JANUARY 2016 | ISSUE 66

Kalamia Cane Growers Organisation Limited

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What a *sweet* life!

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Essentially, a good estate plan can provide you with peace of mind and help avoid potential complications to your beneficiaries.

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At Grasso Financial Services we play an active role in facilitating the estate planning needs for our clients. Please call us if you would like to discuss your estate planning requirements.

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Kalamia Sweet Notes

Designed and printed by:
Lotsa - Print & Signage
Phone: 4775 1981

KCGOL acknowledges and thanks all contributors.

25 JANUARY 2016

So we start a new year. 2015 produced a season of excellent yield but it was tempered by the returns being cruelled by low world sugar prices which have now recovered somewhat and hopefully won't retreat again. The production environment for the 2016 crop has been somewhat fickle to date with some small areas of the Burdekin having enjoyed good rain all the way since end of crushing but most have had to wait until this month and there are still some parts that didn't receive much. Thankfully whilst watering is time consuming and costly, the bountiful Burdekin and its magnificent dam and water infrastructure continues to be able to support the crop for those who missed the necessary rains.

This week saw the Queensland Parliamentary Rural Drought and Debt Taskforce conduct a public meeting in Ayr. The Taskforce comprises parliamentarians and others from broader backgrounds. Its role was information gathering rather than offering policy solutions. Apart from individual case studies presented by industry members present there was discussion of some of the data in the recent ABARES survey on the sugar industry and debt levels in the Burdekin and the ability of farmers to service these borrowings. The proposition from this and the other public meetings around rural Queensland that seemed to garner strongest support was that in the case of market failure (a term that seems to be used for many causes of lack of profitability in an industry and consequential difficulty in servicing borrowings) there needs to be affordable financial instruments and the current policies and practices of the Australian Banking sector no longer provide these. It was strongly advocated that either government regulate to ensure the sector does provide these financial instruments or institutions such as the Primary Industry Bank which took a different risk profile on rural land and enterprise and provided long term loans on an "at cost interest rate" needed to be resurrected. It was pointed out that much of the effectiveness of PIBA and other like institutions had been that not only had they taken over loans from banks and then extended the loan period to accommodate an affordable repayment regime, but the banks had been prepared to "sell" the loans to these institutions at 80c in the $1 in order to not have the risk exposure of any defaults, so the farmers borrowing from the institution was reduced by 20%.

Whether or not the same commercial

outcome would be derived today by a PIBA type financial institutions, governments do have the opportunity and arguably the responsibility to support industries like agriculture with high risk due to being price takers and with much of its asset base in fixed rather than liquid assets if normal market mechanisms do not do so. Society and communities benefit from sustained and sustainable rural communities.

Fingers crossed 2016 produces a proper rainfall across all Queensland and the sugar price is healthy and in the meantime your Directors will continue to work to resolve 2017 arrangements with Wilmar for a Cane Supply Agreement and access to Forward Pricing.

Regards, David

QSL Update

Interpreting our online daily prices

By Bryce Wenham, QSL Supplier Relations Manager

With the 2016-Season pricing declaration date approaching in February, growers may be starting to pay closer attention to ICE 11 and Australian dollar movements. As part of our service offering, QSL publishes daily market values on our website and via SMS, with the view that this information may be useful for growers' as they consider their pricing options for the year ahead. This week, we explain how growers can interpret the values represented.

The indicative price featured on the front page of the QSL website is quoted in Australian dollars per metric ton IPS, and are comprised of two components:

» The ICE 11 futures price; and
» The Australia dollar exchange rate

The ICE 11 futures price is represented by the US c/lb value, which represents where the market settled overnight for the prompt (currently the March 16) contract.

The second element, the Australian dollar exchange rate, represents the current US dollar – Australia dollar spot exchange rate. We use these components as part of the calculation to convert the ICE 11 price into an $A IPS value.

