The Bundaberg District Canegrower

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Emerging Legend - Sam Ford

Chair's Update



How things have changed in a short period of time. After one of the driest harvest periods, some areas are now too wet to access.

Most of the district has received much-needed rain, bringing relief to ratoon and plant cane that was suffering in the dry conditions.

Mill throughput has been reasonable but not quite as good as initial forecasts. CCS had been the highest average in three (3) years, however with the wet weather CCS has taken a dive expectedly, hence why we would like to be closer to the finish line, if not finished altogether.

We understand that mechanical plans are in place and it takes time to implement it all, but the outcomes and delays have left throughput below the desired level.

Transport continues to cause on-farm delays with driver and bin shortages making it difficult to coordinate it all for a smooth run.

We recently met with Jerome Lippens, Guy Basile and Bundaberg Sugar team to review the season's progress to date and discuss where to from here.

Congratulations to the Bundaberg Legends honoured at the CANEGROWERS Centenary Gala Dinner on Thursday 29 October. Legend awards were presented to Sam Ford (Emerging), Dale Holliss (Present) and Allan Dingle (Past). Chosen from strong nominations across all categories, they were recognised for their lasting contribution and dedication to the Bundaberg sugar industry. The gala was a wonderful opportunity to come together and celebrate our industry.



Past Legend - Allan Dingle pictured with Claire Dingle

Applications are now open for the Irrigation Pricing Rebate Scheme, which offers eligible businesses a 15% rebate on the total invoice issued by Sunwater, including Burnett Water. This application process also serves as the eligibility test to receive regulated water prices from June 2027.

Planting has been disrupted in parts of the district by conditions that have been either too dry or too wet. One-eye sett distribution is now complete, with good uptake from growers.

Soybeans have helped growers manage low sugar prices in the past and could again support cashflow while also benefiting the soil. Even if not taken for grain they provide a good cover crop in the fallow. Matt can help with variety selection and soybean management, drawing on his extensive knowledge. See the article on page 3 for an introduction.

Let's hope the weather holds up for a successful end to the harvest.

Mark Pressler
Chairman



Present Legend - Dale Holliss pictured with Ann Holliss

Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Ltd Newsletter
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2026 Season Indicative Advances Program

Based on QSL reports 30 October 2026

The below schedule is the Bundaberg Supplier Specific Advance Program.
This is not the QSL Standard Advance Schedule and does not apply to growers participating in QSL FlexPay. These growers should refer to their individual Advances Payment Schedule, available in their QSL Direct account.

Applicable From	Uncommitted Pool Advance (AUD/tonne IPS)		QSL Bundaberg Supplier Advance Rate
Payment Date	Payment Change	To	
Initial	$0	$232	50%
17-Jun-26	$0	$232	50%
15-Jul-26	$0	$234	50%
19-Aug-26	$0	$258	55%
16-Sep-26	$0	$290	55%
21-Oct-26	$6	$296	55%
18-Nov-26	$41	$337	60%
16-Dec-26	$28	$365	65%
20-Jan-27	$28	$393	70%
17-Feb-27	$28	$422	75%
17-Mar-27	$28	$450	80%
21-Apr-27	$28	$478	85%
19-May-27	$28	$506	90%
16-Jun-27	$28	$534	95%
By 31 Jul 27	$28	$562	100%

Notes:

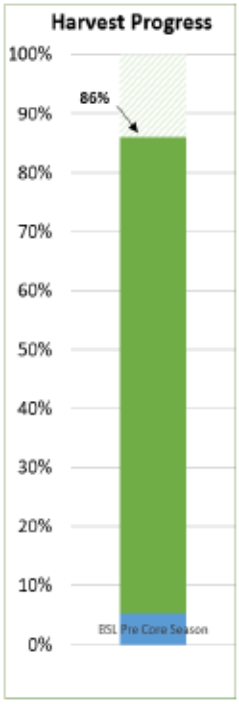
Under QSL's Standard Advances program, supplying growers and millers are paid a proportional amount of their current estimated final sugar pricing result.

