



Burdekin Productivity Services Grower Update

MARCH 2011 EDITION 2

HOT TOPICS

1. SRDC Regional Expo

Topics:

- Developing sugarcane for production systems utilising total biomass (Phil Jackson)
- Harnessing soil biology to improve the productivity of the new sugarcane farming system (Susanne Schmidt)
- Remote sensing-based Precision Agriculture tools for the sugar industry (Andrew Robson)
- Assessing the impact of processing the whole crop on factory performance and operations (Geoff Kent)
- Helping sugarcane farmers integrate electronic recording systems into their farming business (Richard Gherardi and Sergio Figuera)

Tuesday, 15th March, 4.30 to 6.30pm

Pizza and drinks after the event

Delta Cinemas

(entry through laneway beside Delta Backpackers)

RSVP (essential for catering purposes):

Kara Billsborough on 07 3210 0495

2. Burdekin Predator Control Day

Topics:

- Jim Mitchell, expert on feral pig control and management
- Results of new pig poison (sodium nitrate)
- Baiting: new bait attractant 'Carasweet',
- Trapping: auto-feeding system, panel trapping
- Grower funding for pig fencing; fencing wetlands
- Using bush spy cameras
- Videos and photos of local pig activity
- Trapping wild dogs and pig dogs!
- Bus tour

Wednesday, 13th April, 9am—3.30pm

SISL property, corner Bruce Highway and McLain Road

RSVP: Declared Pest Animal Control officer, Chris Gaschk: **0400 835 983**

Cost: free. Morning and afternoon tea, and lunch are provided.

UPCOMING EVENTS

CPI Meetings

CPI meetings are being held this month:

- Pioneer and Kalamia: 14—18 March
- Inkerman: 14—18 March
- Invicta: 21—24 March

Grower representative organisations will email dates through normal channels. BPS will send SMS messages or phone on the day to remind growers of time and venue.

STAFF PROFILE

Name: Ray Hildebrandt

Position: Senior Field Officer

How long have you been working for this organisation?

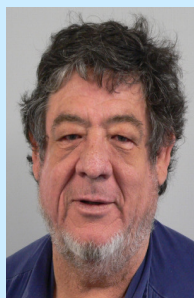
I've been working for the predecessor of this organisation and BPS for 29 years!

Why do you like working at BPS?

It's a lot of things—the camaraderie of the staff and growers, managing pests and disease in the field and the fact that it's never boring; there's something new and different to challenge you every day.

What is the most challenging aspect of being a field officer of BPS?

Serving the growers well.



NOTICES

Approved Seed Cane is an inexpensive insurance

Ordering a small amount of approved seed cane every year provides growers with the best possible means of remaining disease-free, ensuring high productivity and higher profitability. Approved seed cane is a valuable insurance against pests and disease on your farm, safeguarding against loss of productivity and profits. It is tax deductible. It replaces cane from your own farm which you would otherwise have used for planting. Your own cane is then free to be harvested and receive mill price. This means the purchase of approved seed cane is a relatively inexpensive exercise for growers.

Annual Crop Data Survey

All Burdekin growers have now been visited for our annual crop data survey. Data collected is first placed in our hard copy 'ledgers' and then plotted on our GIS map layers in AgDat software. Plant sources for all Burdekin cane are tracked, allowing growers and BPS to see the time since cane used for planting was last hot water treated. BPS staff encourage growers to place orders for treated approved seed cane. Overall pictures of pest and disease control methods emerge on GIS map layers, allowing BPS staff better control and review of district-wide management. Reports are generated to inform internal BPS and BSES control strategies. We appreciate all growers' assistance and time towards maintaining our Burdekin district as among the industry's cleanest regions. Thank you.

Membership details

It is important to keep in touch with BPS to update contact details when there have been changes. Mobile and email communication is increasing and becoming an important communication tool and we would not like growers to miss out on important information. If you would like to receive our updates by email, please contact us using the details below.

Fee for service

BPS has discontinued EM mapping and soil testing services and is currently concentrating on our older core activities of distributing approved seed cane and on-ground pest and disease extension with growers. We thank Peter McDonnell for his input during his time as Operations Manager with us. We wish you well with your new ventures Peter!

RSD

All BPS mother plots and approved seed cane plots will be inspected for RSD, ahead of plots opening in early April. Samples will be taken from plots and analysed in the Mackay BSES lab. Following this, commercial RSD testing and disease inspection will commence in the Kalamia and Inkerman mill areas. Two mill areas are sampled each year, with Pioneer and Invicta mill areas inspected last year. Growers will be notified before BPS staff enter farms.

Plot Opening

Plots will be opening commencing in early April, weather permitting. BPS does not set prices for approved seed cane. The owners and/or managers of BPS supervised plots set prices. Please contact field staff on the numbers listed below to order and collect your seed cane during the coming year.

STAFF CONTACT DETAILS

Manager

Trevor Berryman 0428 927 079 trevor.berryman@bps.net.au

Financial Officer/Company Secretary

Lance Wassmuth 47838626 lance.wassmuth@bps.net.au

Field Staff

Inkerman
Ray Hildebrandt 0409 831 863 rhildebrandt@bps.net.au

Kalamia
Robbie McKenna 0407 960 057 rmckenna@bps.net.au
David Paine 0427 167 159 dpaine@bps.net.au

Invicta
Mindi McNiven 0427 372 124 mmcniiven@bps.net.au

Pioneer
Brad Woodford 0407 167 159 bwoodford@bps.net.au

Cadet Field Officer
Andy Poveda 0447 069 887 andy.poveda@bps.net.au