will work out what is needed to be paid based on the frequency of payment selected by the ratepayer.

Once the request is submitted, Council will contact the ratepayer to confirm if it has been accepted or if the proposed payment commitment needs further discussion. Council will charge compound interest at 12.12% per annum on overdue rates and charges calculated on daily rests. Ensuring the

payments are made in accordance with the accepted arrangement will ensure penalty interest is minimised.

Council also has a hardship policy to assist those ratepayers with extreme financial hardship that can be viewed at the above link.

Should you require further information or assistance, please contact Council's Revenue team on 1300 883 699. ■

CANEGROWERS Education Resources

CANEGROWERS is a member of the Primary Industries Education Foundation Australia (PIEFA), that was formed through a collaboration between the Australian Government, primary industries organisations and the education sector and is the peak body for food and fibre education in Australia.

PIEFA is the one-stop source for educational information and resources to help build knowledge about agriculture, forestry, fisheries and food and fibre within the schools' system, and to create awareness and interest in career pathways in these industries.

CANEGROWERS works closely with PIEFA to develop and promote a range of sugarcane curriculum aligned teaching resources, industry careers and participate in events connecting the sugarcane industry with schools across the country and CANEGROWERS has recently launched two new education initiatives to help teachers, students and the wider community explore Australia's sugarcane industry.

The free Sugarcane Education Pack offers curriculum-aligned, ready-to-use classroom materials covering how sugarcane grows, the paddock-to-product journey, the wide range of

products it creates (including biofuels and renewable electricity), and sustainable farming practices. The pack includes posters, hands-on worksheets and links to additional resources. Visit <https://bit.ly/4aDbBzM> to order your pack today.

To keep educators informed, CANEGROWERS has also introduced a quarterly education newsletter featuring curated resources, events, career pathways and future engagement opportunities.

You can sign up for the education newsletter here <https://bit.ly/4rGg1fg>. ■



SUGAR SERVICES NEWS

New Staff Member

Bundaberg Sugar Services Ltd has employed Lily Schipper (pictured) as their new Field Officer.

Lily recently attended SRA's Disease Identification Workshop at Woodford to gain hands-on experience identifying diseases like smut and Fiji leaf gall through field walks and lab demos.

If you see Lily out in the field, please say hello and introduce yourself.

Lily can be contacted on 0429 334 553 or by email at lschipper@sugarservices.com.au. ■





SMALL CHANGES, BIG REWARDS

TAKE YOUR FARM BUSINESS FROM GOOD TO GREAT!

BUSINESS ESSENTIALS WORKSHOPS

Join us at the Bundaberg Business Essentials workshops to sharpen your skills and refresh your plans for the future!

How do I reserve my spot?

Use the QR code or weblink to fill out a brief survey to express your interest! This does not commit you to attend and we will confirm further details with you first.

web.canegrowers.com.au/cn/a7wtu/Register

Where: CANEGROWERS Bundaberg Boardroom



SESSION 1: Wed 15 April 2026

Plan for your future with guest presenter Bec Fing. Bec will guide you through setting goals and building a plan, improving communications and dealing with risks.

An excellent session for future-proofing your farming business!

SESSION 2: Thu 16 April 2026 (morning)

Beef up your Excel skills at this session with Chris Gillitt who will guide you through the basics of using MS Excel.

The session will explore some useful techniques to help you with everyday tasks in Excel. The second part of the session will focus on using excel to calculate the farm cost of production.

SESSION 3: Thu 16 April 2026 (afternoon)

This session will focus on sugar price risk and help you to consider which approach works best for you and your business to secure a profitable sugar price.

With the market within sugar surplus territory, now is the time to assess your approach.

The full series is free to attend when at least one representative from your business joins us for Session 1. If you attend only Session 2 or 3, a \$50 fee per session applies.

Morning tea and lunch are included each day.