The third value quoted is a bank Over-the-Counter (OTC) commodity swap price adjusted to an IPS value for the prompt contract (the nearest delivery month quoted on the ICE 11, currently the March 16 contract). QSL uses OTC swaps because they allow us to price sugar directly in Australian dollars using a single transaction, taking into account simultaneously the level of the Australian dollar and the ICE 11 futures price. The price is quoted as an IPS value, reflecting the pricing terms used in Queensland and incorporates an estimate of the margin a bank attaches to any OTC commodity swap. You may notice that the OTC IPS value published by QSL may appear to be less than values reported by some banks. This is simply because most banks don't include an IPS adjustment in their reported prices.

As stated earlier, the swap price is for the ICE 11 prompt delivery month only (i.e. for sugar for immediate prompt delivery). If you looking for an indication for what you can price sugar for the 2016 and 2017 seasons, you will need to click on "More info" to see the indicative prices available for those seasons.

You may notice that the OTC IPS value published by QSL may appear to be less than values reported by some banks. This is simply because most banks don't include an IPS adjustment in their reported prices.

It's important to remember that because the ICE11 generally trades outside Brisbane working hours, all of the values provided in our Daily Price updates are indicative only and are generally updated at the start of each business day (Brisbane time). Therefore, if the Australian dollar has risen strongly during the day, the indicative prices quoted on our website may become out-of-date. Growers using this information when making decisions about forward pricing targets, should check how the Australian dollar may have moved during the day before placing their order.

LOCAL FEES AND CHARGES

Your final sugar price can also be affected by additional charges, such as mill administration fees, other local costs or the outcomes of your miller's domestic sales of raw sugar. Please contact your local miller for details of these. QSL itself does not charge fees for its services, with all QSL operating costs included in the QSL Shared Pool.

Notice to Members - Forward Pricing Dates Information

2016 WILMAR PRICING OPTIONS

TARGET PRICE

» Individual growers set their own price
» Pricing can start as early as 3 years before the crop is harvested
» Orders are in $A10 price increments
» Orders are good until cancelled and are the minimum price that will be achieved
» Minimum order size is 10 tonnes of sugar (110 tonnes cane @ 14ccs)
» Tonnes must be committed by closing nomination date (Feb 23, 2016)
» Pricing must be completed by Feb year after harvest, ie Feb 2017.

CALL POOL

» Individual growers set their own price
» Pricing can start as early as 3 years before the crop is harvested
» Orders are placed at the price requested by the grower
» Orders are good until cancelled and are the minimum price that will be achieved
» Order sizes are in multiples of 304.82 tonnes of sugar
» Tonnes must be committed by closing nomination date (Feb 23, 2016)
» Pricing must be completed February year after harvest, ie Feb 2017

WILMAR MANAGED PRICING POOLS – 2016

» Committed Pricing Pools
» Minimum tonnage nomination of 10 tonnes of nominal sugar exposure
» Nomination must occur by February 23, 2016 (Nomination Close Date)
» The 2016 Season Wilmar Managed Pricing Pools aim to enhance the price outcome for participants, by exercising "significant discretion" in the timing of pricing decisions
» Wilmar Sugar Trading will be responsible for all pricing decisions that determine the gross Australian Dollar price element of this pool
» Risk Management Instruments used may include;- ICE No.11 Futures contracts, ICE No. 11 options, Forward foreign exchange contracts, and foreign exchange options.
» Pricing activity will commence after the Nomination Close Date and conclude by 30 April, 2017.The gross Australian Dollar price element of this pool will be adjusted for the Collective Pool Funding Costs and by QSL's ICE No.11 Shared Pool Element for 2016 Season to determine a final Net Pool Price

COMMITTED TONNAGE POOLS - FAQ

» Call Pool or Target Pricing tonnage will not default into the Harvest Pool should it not be priced by the grower.
» Call Pool or Target Pricing tonnage that remains unpriced at the Pricing completion date will be priced by Wilmar the following business day at market prices
» Pricing for future season's (2017 & 2018) if a grower nominates tonnage into Call Pools or Target Pricing and that tonnage remains unpriced before the Nomination Close date a grower will have the opportunity to either cancel these orders and or transfer them to another committed tonnage pool