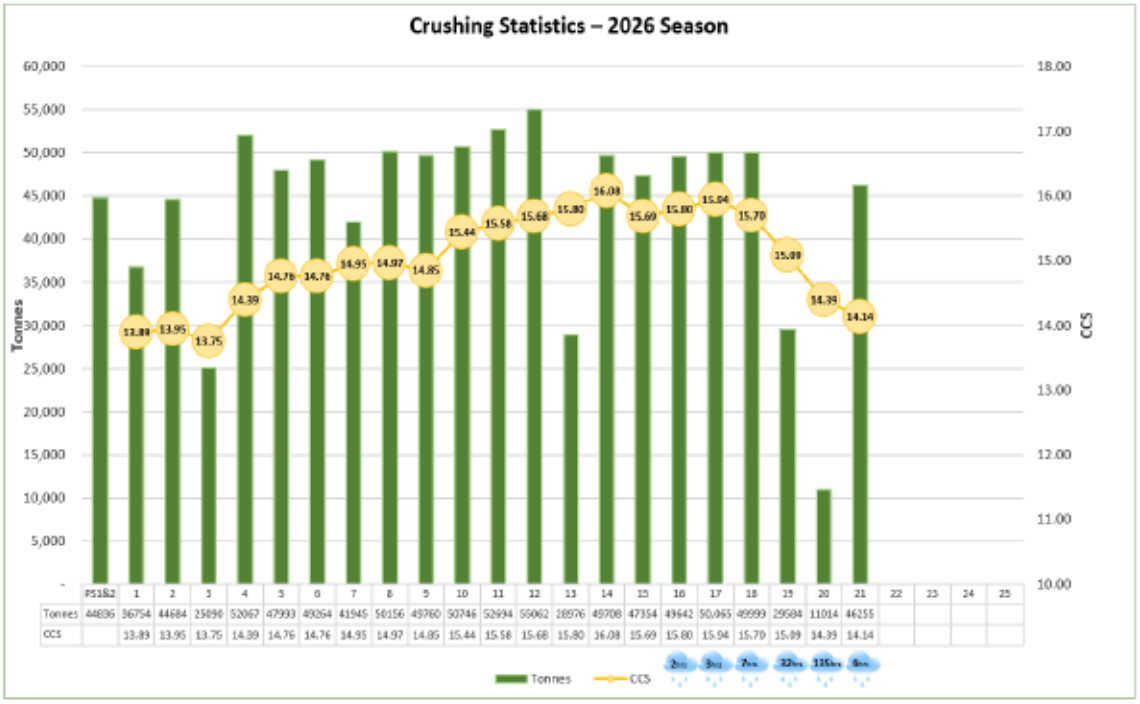
The program is indicative only and may change during the season. It should not be taken as a commitment by QSL regarding Advance payment rates or timing. The QSL Board reviews the program periodically and may approve or amend scheduled increases, taking into account factors such as marketing and shipping plans, sugar price and currency movements, cash flow timing, and suppliers' pricing elections.

The figures below are estimates only, based on the default QSL pricing position of 98% Harvest Pool and 2% US Quota Pool using pool values at the specified date. Pool values may change as the season progresses. Estimated payments exclude GST, allowances, deductions, and any other grower or miller adjustments. Based on indicative pool values, with an estimated combined QSL Harvest and US Quota pool value of $562/t IPS as of 30 October 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.

*The QSL Standard Advance Rate Default Payment incorporates a weighted average Shared Pool and finance allocation. Shared Pool and finance costs applied to grower payments vary by grower due to regional costs, region-specific Advances programs, and any customised Advances arrangements under QSL FlexPay. QSL Direct growers can access their individual Shared Pool and finance cost details in their QSL Direct account.





Sunwater CASPr Rebate vs Sunwater 15% Irrigation Pricing Rebate Scheme

Sunwater customers may have received correspondence regarding an automatic rebate recently for the close of the CASPr project. This is not the same as the Irrigation Pricing Rebate of 15%, eligible growers still need to apply to receive this rebate which is a separate Queensland Government program.

Sunwater is providing rebates to eligible irrigation customers for CASPr related costs previously included in regulated water prices, via a credit on their invoice (no action required).

Irrigation Pricing Rebate of 15% is still only available via application through QRIDA (no longer automatically applied).

What was CASPr

CASPr (Customer and Stakeholder Project) was Sunwater's integrated system for customer and stakeholder relationship management, water accounting and billing. In 2025, after review, Sunwater decided the project would not deliver the intended outcome and it closed.

