



ISSUE 7 JULY 2012



## John's Corner

Welcome to the new look Grower Update, I hope you find it a refreshing change to the old style update we previously produced. In this issue we give growers an insight into some of the new varieties on the plot and the varieties have performed after being harvested, staff changes, and what the staff have been doing. Itch Grass and Pigs will feature in the Pest and Disease section with the future of extension and bio-security issues discussed in the Industry News section. Biosecurity remains the single biggest threat to industry if we do not remain vigilant growers may face incursion of diseases that can cause major damage. You will have seen staff in the Pioneer and Invicta mill areas undertaking RSD sampling in the last few months and they have collected over 1000. It is my aim through the Understanding Cane section to provide growers with information that will assist growers to better understand the needs of their cane and the ground it grows in. With the shed renovation now complete I invite all growers to come and inspect our upgraded treatment facility which now boasts two tanks one for cold soak and the original continuing to be used for Hot Water Treatment. On a final note I wish to advise growers of BPS's renewed commitment in relation to safety. This commitment extends beyond our employees, to our contractors and to you the growers. There will be changes to the way we conduct our activities and I ask that growers assist us to ensure the transitions are as smooth as possible

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*An observation of the new variety Q232 is that it is the first cane to arrow and lodge.*

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## Plot News

This year we observed that Q232 was the first cane to arrow and lodge. Although the cane was planted with nil fertilizer and only 100kg of N was applied (2 bags Urea S at hill up) the Q232 still lodged in early March. Reports from the southern regions say Q232 is good on marginal soils and should not be grown on good soils, hence the lodging at P & K Farm. I have enclosed some information downloaded from BSES Qcans that I encourage everyone to read on pages 7 and 8. The P & K 2<sup>nd</sup> ratoon cane was harvested from the 14<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> June and here are the weighted CCS averages for the different varieties. I must stress that this is not a trial, it is only to highlight how different varieties perform at the start of the year. The field averaged 135 tonnes/ha.





Mound Planted Q247 has produced a more compact plant which is better when working ground



Furrow Planted Q247 has produced a more sprawled plant which could create problems when working ground

Variety	Weighted CCS
Q183	10.69
Q200	9.57
Q208	11.15
KQ228	12.75
Q171	11.4
Q200	9.1
Q208	11.05
Q183	10.1

Of interest here is Q208 is higher than Q183.

Q247

Recently this photo was taken of Q247 mound planted at Chris Hesp's farm at Mulgrave and as can be seen it has not displayed the sprawling like features that were observed in the Delta last year where it was furrow planted. Remember that Q247 likes good soil and we have noticed it performs poorly on average soils. This block that Chris planted has Q183 and KQ228 also so we should get some good data next year after harvesting. We also have a good trial of Q247 vs Q183 in good Delta soil, this block is now 1<sup>st</sup> ratoons and continues to look good. This will be harvested probably in the 3<sup>rd</sup> round, so the data will be produced in a later edition of my newsletter. I hope to make available Tonnes and CCS results of all new varieties in my newsletter as the blocks are harvested.

### Pest & Diseases News

*ITCH GRASS/ROGUE CANE*

On Friday the 8<sup>th</sup> of June approximately 30 growers and contractors attended an Itch Grass forum held at the BPS shed. All were reminded that it is their responsibility to remove and eradicate Itch Grass if it is growing on their property. Contractors are reminded to clean and blow down their machines before shifting farms. Tim Murphy from Bayer Crop Science gave a presentation on the control of Itch Grass using chemicals and has just returned from South Africa where he toured Itch Grass farms and studying the pest. BPS staff this year have spent weeks on the road and in channels spraying Itch Grass and rogue stools of cane. I encourage all growers to spray out rogue stools of cane in any drains, roadsides, riparian lands etc. Remember these are a breeding ground for disease. Points to come from the Itch Grass meeting follow:

- Itch Grass has been identified on 6 new farms and adjacent to Sheepstation Creek.
- Proposed local laws to declare Itch Grass a pest have been approved. The laws need to be gazetted then published. We have been advised by Burdekin Shire Council that the laws came into force on 1 July 2012.
- It is the grower's responsibility to remove Itch Grass from their farm.
- Rogueing alone will not control Itch Grass.
- Growers must employ a good chemical programme and along with rogueing this will eliminate Itch Grass. Growers that have adopted this strategy have eliminated Itch Grass.
- We must prevent Itch Grass from entering P & K Farm.
- Sucrogen and NBWB will assist BPS to eradicate Itch Grass from their sites.
- Growers must not plough out/replant if their block is full of Itch Grass.