2016 SEASON – DECLARATION DATE & NOMINATION PROCESS

» Available now to nominate tonnage into, via the Wilmar Grower Pricing Web
» Nominations close Monday 23rd Feb 2016 – this will be the last date to nominate to Committed Tonnage pools (i.e. QSL Fixed Tonnage Pools , Wilmar Managed Pools, & Wilmar's Target Price & Call Pool Mechanisms)

2015 SEASON – PRICING COMPLETION DATE

» Pricing Completion Date is 19 Feb, 2016.
» Any unfilled call or target orders will be priced at market open the following business day.

2016 SEASON NOMINATIONS

What you need to do prior to the 23rd February

Grower's who have already undertaken 2016 season Pricing:

» Log in via the Grower Pricing Website and please check your:
–Nominated Ha's and Tonnes
–Current Orders
–% of crop priced
–% of crop available to price
–View your FPPA Schedule 1

2016 SEASON NOMINATIONS

What you need to do prior to the 23rd February

Grower's who have not already undertaken 2016 season Pricing, but wish to do so:

» Log in via the Grower Pricing Website and:
–Nominate your expected Hectares and Tonnes of cane production – via FORWARD PRICING page
–Next, click on CREATE/CHANGE ORDERS button to submit your orders/ nominations
–View your FPPA Schedule 1

Growers who do not wish to undertake any Forward Pricing or commit sugar to a QSL fixed tonnage pool are NOT required to do anything. Your cane will be priced in the Harvest Pool as well as receiving US Quota (1 – 5%) and you will not have any fixed tonnage delivery obligation for the 2016 season

Advances and payments by pricing category

2015 Season: Herbert, Burdekin & Plane Creek

11 January 2016

			US Quota	Wilmar Managed Pool	FSP 2 - 2 Season Forward Pool	FSP 3 - 3 Season Forward Pool	Actively Managed Pool	Guaranteed Floor Price Pool	Harvest Pool	Totals & Averages
POOL PRICES										
Previous Net Pool Price Estimates		**A/t IPS**								
27 Mar 2015			$545.48	$359.83	$407.04	$423.30	$362.82	$393.79	$360.77	
24 Apr 2015			$545.84	$374.53	$423.57	$433.97	$386.21	$400.93	$384.38	
29 May 2015			$557.58	$356.26	$415.32	$430.45	$368.78	$400.12	$365.94	
30 Jun 2015			$562.46	$358.07	$416.65	$431.22	$377.25	$400.03	$369.39	
31 Jul 2015			$583.99	$337.82	$413.72	$430.54	$374.38	$401.93	$359.37	
28 Aug 2015			$605.63	$323.69	$417.38	$431.68	$370.14	$400.97	$352.64	
25 Sep 2015			$612.43	$358.47	$423.43	$437.76	$382.23	$403.06	$361.27	
30 Oct 2015			$608.16	$393.55	$434.40	$443.61	$405.34	$405.90	$385.08	
27 Nov 2015			$601.53	$394.38	$434.05	$443.38	$414.80	$406.89	$386.09	
Current Gross Pool Estimate		A/t IPS	$704.22	$400.50	$435.64	$444.89	$417.49	$408.06	$389.03	
Shared Pool Premiums		A/t IPS	-$66.91	$31.04	$31.04	$31.04	$31.04	$31.04	$31.04	
Shared Pool Charges		A/t IPS	-$32.30	-$32.30	-$32.30	-$32.30	-$32.30	-$32.30	-$32.30	
Net Pool Price Estimate 25 December 2015 Pool Reports		**A/t IPS**	**$605.01**	**$399.24**	**$434.38**	**$443.63**	**$416.23**	**$406.80**	**$387.77**	
ADVANCE RATES	**A$/t IPS**	**% Advance**	**Status**							
In-Season $ Rates										
Initial	**$227.00**		Paid	$227.00	$227.00	$227.00	$227.00	$227.00	$227.00	$227.00
20 Aug 2015	**$243.00**		Paid	$243.00	$243.00	$243.00	$243.00	$243.00	$243.00	$243.00
22 Oct 2015	**$266.00**		Paid	$266.00	$266.00	$266.00	$266.00	$266.00	$266.00	$266.00
17 Dec 2015	**$304.00**		Paid	$304.00	$304.00	$304.00	$304.00	$304.00	$304.00	$304.00
Post-Season Differential Rates										
21 Jan 2016		80.00%	Scheduled	$484.01	$319.39	$347.50	$354.90	$332.98	$325.44	$310.21
18 Feb 2016		82.50%	Scheduled	$499.13	$329.37	$358.36	$365.99	$343.39	$335.61	$319.91
17 Mar 2016		85.00%	Scheduled	$514.26	$339.36	$369.22	$377.08	$353.79	$345.78	$329.60
21 Apr 2016		87.50%	Scheduled	$529.38	$349.34	$380.08	$388.17	$364.20	$355.95	$339.30
19 May 2016		90.00%	Scheduled	$544.51	$359.32	$390.94	$399.27	$374.61	$366.12	$348.99
23 Jun 2016		95.00%	Scheduled	$574.76	$379.28	$412.66	$421.45	$395.42	$386.46	$368.38
Final		100.00%	Scheduled	$605.01	$399.24	$434.38	$443.63	$416.23	$406.80	$387.77
FORECAST RETURN FOR A 'DEFAULT GROWER' (i.e. A grower with no Forward Pricing or QSL Fixed Tonnage Pools)										
% Allocation to US Quota and Harvest Pools			2.39%						97.61%	**100.00%**
Advances to be Paid on 21 January 2016		A/t IPS	$484.01						$310.21	**$314.37**
Final Forecast Advances to be Paid		A/t IPS	$605.01						$387.77	**$392.96**
% Paid Season-to-Date			80.00%						80.00%	**80.00%**