The cost of CASPr was being recovered through irrigation prices for 2025/26 and 2026/27 and Sunwater has confirmed it will rebate this cost to eligible irrigation customers via a credit on their invoice.

15% Irrigation Pricing Rebate Scheme through QRIDA

The Queensland Government has allocated $25.3 million to the Irrigation Pricing Rebate Scheme (the Scheme) to provide rebates of 15% to eligible businesses on water bills issued by Seqwater or Sunwater (including Burnett Water) in relation to the 2025/26 and 2026/27 financial years. The 15% rebate will support owner-operated businesses that use water for irrigation and earn primary production income.

Applications can be completed online through the QRIDA application portal, or via the paper application form. If you require assistance to complete your application please contact the office on 4151 2555.

Soybean Update

As cane harvesting draws to a close, soybean growers can begin planning by looking at options for the upcoming season. Things to consider include paddock selection and preparation, soybean variety, and what the season may bring regarding pests and diseases.

Paddock Selection

This is the important first stage for growing soybeans and should begin with a soil test to determine if lime or gypsum is required for optimal growth. Soybeans like most legumes require plenty of available soil calcium as well as a slightly acidic to slightly neutral pH in the range of 5.8 to 7.5. Ideally the paddock is level as soybean emergence can be affected by water laying in the planted row.

While good seed to soil contact is required for good emergence, the block should not be fluffy from over cultivation especially from a rotary hoe as this can make it hard to ensure the seeds are placed at the correct depth and can also allow the soil to set hard if rain falls after planting and before plant emergence.

Soybean variety

A-6785 - With the cane harvest due to finish in late November, the planting window for A-6785 is open for a longer time than the previous two (2) seasons. Its window is from early December to early January and is suitable for most edible markets however not all grain marketers will purchase it.

Hayman – is the industry standard for market acceptance, being suitable for all markets. It is an erect variety making it easier to spray when required. The planting window is from mid December until the end of January.

Kuranda – This variety has the highest yield potential of all the varieties, however has not shown this locally, which is probably due to its use as a late season variety rather than allowing it to grow through a longer season. It does have some marketing restrictions so check with your grain marketer before planting it. Kuranda can be planted from early January through to late February though later planting has a lower yield potential.

There are other soybean varieties that can be grown in the district such as Fernside, No-lox, New Bunya, Turbo and Morgan. Turbo and Morgan are new varieties this season while No-Lox has only been released for one season and so there is less information on ideal planting times and management practices than the other varieties.



Pest & Diseases

With an El Nino being declared it can be expected to be drier than the last couple of years which should reduce the incidence of Soybean Target Spot and Soybean Anthracnose, though it may still be present in large crops with a closed canopy.

The drier weather generally brings about an increase in soybean moth which likes water stressed plants and an increase in Red Banded Shield Bug while decreasing Green Vegetable Bug numbers. There can be an increase in chewing pests and moth larvae as there are less suitable crops and green vegetation to attract the moths and beetles.

There has been reports from the horticultural sector that cluster caterpillars have become resistant to some of the more common insecticides used across the various grains and horticultural industries including Vantacor (chlorantraniliprole) in north Queensland. This insecticide is one of the products registered for heliothis larvae and generally takes out all moth larvae so to find that cluster caterpillars may be resistant will make proper identification of grub larvae critical in deciding what insecticide to use if the numbers present are above the spray threshold level.

SUGAR SERVICES NEWS

Collaborating with neighbours for One-Eye Sett orders

The Bundaberg district has seen continued adoption of One-Eye Setts (OES) from whole stick with a few differences between the two, from planting and taking care of younger plants until eventual harvest. One method that can make it easier, depending on the situation of growers, is collaborating with fellow neighbours/growers in the ordering, planting and care of OES.

Depending on the grower, the size of farms and other factors, growers have several options when it comes to the number of trays and varieties chosen when ordering OES. Sticking to one or two varieties per season with enough trays to fill one or two rows, can make harvest of seed blocks easier, and limit confusion of varieties, however it can slow the replacement of clean seed for older varieties as growers focus on the newer varieties grown on farm.

Choosing multiple varieties but with a smaller number of trays for each variety to fill those one or two rows, can often lead to a smaller number of trays per variety being purchased and depending on where and how they are planted, confusion around varieties and if multiple varieties are planted in the same row, difficulties in accessing planting material. It also reduces the area able to be planted from the OES meaning it takes longer until a full paddock of the variety can be planted.