*ITCH GRASS(cont'd)*

- Growers must tell their harvesting contractor if there is Itch Grass in any block to be cut so the contractor can clean down machinery before transferring to another farm.
- Stool splitting and spraying is a good way to control Itch Grass. By cultivation the seeds can be buried and can lay dormant for 4 years and still germinate when exposed in the next cultivation.
- BPS will continue to do trials with chemicals under the supervision of chemical reps.
- BPS staff have made a big effort in spraying/rogueing Itch Grass in all accessible areas eg Rocks area, NBWB channels, fallow areas, roads and railway lines and council property.
- We are here to help and provide growers with any assistance to prevent the spread of Itch Grass.
- Growers will be asked to contribute 50% of the cost of rogueing when we commence in October. This will allow us to cover a larger area.
- Council will provide chemicals if a pest management plan is completed

It is pleasing to see that all contractors are blowing down their machines after harvesting Itch Grass farms.

As a further control of Itch Grass and Sorghum on the P & K Farm we are going to irrigate the 2<sup>nd</sup> ratoons that have recently been harvested. This will germinate any Itch Grass and Sorghum (if any on that block). After we are confident there is no Itch Grass present we will destroy the stool with Round-up. As another measure to ensure the P & K Farm is free of Itch Grass, David and Kristine drive down every row that is harvested for seed cane and look into the next row to ensure it is free of Itch Grass.

*PIGS*

Burdekin Shire Council has recently used Ry-Ellen Heliwork to do two shoots around Alva Beach so far with a reported kill rate of 290 pigs. BPS is willing to work with growers who form groups to do a shoot by providing financial assistance in the form of an hour's helicopter hire. BPS will also conduct an aerial shooting program on the fringes between riparian zones and cane lands to ensure the aerial shooting programs within cane areas are effective.

## Field News

Now that sales of approved seed cane have ceased due to wet weather the staff have continued rat trapping for monitoring purposes and also RSD testing. We will collect over 1000 samples of cane juice for RSD analysis this year. If any RSD tests come back positive the grower will be notified by myself and the field officer. Remember, to ensure you prevent the spread of RSD it is important you purchase some approved seed cane each year. Sterilization of machinery that comes into contact with cane juice is essential. This applies to cane harvesters, planters and stool splitters.

*GRUB FLIGHTS*

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of June BPS staff flew over the district to ascertain cane grub damage. It was pleasing to see there was little damage to blocks of cane from cane grubs. Approx. 100 photos were taken over the entire district. If you suspect you may have grub damage contact your field officer to see if an aerial photo was taken. There were approximately 20 blocks severely affected. With the price of chemical coming down and sugar prices still firm it makes sense for all growers to treat for cane grubs. In May's edition of Rural Business there is an article with tips for best results in the treatment of grubs. Here is an extract from that:

- Treatment with suSCon Maxi granules at sett level at planting is generally the most effective and convenient method, particularly for two-year life cycle canegrubs such as Childers and Negatoria grubs.



- Of the open-furrow application options, treatment at or near first working is more reliable than at fill-in for medium to shallow planting. However for deep planting (30cm or greater), application at drill fill-in is best, particularly for greyback canegrub. BSES trials show that either method gives the same result, as long as granules are at least 10cm below the consolidated soil surface.
- The recommended rate is only 10-15 kg/ha so precise metering equipment is needed to evenly distribute the product.



