



# Burdekin Productivity Services Grower Update

JANUARY 2012 EDITION 4

## HOT TOPICS

### 1. Itch Grass

The rogeuing program commenced back in early November has now come to a end and known areas have been inspected and roged as necessary. With some new infestations detected. It is very important that the spread of Itch Grass is controlled. To the growers that already have Itch Grass on their farms, and in their harvesting group, a zero tolerance policy should be adopted. To achieve this a rigid program of rogeuing, maintaining machinery hygiene and a good spraying program will be required to completely eliminate the infestation. Reports being received from the field are indicating that growers with Itch Grass and are using Balance to control other grasses in their field are finding that the balance is also working well on the Itch Grass. It must be noted that Balance is **not registered** for Itch Grass control at this stage. All positive approach by all growers is required. Remember if 90% of growers are proactive and 10% do no control then Itch Grass will spread to half the farms in the Burdekin region.

All stakeholders will be brought together over the next few months to ensure we all have a positive approach to Itch Grass eradication. I know this is an enormous task, however if we continue on the current path it's presence will not be reduced. For any assistance please contact John or any of the field staff.

### 2. Sorghum/Cane Beetles

Field staff have been reporting a significant increase in sorghum and cane beetles. Remember that it is easy to pull out a few plants when you spot them then let them go to seed. If you let it go the cost of removing sorghum with chemicals is very expensive. There has been a phenomenal amount of cane beetles observed, obviously due to last years wet reducing the area that would have normally been treated. The price of chemicals to control grubs has reduced markedly in recent years so now is the opportunity to take advantage of the situation.

### 3. Wallabies

Wallabies can be a major pest and have the ability to damage large areas of young cane if your farm borders riparian wetlands and large populations of wallabies reside. This problem occurred at our Giru distribution plot and the plot manager Gary Lyons researched a product called D-TER. After consideration we trialled the product and were considerably pleased with the result and the effect it had in deterring the wallabies from continuing their assault on the plant cane. BPS would like to acknowledge the efforts of Gary and Keith Lyons during the trial.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Seedcane orders close 31 March 2012

CPI meetings will be held in late February early March

## 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 with **orders closing on the 31 March**.

### **Annual Crop Data Survey**

Almost all growers will have been visited by their field officer to collect annual crop data. 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 it also allows us to see the time since cane used for planting was last hot water treated and were approved sources have been planted. While a field officer is visiting it is important to ask about the new varieties that may be released in the next few years. If you have not been visited by a BPS field officer please contact the office and John will ensure you are visited promptly. 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.

### **Giru Seed Plot**

BPS would publicly like to thank Gary, Margaret and Ashley Stockham for their contribution to providing quality approved seed to the growers in the Invicta area for the last two seasons. The plot is now in the hands of Keith and Gary Lyons and is situated on the highway on the Ayr side of Horseshoe Lagoon.

### **Itch Grass Trial**

Tim Murphy from Bayer Crop Science is being assisted by BPS to conduct a chemical trial on a product for itch Grass use. As this progresses results will be made available.

### **Smut**

The smut trial being lead by BSES at Jarvisfield has been walked with the result passed on to Dr Rob Magarey, a research scientist in plant pathology, based in Tully. It is pleasing to note that the Q183 has not been infected yet. The results of smut whips counted are:

Variety	Whips/Infection
Q117	About 70% infected
Tellus	About 30% infected
KQ228	9
Q208	16
Q247	2
Q200	1
Q183	0
Q171	0

It needs to be noted that although the KQ228 and Q208 are infected they are in a heavily infested area and have Q117 in close proximity

### **Manager's Note**

BPS Directors and staff hope all growers had a good XMAS and wish them a prosperous new year. We firmly hope that the last two years remain a distant memory and look forward to what should be a bright future for the Sugar Industry.

## ACROSS THE MANAGERS DESK

### Fertiliser Trials

Jayson Dowie from Sucrogen Bio-Ethanol conducted fertilizer trials locally last year and recently presented the results to BPS. An extract of the results are recorded below showing the differences between straight Urea as against a blended product. If you wish to see all results then please contact Jayson. The object of this exercise is to show the net benefit of applying a blended product against a straight urea. The soil here does show a deficiency in P, K & S. It must be noted that although a blended fertiliser is more expensive the return in the crop yield increase more than compensates.

	Product	N	P	K	S	tc/ha	CCS	tS/ha
T1	Urea	170	0	0	0	109.32	16.40	17.92
T2	Blend	170	18	60	20	134.62	16.02	21.57
T4	Blend	200	18	60	20	142.46	15.80	22.51

BPS has reproduced an extract of the above table with the consent of Jayson Dowie.

### Nitrogen and Phosphorus Rates in Sugarcane

For a long time now Rob Dwyer, agronomist for Incitec Pivot has been compiling results for Nitrogen and Phosphorus for use in each district of cane growing regions within QLD. With his permission I have reproduced two of the tables relevant to growers in this region. Please note that the reduction in fertiliser use in 2008 was due to the high price. There has been a noticeable reduction in fertiliser use since 1996.

Average N and P Rates (kg/ha) by Year - Eastern Australia (All Regions)

Year	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
kg/ha (N)	206	197	190	199	179	177	171	166	169	165	169	164	148	169	146
kg/ha (P)	27	27	24	21	21	23	19	19	19	19	21	19	12	21	18

Average N and P Rates (kg/ha) by Year - Burdekin

Year	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
kg/ha (N)	272	246	247	269	233	229	234	219	223	213	218	212	198	231	227
kg/ha (P)	26	23	23	22	21	19	17	19	21	22	18	16	10	16	19

### STAFF CONTACT DETAILS

#### Manager

John Deambrosis      0428 927 079      [jdeambrosis@bps.net.au](mailto:jdeambrosis@bps.net.au)

#### Finance & Corporate Services Officer/Company Secretary

Lance Wassmuth      0427 834 800      [lance.wassmuth@bps.net.au](mailto:lance.wassmuth@bps.net.au)

#### Field Staff

##### Inkerman

Ray Hildebrandt      0409 831 863      [rhildebrandt@bps.net.au](mailto:rhildebrandt@bps.net.au)

##### Kalamia

Robbie McKenna      0407 960 057      [rmckenna@bps.net.au](mailto:rmckenna@bps.net.au)  
David Paine      0427 167 159      [dpaine@bps.net.au](mailto:dpaine@bps.net.au)

##### Invicta

Wayne Squires      0427 372 124      [wsquires@bps.net.au](mailto:wsquires@bps.net.au)

##### Pioneer

Brad Woodford      0407 167 159      [bwoodford@bps.net.au](mailto:bwoodford@bps.net.au)

#### Office

(07) 4783 1101