NOTES TO ADVANCES PROGRAM

Forward Pricing pools

In addition to the above pools, many growers have undertaken pricing via Wilmar's Forward Pricing program, namely under the Target Price and Call Pool pricing mechanisms. The final returns from these pools are subject to the same Shared Pool adjustment as for the ICE No.11 pools referred to above.

Shared Pool Element

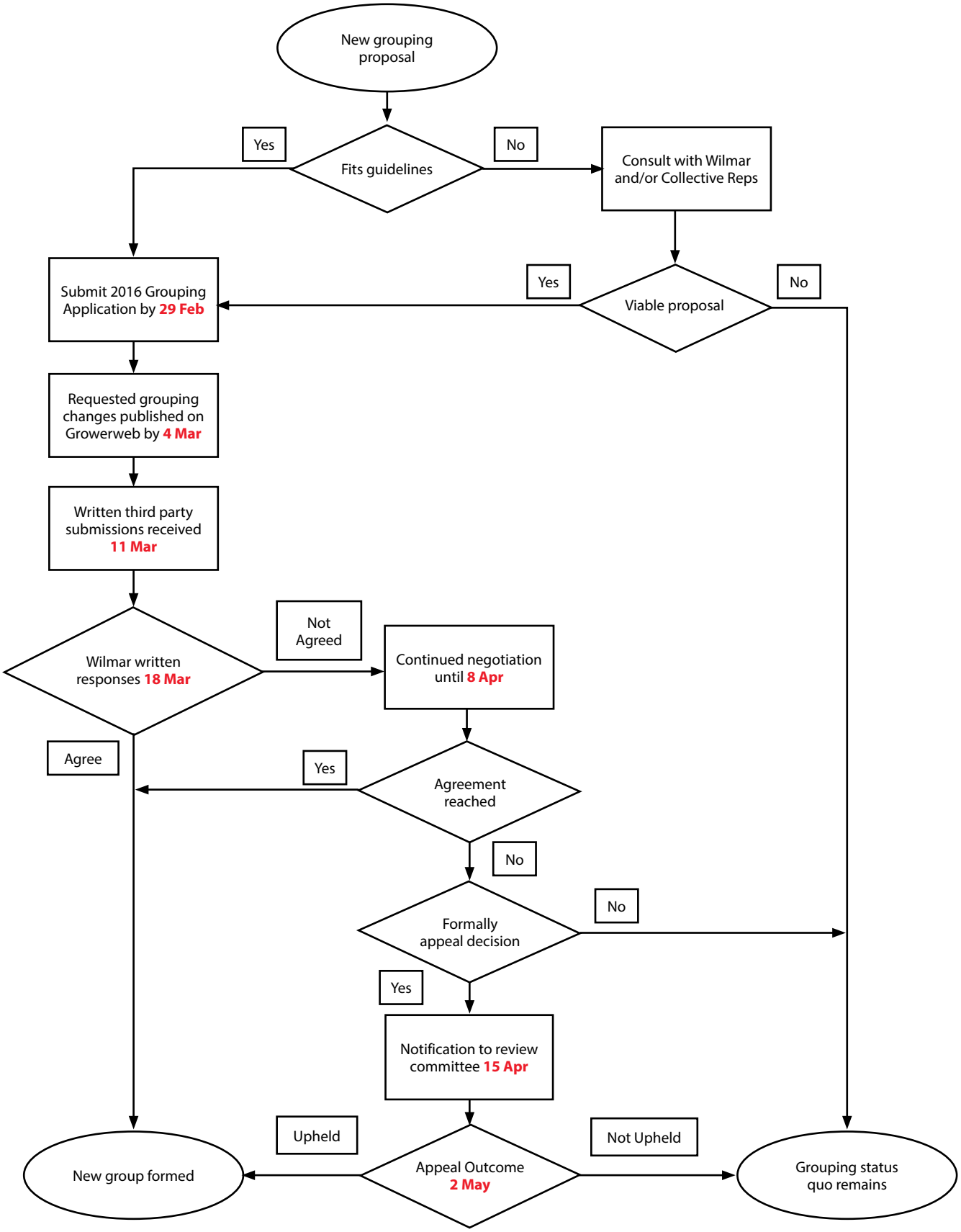
The 'Shared Pool Premiums' and the 'Shared Pool Charges', as shown above, together comprise the 'Shared Pool Element' as defined in the Forward Pool and Pricing Agreement (FPPA).

General information

Advances are quoted EXCLUSIVE of GST. All advances are subject to QSL Board approvals, final returns for each price category, Wilmar's final sugar production for the season and tonnage allocations to various pricing methods. All growers who have used any form of Forward Pricing will have different advances depending on their price outcomes and tonnages fixed.

Wilmar - have you got your grouping application in for 2016?

2016 Grouping Process Flowchart



MEMBERS INFORMATION NOTICE BOARD

2016 Upcoming Elections

Have you thought about nominating as a director of your organisation?
Kalamia Cane Growers Organisation have their upcoming Elections in April 2016.
If you would like to make a difference or have something to contribute
in the sugar industry, please consider nominating.

Interested in Smartcane BMP Accreditation?

KCGOL has spoken to BPS(Burdekin Productivity Services) regarding their representative,
Mr Terry Granshaw running some courses for members in February or March.
If you are interested please call the office and let Annmaree know before 15th February 2016.
Once numbers are known, we will contact you to provide some date options.

Changing Ownership/Leasing & Kalamia Member Changes

Existing Kalamia CaneGrower members are asked to notify our office
of any changes concerning farm sales/leasing arrangements.
This information will help to keep our membership accurate in communication
and allows staff to assist with these matters if required.
This will also assist your organisation to provide any prospective members with our
extensive range of services including , industry representation, negotiation of CSA
agreements, special fuel prices, crop insurance, wage preparation and other benefits.

Proudly supporting local businesses

Digging Deeper Programme

A seven-month extension programme of intensive practical on-farm workshops that explore soil issues.