## Industry News

### *FUTURE OF EXTENSION*

With the restructure taking place growers are concerned and frustrated when they phone BSES and are transferred to Brisbane, under the restructure BSES does not do one on one extension anymore. If you believe BPS can be of any assistance please phone myself or any of the Staff. Wayne with his knowledge of chemicals has been doing spray recommendations as well as some extension work on chemicals and I have been assisting several growers with nutrient advice and soil samples. Last week we calculated some bore pumps for flow rates and BPS has purchased a pH conductivity meter so we can analyse growers' water for pH/conductivity/salt.

### *BIOSECURITY*

Australia, being an island and isolated with no borders in the past has provided good protection from a lot of exotic pests and diseases to our sugar industry, this is also evident in the cattle industry. As a result, the beef industry in Australia has been successful in ensuring Mad Cow Disease has not reached our borders. However when persons do the wrong thing diseases can slip through and cause massive devastation eg Citrus Canker that wiped out the mandarin crop at Emerald. Now with the amount of tourists entering our country it is only a matter of time before pests and diseases are introduced into our sugar cane. Papua New Guinea is the home of wild cane. Sugar cane is also a crop grown by the Torres Straits Islanders and it is often found growing in their gardens. As said previously, Indonesia/Papua New Guinea are the breeding grounds of pests and diseases. With the Torres Strait people doing a lot of island hopping in their boats it is easy to introduce pests and diseases into our cane growing regions. The insect that carries Ramu Stunt in PNG is also found on Thursday Island. Further information regarding work carried out by BSES for disease diagnosis and prevention will be presented at our AGM on 21<sup>st</sup> August by Rob Magarey (Senior Plant Pathologist at BSES). Rob's talk will be very informative and I encourage all growers to attend. Rob was in the Burdekin to check out the Orange Rust situation in February and will also field any questions growers have regarding Orange Rust.

There has been quite a lot of talk and questions regarding the inspection of machinery now with BSES having been restructured. BPS staff have recently received training to inspect machinery that moves from one Plant Quarantine Area (PQA) to another. After our inspection we fill out an application form on-line then a certified inspector (under the Plant Protection Act) signs off and the machinery is allowed to be moved from one quarantine area to another.



*BIOSECURITY (cont'd)*

It is important all growers abide by this to prevent the spread of pests and diseases through the movement of machinery. Machinery moving between Plant Quarantine Areas must be free of cane plants/trash and soil. Please see pages 9 and 10 for the inspection check list for sugar cane machinery. This is what is required to be cleaned and inspected before a permit is issued to move machinery to another PQA. I must stress the importance of carrying out this procedure to prevent the spread of pests and diseases. Remember there are only 5 BPS staff driving around and it is impossible for us to keep track of all machinery movements. We ask all growers to inform us if they see any machinery moving in and out of the district and of particular concern is when there is an influx of wet weather harvesting gear at the end of the year to help out with our wet harvesting.



Harvester ready to be shifted from the Burdekin District (PQA3) to Gordonvale District (PQA2) and therefore requires permit

*REEF REGULATIONS UPDATE*

All growers may remember as from the 1<sup>st</sup> of July the proposed new regulations concerning the application and recording of mill mud were to come into effect. I have recently been in contact with Kerry Sutton (Principal Reef Protection Officer) from the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection and she stated "A decision on taking mill mud applications into account when calculating the optimum amount fertiliser required has been deferred at present."

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*"A decision on taking mill mud applications into account when calculating r=the optimum amount of fertilizer required has been deferred at present".*  
*Kerry Sutton (Principal Reef Protection Officer – Dept. of Environment & Heritage Protection)*

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**Staff News**

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of June we welcomed Joe Savorgnan to our BPS staff. Joe comes to us with a wealth of experience and has been farming in the Giru area for over twenty years after completing a trade as a Diesel Mechanic. Joe will be trained in all the roles of our core business under Ray Hildebrandt, with the long term view of being the Inkerman Field Officer when Ray retires.