Payday Super – Key Changes to Super Guarantee Commencing 1 July 2026

What is payday super? Payday super is the Federal Australian Government's legislation to make employers pay their employees' super at the same time as their wages or salary.

What does payday super legislation mean for employers?

Employers have 3 main obligations under the legislation, starting 1 July 2026:

1. They need to accurately calculate the amount of super owed to each employee (see "qualifying earnings" below).
2. They must make sure super funds receive employee SG contributions **no later than 7 business days after every payday** (qualifying earnings day). There are limited exceptions to this rule, for example relating to onboarding new employees.
3. It will be imperative to remit funds on day one (payday) due to bank clearance days and to allow time for the Clearing House to distribute funds to the employee's superannuation fund by the 7th day with time to rectify any errors. Super funds will have 3 business days to allocate or return contributions.
4. They must comply with the employee's choice of fund. If they don't, they may be charged an extra penalty.

Different rules may apply to Defined Benefit accounts.

Key changes to understand

Calculating super - qualifying earnings

Qualifying earnings (QE) is a new term for the types of payments you make to employees that are used to calculate the super guarantee (SG) under Payday Super.

What qualifying earnings means for employers

From 1 July 2026, all employers will use qualifying earnings as the base to calculate both the SG amount and the super guarantee charge (SGC).

Currently employers calculate SG and SGC on different earnings bases.

For many employers, the new concept of qualifying earnings doesn't change

the amount of SG you are currently paying for your employees.

Most employees are eligible for SG. Independent contractors paid mainly for their labour are considered employees for SG purposes.

What amounts count as qualifying earnings?

Qualifying earnings include the following:

- Ordinary time earnings (OTE), i.e. payments for ordinary hours of work, including certain types of paid leave, allowances, bonuses and lump sum payments. There are no changes to what payments are considered OTE under Payday Super.
- All commissions paid to an employee.
- Salary sacrifice amounts that would qualify as qualifying earnings had they not been sacrificed to superannuation.
- Earnings paid to workers who fall under the expanded definition of employee, including payments to independent contractors paid mainly for their labour.

Some payments may fall into more than one category of qualifying earnings, such as commissions. Those payments are covered only once to the extent of the overlap in categories.

Ordinary time earnings

Payments for ordinary hours of work are qualifying earnings. This includes certain types of paid leave, some allowances, bonuses and lump sum payments. The full list of payments that are OTE can be found on the ATO website.

You may have additional super obligations under an industrial instrument (award or agreement) to pay super on amounts that are not OTE.

When to pay super under payday super rules

Under the new rules, employers must pay employees' super at the same time as their salary or wages. That means super payment dates for your business will be the same as your paydays, if they're not already.

Super funds must **successfully receive** SG contributions no later than 7 business days after payday. They then

have 3 business days to put it into the employee's account.

What does "payday" mean under the new rules? "Payday" means the day you pay an employee their wages or salary. The legislation calls payday, "QE" (qualifying earnings) day.

The ATO have finalised their compliance approach for the first year of Payday Super. It recognises that employers who try to do the right thing, and resolve issues quickly, shouldn't be the focus of ATO compliance action.

Changes to the Super Guarantee Charge (SGC)

From 1 July 2026, the SGC applies when amounts aren't received by a super fund within 7 business days of payday (unless an extended timeframe applies, such as for a new employee) and,

- Is calculated based on QE.
- Includes interest that compounds daily at the general interest charge rate.
- Includes an administrative uplift which can vary based on an employer's history of meeting super guarantee obligations and may be reduced by a voluntary disclosure.
- Is assessed by the ATO.
- SGC is now tax deductible.

Penalties may be 25% or 50% of the unpaid SGC depending on any prior penalties.

Other changes as part of payday super

The ATO's Small Business Clearing House will close from 1 July 2026. If you use this service, you will need to find a new way to make SG contributions.

Check your clearing house and payroll systems

Ensure your clearing house and payroll software supports real-time SG payments aligned with employee paydays.