Commitment required

The programme consists of six on-farm field days (9am-4pm), at which you will learn how to investigate each farm's soil issues. To join the group of 12 participants, you need to commit to attending the field days on the properties of the other participants from the lower Burdekin, and hosting the group on your property. NQ Dry Tropics will provide the catering.

At the final session, everyone will take part in a 'Soils Olympics' to discuss how they might use their new skills and knowledge to change some of their farm management practices.

Cost

Total cost is $300 per enterprise, payment is required on registration. Registration fee covers entry to all six programme events, lecture notes, smoko and lunch.

What is next?

The first event in the series will be a Soil Pit day on the 5 February 2016. Come and find out how soil biology can assist you to feed your crops for better long-term returns.

Learn how to change from purely conventional farming to a system more sympathetic to soil biological activity. The workshop will be delivered in a flexible, fun and hands-on way that will enable you to address issues specific to your property and situation.

There will be practical sessions out in the paddock discussing:

- management options and soil health monitoring;
- building skills in soil health and farm fertility management;
- assessing soil fertility;
- identifying soil management constraints;
- managing fertilisers; and
- soil & land monitoring.

Who runs the Programme?

NQ Dry Tropics organises the programme through its Sustainable Soils for the Burdekin project, funded through the Australian Government's National Lancare Programme. Terrain NRM has successfully run it in the Wet Tropics for the last two years.

What do others say about it? (Wet Tropics Programme participants)

I enjoyed the programme immensely and learned heaps. This project is the foundation of successful horticulture and agriculture. **Peter Salleras, experienced tropical fruit grower.**

This programme provided the link between the classroom and the paddock and it makes sense. I had the science background, but I needed to make the connection with the soil. **Kaila Ridgeway, recent Honours graduate in soil science.**

We've found that our organic matter is really shot on the farm, we are going to do a pasture fallow in our cane for three years and do some trials to see if we can improve our organic levels in the sandy soils. **Carmen Henning-White.**

REGISTER NOW

on **0407 317 316** or email **diana.odonnell@nqdrytropics.com.au**

The Sustainable Soils for the Burdkein project is supported by NQ Dry Tropics through funding by the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme.

Three-day RegenAG® Biofertiliser Course

NQ DRY TROPICS
SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

16 - 18 February 2016 (9am - 5pm daily)

447 Arthur Spotswood Rd, Inkerman

NQ Dry Tropics and Gary Spotswood invite you to attend a three-day RegenAG® Biofertiliser course. The hands-on course delivered by Kym Kruse, a leader in the field of regenerative agriculture, is designed for commercial farmers and delivered to small groups of no more than 15 participants.

You will learn practical methods to make your own products, which will greatly benefit anyone spending crippling $$ on conventional inputs or those who have gone 'organic' but are still shopping for inputs.

This course is for you if you want to:

- significantly reduce the cost of your inputs;
- learn how to solubilise minerals yourself to use on-farm rather than purchasing ready-made soluble mineral fertilisers;
- learn how to recognise, capture and reproduce those beneficial microbes everyone talks about;
- increase the water-holding capacity of your soils;
- control pests and disease with reduced artificial chemicals; and
- increase your soil, plant and animal health.

COST

First person per enterprise $300, second person $200. **Full payment required on registration.** It is strongly recommended that two people attend per enterprise to maximise the opportunity for implementation.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER

Contact Diana O'Donnell on 0407 317 316 or email: Diana.Odonnell@nqdrytropics.com.au