Kristine Grasso has shifted into the role of Pioneer Field Officer and has taken up the challenge with both hands with the assistance of David Paine. All Pioneer and Kalamia growers should have been notified regarding their approved seed cane orders. With the restrictions on quotas it is impossible to get it correct. With growers changing their request for seed cane orders from when orders were taken last year we are endeavouring to do our best to meet every growers needs.

Whitson's Plot: Seed Cane Orders (t)								
	KQ228	Q247	Q232	Q208	Q200	Q183	Q171	Q133
Sold as of 22/06/2012	76.26	57.38	30.24	60.065	28.33	132.98	13.85	0
Orders still to be collected	547	157	89	437	28	845	6	8
Available quantity left	280	80	31.5	284	20	468	0	30
<b>Difference</b>	<b>-267</b>	<b>-77</b>	<b>-58</b>	<b>-153</b>	<b>-8</b>	<b>-377</b>	<b>-6</b>	<b>22</b>



Remember we are here to assist all growers any way we can. If you have any issues regarding BPS please do not hesitate to contact us. Finally we wish all growers and contractors a safe harvest and a dry crushing season.

## GROWER FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

### GROWER FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

I recently met with Mark Whitten and Bec Walther from DAFF. Mark and Bec are very keen to do some demonstrations here in the Burdekin. In the Herbert area Mark has run fertilizer, chemical and break crop field demonstrations on cane farms. I am very keen to have this project take off and I encourage growers to contact myself or Mark for further information. Please read Mark's Media Attachment.

Science Agriculture Food Tourism and Regional Services

## media statement



### New Help for Burdekin Cane Growers

Want more from your farming system? Burdekin cane growers wanting to fine-tune their cane management to improve business viability now have access to help from the Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF). Working in collaboration with Burdekin Productivity Services (BPS), DAFF extension officers are eager to work with local growers looking to trial new farming practices.

DAFF extension officer Mark Whitten said: "We're keen to work with growers who are interested in trialling new practices. This could be anything from growing fallow legume crops, fine tuning fertiliser rates, developing new herbicide strategies, changing cultivation methods or even getting things in the office running better?"

"These are things we know a lot of growers want to try out; however, trialling a new practice is frequently put on the back burner due to time restraints and perceived risk to production."

"To change this we're going to be working one-on-one with growers to develop small scale demonstrations."

Mr Whitten said that by running a small demonstration to test new practices on individual farms, growers would see results specific to their own farm, not a research plot 100kms away.

"You get to see how the practice fits with your system and whether it'll work for you."

"This helps to reduce the risk of adopting a new practice, as you are trialling it first on a small-scale. If it works, you'll already have some skills and knowledge to start practising on larger areas. If it doesn't work you can make changes if you feel it has potential or not adopt it at all!"

Through the project there will be opportunities to receive specialist advice from the team and to share ideas with other participating growers.

For more information contact BPS manager John Deambrosis on 07 4783 1101 or DAFF extension


## Understanding Cane

Over the coming issues I will be providing advice of a general nature on the important nutrients required for a good crop of cane. In the next issue I will be concentrating on Sulphate usage over a crop cycle. I will commence trials this year to determine if any leeching of Sulphur occurs.