Refer to the ATO's Payday Super Checklist for Employers for a timeline to get ready for Payday Super.

Contact Kate at the office on 4151 2555 if any assistance is required. ■



Invitation

You're invited to

Barefoot Bowls, BBQ & Beers

Nothing formal, just a good old sausage sizzle and even better company.

Where: Burnett Bowls Club,
169B George St, Bundaberg West

When: Friday, 6th March 2026

Time: 5:00pm

RSVP by: Friday, 27 February by calling 07 4151 2555
or emailing reception@bdbcanegrowers.com.au



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
15.01.26	Monthly SRA Update	To receive update	Tanya Howard
21.01.26	DNR water plan review	To represent update	Dale Holliss Tanya Howard Matthew Leighton
22.01.26	QCGO Marketing Standards	To represent members	Tanya Howard
11.02.26	QFF Water and Energy Policy Committee	To represent members	Tanya Howard
12.02.26	SRA Seedplot Agreement	To receive update	Tanya Howard
12.02.26	QCGO Farm Performance and R&D Investment Committee	To receive update	Tanya Howard
18.02.26 - 20.02.26	QCGO Industry performance & Evolution Committee	To receive update	Tanya Howard
28.01.26	2026 Season Advance Schedule discussion	To represent members	Tanya Howard
03.02.26	Women in Sugar meeting	To represent members	Anna Attard
05.02.26 - 06.02.26	QCGO Sustainability and Extension Committee	To receive update	Mark Pressler
09.02.26 - 10.02.26	QCGO District Managers Meeting	To receive update	Tanya Howard
17.02.26 - 18.02.26	QSL Grower Representative Meeting	To represent members	Mark Pressler



www.dundertech.com.au
41 Steptoe Street, Bundaberg East,

Feed Your Cane, Feed Your Soil with Dunder based liquids!

This autumn, give your sugarcane the best head start with our Dunder-based planting fertilisers made locally here in Bundaberg. The trusted solution for healthier soils, stronger plants, and higher yields.

Dunder Complete

N	P	K	S	Ca	Mg	Carbon
12.5%	12.5%	6.5%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	3.1%

Dunder DAP

N	P	K	S	Ca	Mg	Carbon
12.9%	15.6%	0.9%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	2.3%



* May include traces of trace elements + Molybdenum, cobalt & selenium. Typical analysis may vary due to natural ingredient included in this product.

- Includes yeast, complex sugars and crude protein to feed soil biology.
- Contains liquid carbon (2-3% C) to increase CEC thereby increasing soil nutrient storage.
- The dunder component is a by-product of the molasses fermentation, becoming a great food source for microbes.
- Built on a fermented dunder base that helps improve nutrient efficiency.
- Enhanced application flexibility, allowing for precise nutrient delivery.
- Economical to use.

Also current Dunder ratoon blends:

Dunder 7030

N	P	K	S	Ca	Mg	Cu	Carbon
13.6%	0%	14.47%	0.1%	0.23%	0.16%	100ppm	10.56%

Dunder 7030(S)

N	P	K	S	Ca	Mg	Cu	Carbon
12.65%	0%	13.5%	1.5%	0.23%	0.16%	100ppm	10.5%

Dunder Power – For Cane That Grows Strong!

For pricing and more detail please contact:

Tim O’Dea 0429 112 225

Gerco VanZyl 0499 944 810

Theunis Smit 0423 394 468

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



If undeliverable return to:



Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Ltd

PO Box 953
BUNDABERG QLD 4670

Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Ltd
32 Bourbong Street (PO Box 953)
Bundaberg Qld 4670
Phone: (07) 4151 2555 Fax: (07) 4153 1986
Email: bdb_office@bdbcanegrowers.com.au
Website: www.bdbcanegrowers.com.au
ABN: 66 110 868 801

PRINT
POST
100001222

POSTAGE PAID
AUSTRALIA
PRIORITY