Collaborating with fellow growers enables a larger number of trays to be planted. For example, Grower A purchases 44 trays of variety A and Grower B purchases 44 trays of variety B and each grower plants approximately two rows of each variety which can be grown on separate farms, or one farm, and shared by the growers come planting time. The planting and care of OES can also be limited to one paddock or area for multiple growers as opposed to smaller areas across multiple farms. Furthermore, aggregating multiple orders under one single grower may be a large enough number (156 trays or more for members) to qualify for discounted pricing. ■

Reduction in varieties available as One-Eye Setts

Sugar Services is looking at reducing the number of varieties being offered via its Autumn and Spring distribution of One-Eye Setts (OES). Managing clean Tissue Culture plants from SRA to develop the OES for distribution to growers takes time and incurs costs. The varieties proposed for removal have received few or no orders over the past couple of years.

Q242, Q245 and Q247 will remain available through the 2027 OES distributions but will no longer be offered from 2028 onwards.

Q232 and Q238 will also be reviewed, along with the remaining "Q" varieties and some of the less popular "SRA" varieties.

Growers seeking a variety that is not on the OES distribution list can ask Sugar Services to order it from SRA as tissue culture on their behalf.

If you have any thoughts on this please contact Lily Schipper via email lschipper@sugarservices.com.au or on her mobile 0429 334 553.■



Southern Regional Variety Guide 2026/2027

The 2026/2027 Variety Guide for Southern region is designed to help growers in the Southern cane growing region with their agronomic considerations when selecting new varieties to plant and trial on their farms.

The information comes from the best available data of regional variety performance and disease ratings. The information contained in the Guide will help you understand:

- New and recent varieties available in the Southern region
- Smut ratings
- Pachymetra ratings
- Disease resistance
- Harvest management
- Variety adoption in each mill area

The 2026/2027 Variety Guide for Southern region can be viewed/downloaded by visiting https://sugarresearch.com.au/southern-variety-guide, or by contacting the office on 4151 2555 for a printed copy.■



Workplace Health and Safety Update

Workplace Health and Safety are focusing their latest October to December 2026 on farm compliance program on "fixed plant". While the focus is on fixed plant all parts of the workplace is checked for compliance. Fixed plant is machinery non-mobile stationary machinery, equipment, storage structures and workshop equipment that is in fixed location. Examples are irrigation motors and pumps as well as drill press' and lathes in sheds.

There are examples such as flume roller attachment to a tractor which can be part of mobile plant when being moved to an operational site and then it becomes fixed plant during the irrigation fluming retrieval process. Regardless of whether it is mobile or fixed plant, it is required to have PTO guarding, covered drive connections and other necessary guarding to make the operation of the equipment as safe as possible. Section 20B of the WHS Regulation and the Rural Plant Code of Practice 2024 state that all guarding must be securely fixed and fit for purposes. Securely fixed means that a tool must be used to remove the guarding. Prior to the removal of any guarding, isolation procedures must be in place so that the machinery does not cause an electrical shock or start accidentally.

It is important to have operational procedures for all equipment use and maintenance procedures. Normally the recommendation is to use the operator's manual, however not all farm equipment came with a manual, especially if purchased second hand or it has been lost over the decades since it was purchased. Searching the internet for the specific manual or a generic manual can be of assistance as is the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), which can create generic safe work procedures and maintenance procedures for a range of farm equipment.

All maintenance, services and repairs need to be recorded and kept for a period of up to seven (7) years as proof of regular maintenance in case of an incident.

WHS officers can turn up and enter a property without notice however during routine inspections do try and notify an owner so that there is someone at the property. If non-compliance is found, and there is generally something that is non-compliant, growers normally receive an Improvement Notice and a timeline in which the relevant repairs must be completed. If parts are not available by the deadline listed in the Improvement Notice, an extension may be requested.

If the risk of injury is severe a Prohibition Notice may be issued and this means that the equipment cannot be used until the issue has been rectified and approval for use is issued by WHS.

If growers require assistance in preparing procedures for equipment, they can contact Matt Leighton on 0437 084 035 who will demonstrate the use of AI in creating the relevant documents.