# Q232<sup>(D)</sup>

Southern Maryborough

Variety	Q232	
PARENTAGE	QN80-3425 x QS72-732	
SEEDLING CODE	QS94-2329	
SMUT INFORMATION	RESISTANT	
APPEARANCE	Yellow-green, average-thick stalks with light wax covering. Trash held tightly to stalk. Erect dark green leaves, bent at tip. Erect stool. Distinct bud groove. Hairless.	
FEATURES/COMMENTS	Moderate to high CCS levels mid to late in the season. Tight trashing. Large green top. Good soldier fly tolerance.	
HARVESTING TIME	Early, Mid, Late	
SUITED SOILS	Scrub Soil, Hard Setting Scrub Soil, Black Clay, Grey Forest, Heavy Alluvials, Red Forest, Light Alluvials, Wallum, Red Clay	
SEASONAL SUGAR -		
EARLY	Average	
MID	Good	
LATE	Good	
PRODUCTIVITY -		
YIELD	Moderate - High	
CCS	Moderate - High	
RELIABILITY OF GERMINATION	Average	
RATOONING -		
HARSH CONDITIONS	Average	
LODGING TOLERANCE	Average	
REACTION TO STRESS -		
WATERLOGGING	Good	
DROUGHT	Average	
FROST	Average	
FLOOD	Unknown	
DISEASE REACTION -		
RESISTANT	Leaf Scald, Mosaic, Orange Rust, Smut	
INTERMEDIATE - RESISTANT	Red Rot	
INTERMEDIATE	Fiji Leaf Gall, Pachymetra	
UNKNOWN	Brown Rust	
CANE GRUB TOLERANCE	Unknown	
HERBICIDE REACTION	Apply ametryn-based products as directed spray only. Some reaction to 2,4-D.	
CROP MANAGEMENT PRACTICES	Will grow on all soil types. Mid-late season; if heavy arrowing, harvest earlier.	

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# Q247<sup>®</sup>

**Burdekin**

Variety	Q247
PARENTAGE	Q138 x Q155
SEEDLING CODE	QA97-3298
SMUT INFORMATION	RESISTANT
APPEARANCE	Reddish-purple stalks with light wax covering. Trash held loosely. Hairless. Open stool with sprawling habit similar to Tellus.
FEATURES/COMMENTS	Reliable germination but slow early growth in both plant and ratoons
HARVESTING TIME	Early, Mid, Late
SUITED SOILS	Cracking Clay, Non-Sodic Duplex, Sodic Duplex
SEASONAL SUGAR -	
EARLY	Average
MID	Average
LATE	Average
PRODUCTIVITY -	
YIELD	Moderate
CCS	Low - Moderate
FAST AND RELIABLE GERMINATION	Average
RATOONING -	
HARSH CONDITIONS	Unknown
LODGING TOLERANCE	Unknown
REACTION TO STRESS -	
WATERLOGGING	Unknown
FLOOD	Unknown
WIND	Unknown
DISEASE REACTION -	
RESISTANT	Leaf Scald, Red Rot, Smut
UNKNOWN	Brown Rust, Chlorotic Streak, Downy Mildew, Lesion Nematode, Orange Rust, Root Knot Nematode, Striate Mosaic
CANE GRUB TOLERANCE	Unknown
HERBICIDE REACTION	
CROP MANAGEMENT PRACTICES	Sprawling growth habit may lead to difficulties in managing weeds with cultivation and herbicides.



This information has been compiled using limited data for Q247<sup>®</sup>

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**Inspection checklist for sugarcane machinery**  
(Attach completed checklist to certificate)

Sugarcane harvesters <i>Each area must be inspected carefully for soil and residues in recesses</i>	Inspected (Initial here)	Passed (Write further comments over the page)
All outside surfaces, panels and windows Topper arms, drum and blades - <i>note directional flaps</i> Gathering sidewalls and floating shoes Crop dividers - <i>inspect top recess</i> Knockdown and finned rollers Basecutter - <i>note inside of rubber stone flaps</i> Feed roller train - <i>remove all impacted soil</i> Chopper system - <i>clean area above deflector plate</i> Primary extractor blades and chamber - <i>inspect corners for compacted soil</i> Elevator system - <i>inspect channels, sprockets, flights</i> Secondary extractor blades and chamber Oil cooling screen Motor screen Operator's cabin Wheels or tracks		
Tractors		
All outside surfaces, panels and windows Radiator Engine and covers Wheels - <i>particularly inside of rims</i> Cabin - <i>air intake and underneath</i>		
Planters		
All outside surfaces, panels and windows Furrow openers Chopper knives (whole stalk) Chute Hoppers Elevator flights, boot, dip tank on billet planters		





