



Burdekin Productivity Services Grower Update

AUGUST 2011 EDITION 3

HOT TOPICS

1. Feral Pig Control

BPS was instrumental in facilitating the obtaining \$166,000 from Blueprint for the Bush, \$50,000 over two years from NQ Dry Tropics and then committed to input \$33,160 towards the Declared Pest Animal Control Programme (feral pigs and wild dogs). The declared pest animal advisory group consists of representatives from all stakeholders, with the group meeting on a quarterly basis. The group is charged with overseeing the whole project from collecting data to control of pigs, wild dogs and dingoes. If you would like further information contact Chris Gaschk (Project Officer) on 0400 835 983, Merv Pyott at Burdekin Shire Council or John Deambrosis (BPS).

2. RSD Survey Results

Staff have completed the annual RSD surveys of BPS approved plots and 152 commercial samples taken within the Inkerman, Kalamia and some parts of the Pioneer Mill areas. Those samples were analysed at the BSES laboratory in Mackay. A further 50 samples were viewed under the microscope at our treatment shed. All approved plots came back with a clean bill of health with no RSD being detected. However, I must report that 6 positive results were detected in commercial samples, those growers have been contacted and notified of the sample result. BPS is now conducting follow-up visits to conduct more tests on the affected growers farms and other growers within the harvesting group will also be notified. BPS will ensure that the grower where the sample was taken is not identified to ensure other growers do not victimise the growers who were randomly selected when testing was conducted as that grower is not necessarily the source of the problem. It is important that your planting contractor washes down and sterilizes their equipment before starting planting at your property, I encourage you to ask your planting contractor whether or not he has sterilised his equipment prior to harvesting of plants.

3. Plant Source Inspections

This year extra pressure has been placed on BPS staff to carry out inspections to identify suitable sources for plants due to damage caused to growers plants from the cyclone earlier in the year. We thank growers for their patience.

4. Water Testing

BBIFMAC are doing water testing of Nitrogen and are offering water tests at a subsidised price, this is a good offer and growers are encouraged to take advantage of it.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Seed Plots will close on 30 September

CPI meetings will be held in late October and Early November

Annual Crop Data Survey will commence in early October

STAFF CONTACT DETAILS

Manager

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Finance & Corporate Services Officer/Company Secretary

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Field Staff

Inkerman

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Kalamia

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David Paine 0427 167 159 dpaine@bps.net.au

Invicta

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Pioneer

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

Field Officer

Vacant 0447 069 887

NOTICES

Approved Seed Cane

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 also ensures a treated source is present minimising any potential impact should a disease outbreak occur in the district. If you haven't already purchased seed cane then now is the time to do so.

Annual Crop Data Survey

All Burdekin growers will soon be visited again to assist us in our annual crop data survey. Overall pictures of pest and disease control methods emerge on GIS map layers, allowing BPS staff better control and review of district-wide management and allows us to see the time since cane used for planting was last hot water treated and were approved sources have been planted. 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, BPS staff encourage growers to place orders for treated approved seed cane. We appreciate all growers' assistance and time, 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 is an important communication tool. 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.

Appointment of new Manager of Productivity Services

Directors and staff of BPS are pleased to welcome Mr John Deambrosis to the new role within the organisation. John commenced employment in 1968 as a sugar chemist at Kalamia Mill and was in charge of sugar production on a shift basis. In 1990 when Invicta Mill went to continuous crushing I was transferred in the capacity of field officer where he remained for 5 years. Soon after he purchased a farm and began to realise the challenges that people faced on the land and was a director on the Invicta Cane growers Organisation. This time proved to both rewarding and challenging. In 2008 he returned to Kalamia Mill as a Senior Cane Auditor and had regular contact with grower boards. In 2009 he was employed at Elders in the role of sales agronomist and had exposure to many growers throughout the district. John is looking forward to working with growers and realises that supply of quality seed cane, pest and disease control and productivity enhancements are paramount to ensure the continuation of the industry.

Grub Flights

Each year in May BPS conducts flights over the district to capture grub damage and also to identify any other crop damage that may need further investigation. You are welcome to the photo of your farm. Please contact your field officer to arrange a suitable delivery method.

STAFF PROFILE

Name: Lance Wassmuth

Position: Finance & Corporate Services Officer and Company Secretary

How long have you been working for this organisation?

I've been employed at BPS for 18 months now.

Why do you like working at BPS?

Coming from a tax and audit background and also having being employed in cane farming and quarrying enterprises my current role offers and provides me with diversity on a daily basis. I like a challenge, and enjoy seeing the improvements I am making here.

What is the most challenging aspect in your role at of BPS?

Ensuring that I am up to date with regulatory requirements with ASIC, ATO, Payroll and Corporate Governance and meeting the needs of the board and members.