No Use Spray Windows have commenced

There are a series of products that have no use spray windows due to an apparent higher risk period of the applied chemicals moving from the paddock to waterways following rainfall or irrigation. Below is a list of the more common chemicals used in the sugar industry that have a no use period and the timing of the no use window.

2,4-D Amine

The timing of the no spray window depends on the actual product used so growers will need to check the label for the exact information.

For the 625-gram active ingredient products (g ai) for rates below 1.2 L/ha there are no restrictions regarding time of use. For rates between 1.2 and 1.8 L/ha on bare ground there is a no spray window for October and November, while when applied to a trash blanket the no spray window is October only. When used at higher rates there are additional no spray windows.

When using DropZone a 500 g ai product, rates below 1.56 L/ha there are no restrictions regarding time of use. For rates between 1.56 and 2.1 L/ha on bare ground there is a no spray window for October and November, while when applied to a trash blanket the no spray window is October only.

Amicide Advance which is a 700 g ai product, has no spray window when used at rates below 1.1 L/ha. For rates between 1.1 and 1.6 L/ha on bare ground there is a no spray window for October and November, while when applied to a trash blanket the no spray window is October only. When used at higher rates there are additional no spray windows.

Amitron

There is a no spray window for Amitron for October, November and December.

Diuron products

For the standard 900 g ai diuron products there are differences in no spray window based on the rate applied. For "spike" rates up to 500 g ai there are no restrictions on when to spray and the whole paddock can be sprayed. For rates between 500 g ai and 1.9 kg ai there is a no spray window between 1 November and 29 January when applied at a directed spray targeting 60% of the paddock area. There does not seem to be a registered use for applying diuron to the whole paddock anymore.

Diuron at 468 g ai + Hexazinone 132 g ai products also have differing spray windows based on the rate applied and the area sprayed. When applied broadcast over the whole paddock at 4 kg/ha the no spray window is from 1 November through to the following 31 May. When applied as a banded spray covering 60% of the paddock at rates between 3-4 kg/ha the no spray window is reduced to 1 November to 29 February.

To be certain that growers are complying with these and other restrictions they are encouraged to read all of the label including critical comments, the rates for use and information including withholding periods.

In addition to all of the no spray windows for each of the products there are buffer zones in place for these and many other pesticides. These are area where no spraying is allowed next to a waterway or neighbour to minimize the chance of drift impacting others. There may be restrictions based on forecast rainfall and since the label is a legal document growers must comply with the conditions on the label.

Now Available: 2025/26 Annual Reports

Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited (BSSL) and Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Ltd (BCL) held their Annual General Meetings on 14 October to review the financial reports and organisational activities for the 2025/26 financial year.

Copies of the BSSL and BCL Annual Reports are now available and you can access your copy by:

- Visiting www.bdbcanegrowers.com.au
- Dropping by the office at 32 Bourbong Street
- Calling us on 4151 2555 to request a printed copy





A century in the making and yours to keep

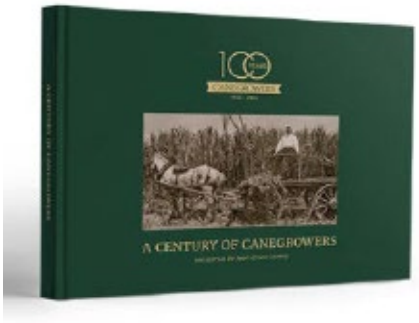
A Century of CANEGROWERS is a richly illustrated coffee-table book celebrating 100 years of Queensland's sugarcane industry – and the people, families and communities who shaped it.

Across its pages, historic photographs, personal stories and first-hand recollections bring to life the changing face of cane growing: the hardships and breakthroughs, the characters and communities, the battles won and the moments that helped define an industry. From the first gathering of grower representatives in Mackay in 1926 to the challenges and opportunities facing cane-growing families today, this is more than the history of an organisation. It is the story of generations of growers working together, standing up for their industry and building a legacy that continues today.

Beautifully designed and produced to mark CANEGROWERS' centenary, this commemorative hardcover book is a lasting keepsake for growers, families, industry supporters and anyone with a connection to Queensland's cane country.

Limited stock is available at Bundaberg CANEGROWERS for the purchase price of $60 each. **Call the office on 4151 2555 to reserve your copy.**

A century of stories. A century of change. A century of cane.