**Inspection checklist for sugarcane machinery**  
 (Attach completed checklist to certificate)

Haul-outs, cane-tainers and bins		
All outside surfaces, panels and windows		
Tractor or prime mover - as above		
Wheels - <i>particularly inside of rims</i>		
Suspension under bin		
Flights, boot, hopper on elevator bins		
Inside and outside of bin, container		

Further comments, cleaning requirements and inspections

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*Plant Protection Regulation 2002*  
 Subordinate Legislation 2002 No. 205

**Section 118 Moving sugarcane appliances (machinery)**

*Owner* \_\_\_\_\_

*Address* \_\_\_\_\_ *Suburb* \_\_\_\_\_

*Postcode* \_\_\_\_\_ *City* \_\_\_\_\_ *Phone Number* \_\_\_\_\_

*Email* \_\_\_\_\_ *Type* \_\_\_\_\_

*Make and model* \_\_\_\_\_ *Serial number* \_\_\_\_\_

I \_\_\_\_\_ certify that the machine as described above was free of visible plant material and soil when I inspected it on:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Inspector/Assistant

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Organisation

**Note:** A new certificate will be required if this appliance comes in contact with sugarcane or sugarcane fields before it is moved.



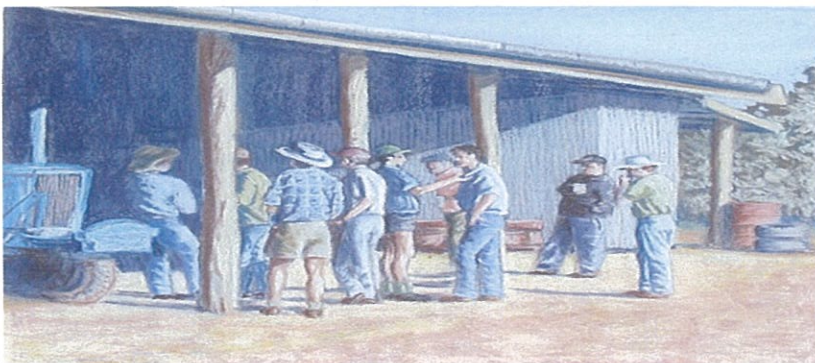
## Staff Contacts

Contact	Title	Contact Number	Email
Office		(07) 4783 1101	<a href="mailto:reception@bps.net.au">reception@bps.net.au</a>
Fax		(07) 4783 5327	
210 Old Clare Road, Ayr QLD 4807			
PO Box 237, Ayr QLD 4807			
John Deambrosis	Manger	0428 927 079	<a href="mailto:jdeambrosis@bps.net.au">jdeambrosis@bps.net.au</a>
Lance Wassmuth	Finance and Corporate Services Officer	0427 834 800	<a href="mailto:lance.wassmuth@bps.net.au">lance.wassmuth@bps.net.au</a>
Raymond Hildebrandt	Field Officer - Inkerman	0409 831 863	<a href="mailto:rhildebrandt@bps.net.au">rhildebrandt@bps.net.au</a>
David Paine	Field Officer - Kalamia	0427 167 159	<a href="mailto:dpaine@bps.net.au">dpaine@bps.net.au</a>
Wayne Squires	Field Officer - Invicta	0427 372 124	<a href="mailto:wsquires@bps.net.au">wsquires@bps.net.au</a>
Kristine Grasso	Field Officer - Pioneer	0407 167 159	<a href="mailto:kgrasso@bps.net.au">kgrasso@bps.net.au</a>
Joe Savorgnan	Trainee Field Officer - Inkerman	0407 960 057	<a href="mailto:jsavorgnan@bps.net.au">jsavorgnan@bps.net.au</a>

## Upcoming Events

- Women in Sugar (Burdekin) Meeting** JUL 11
- KCGOL AGM** JUL 17
- Sugar Poll 2012** August
- BPS AGM** Aug 21
- Seed Plots Close** Sep 30
- QRAA Special Disaster Applications Close** Oct 31

If you would like any further information or like to list an important grower event then please contact Lance or Margaret to have it added



JULY 2012						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

AUGUST 2012						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	