National Ag Day Photo Competition

Grow you good thing!

The AgDay Photo and Video Competition is back for 2026, and entries are now open.

This year's theme is *Our Farmers, Our Future*, and aims to see farming life through your lens. Golden paddocks, machinery at work, livestock, muddy boots, kids and puppies - show what agriculture looks like where you are. Please keep safety in the frame and show good, safe farming practice alongside the beauty of the job.

New for 2026: A People's Choice Award. For the first time, the public will help choose a winner. On Friday 27 November voting will open through the National Farmers' Federation social media pages where you can vote for your favourite photo.

Key dates

Entries open: Friday 23 October 2026

Entries close: 5pm AEDT on National Ag Day, Friday 20 November 2026.

People's choice voting: Friday 27 November until Monday 30 November 2026.

Winners announced: Friday 4 December 2026.

For more information, to submit your entry or to view last year's winners, visit https://agday.org.au/photography-video-competition.

Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Ltd

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

Navigating Queensland's Smoke Alarm Laws: What You Need to Know for Compliance

By 1 January 2027, all private homes, townhouses, units, and manufactured homes across Queensland must comply with the state's comprehensive smoke alarm legislation.

The alarms must comply with the following:

- Alarms must use photoelectric technology (meeting the Australian Standard AS 3786-2014). Ionisation alarms are no longer compliant regardless of age. Photoelectric sensors are vastly superior at detecting slow, smouldering fires - the kind most common and deadly in household settings.
- Every smoke alarm in the dwelling must be interconnected. This means if one alarm detects smoke and triggers, all alarms throughout the property sound simultaneously, giving occupants vital early warning no matter where they are sleeping. Interconnection can be achieved via hardwiring or wireless radio-frequency technology.
- Alarms must either be hard-wired to the mains power (with a secondary power source, such as a 10-year non-removable lithium backup battery) or powered by a 10-year non-removable lithium battery. Crucially, if your home already has 240V hard-wired alarms, any replacement must also be hard-wired - you cannot downgrade to battery-only units.
- All alarms must be less than 10 years old from their manufacture date.

The alarms must also be placed in specific areas to be compliant:

- In every bedroom
- In hallways that connect bedrooms to the rest of the dwelling
- If there is no connecting hallway, between the bedrooms and other parts of the storey
- On every level/storey of the home (if a level has no bedrooms, place the alarm in the most likely path of travel to exit the dwelling)

To be deemed compliant these alarms also need to be inspected every 12 months by a qualified person.

Generally, domestic electricians are able to install and maintain the smoke alarms as well as a range of specialty businesses focussing on smoke alarms.

Please contact an electrician and book in an installation time to be compliant by the 1 January 2027 deadline.

Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Ltd

Representation on Your Behalf

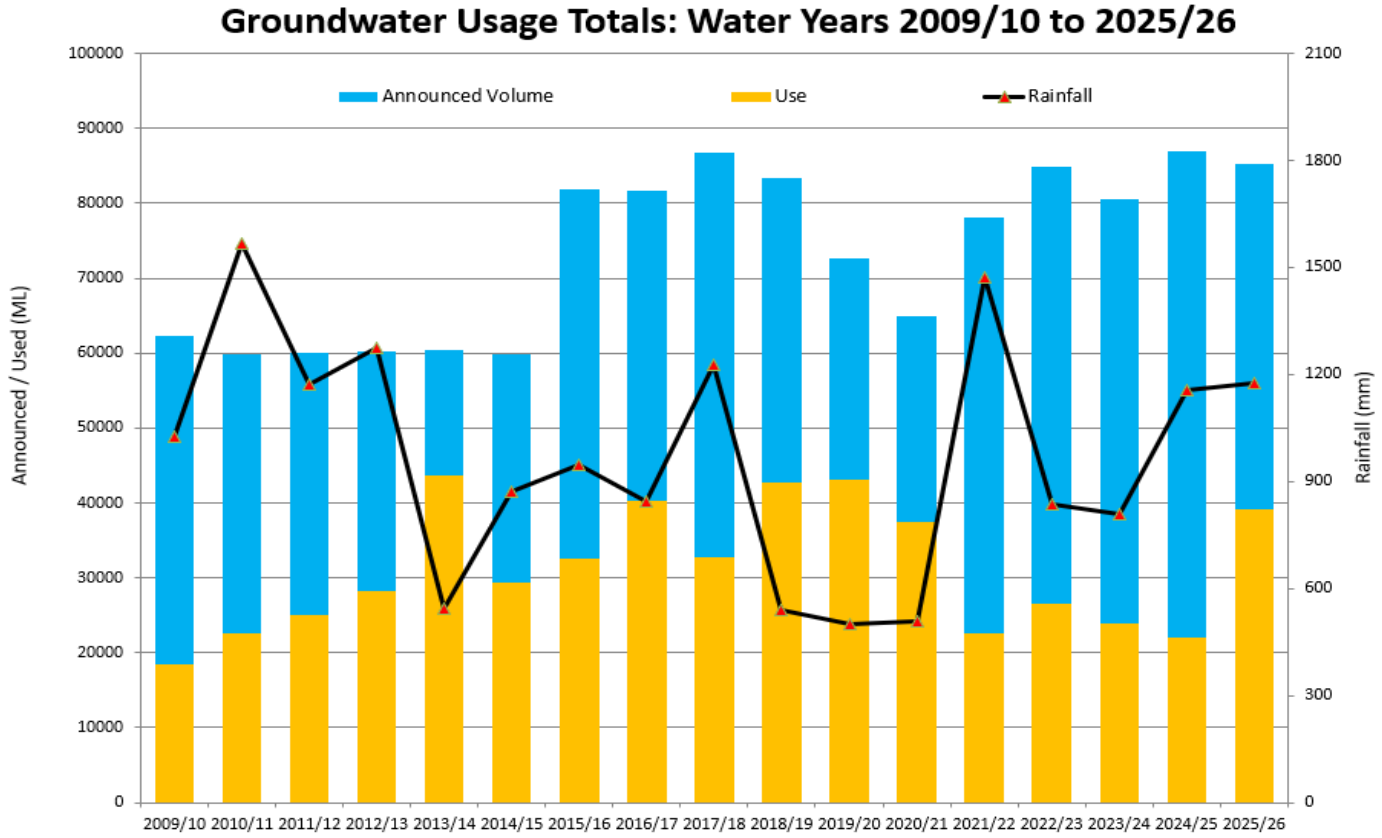
Chairman, Elected Members and Staff of Bundaberg CANEGROWERS represented cane growers on a number of occasions. Executive members also attended many Branch meetings and other engagements in their own time.

DATE	MEETING	PURPOSE	FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
28.09.26	Agricultural Sector Advisory Committee	To represent members	Tanya Howard Dale Holliss
29.09.26	QCGO Sustainability and Extension Committee	To receive update	Tanya Howard
30.09.26	QCGO Industry Performance and Evolution Committee	To receive update	Tanya Howard
07.10.26	SRA Update	To represent members	Tanya Howard
13.10.26	CANEGROWERS District Manager's meeting	To receive update	Tanya Howard
14.10.26	Sunwater Bundaberg Customer Advisory Committee	To represent irrigators	Mark Pressler Tanya Howard Dale Holliss
19.10.26	QFF Water and Energy Policy Committee	To represent members	Tanya Howard Dale Holliss
19.10.26	Regional Business HQ Board	To represent members	Tanya Howard
20.10.26	The Energy Charter	Launching the 2026-27 Priority Actions of the Better Practice Social Licence Guideline	Tanya Howard
21.10.26	Sweetest Schools Excursion	To progress arrangements	Tanya Howard
22.10.26	De Gunst Transport	To discuss season progress	Mark Pressler Tanya Howard
28-29.10.26	QCGO Policy Council	To represent members	Mark Pressler Tanya Howard

Groundwater use summary 2025/26

The graph of groundwater allocation and use provides some insight to what is happening with the groundwater resource across the Bundaberg and Isis region. What is noticeable is that water use was the fifth highest over the last 17 years with approximately 40,000ML used. This was approximately 45 percent of the total allocation available for use.

What this graph does not show is that some Zones and Zone Groups used significantly higher levels than the average and they may have used more water except for the trading caps put in place to ensure the resource is not overused in any one area. What the graph does suggest though is that seasonal water trading, especially within Zones, could be used by growers with groundwater who are looking for more water to irrigate the crop.



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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