Registration closes on Monday 8 February 2016

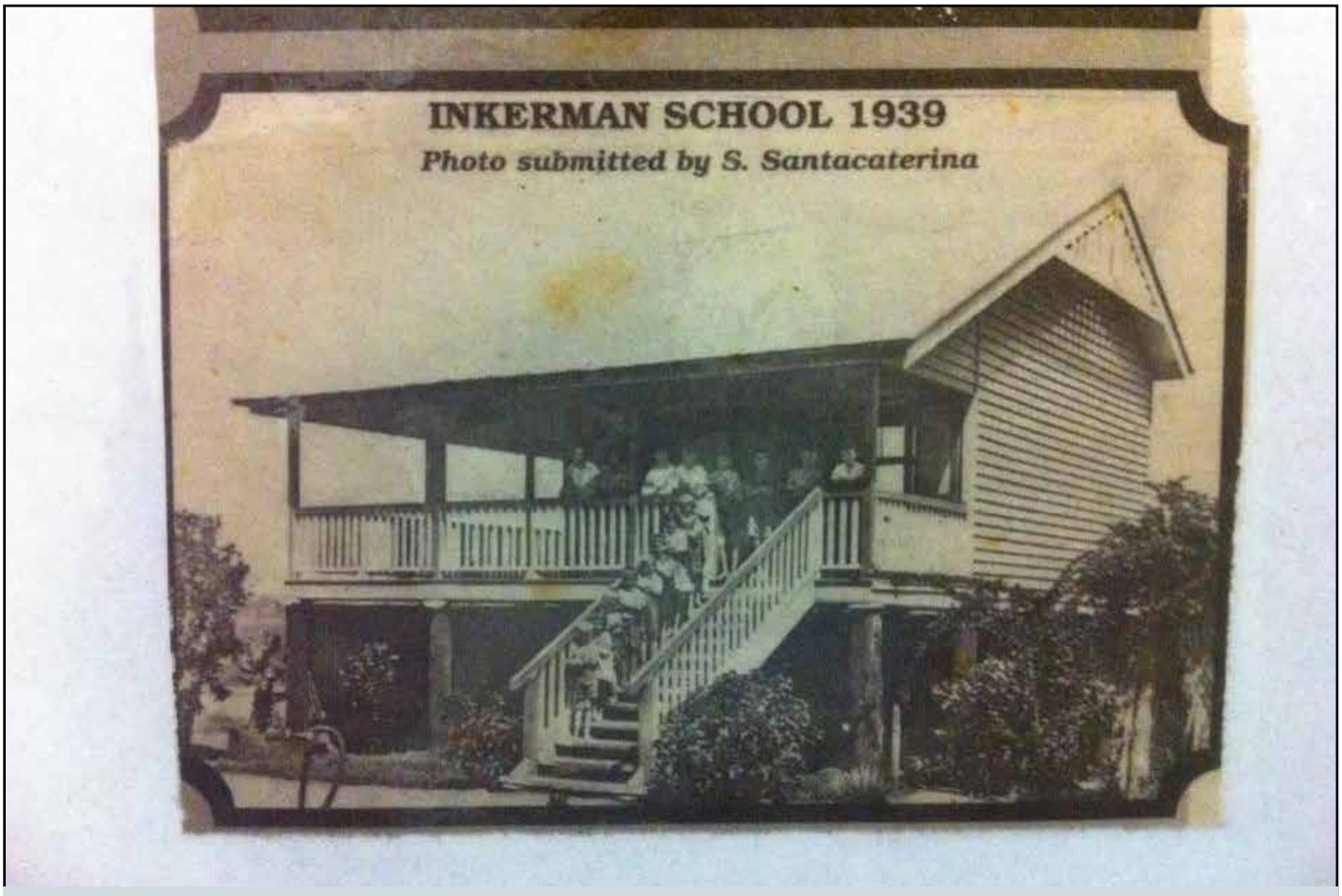
The Sustainable Soils for the Burdkein project is supported by NQ Dry Tropics through funding by the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme.

REGENAG® REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

Australian Government | National Landcare Programme

Sweet Memories

Ayr Court House



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Interesting News Articles

Extraneous matter prompts Australian sugar industry to address productivity and harvesting losses

By Charlie McKillop, ABC Rural – www.abc.net.au/rural

Photo: Sugar Research Australia's Phil Patane knows tackling trash levels will require millers, growers and harvesting contractors to work together (ABC: Caitlyn Gribbin)

As another cane harvest ends, the Australian sugar industry is grappling with an issue it knows is costing it millions of dollars in lost productivity.

Every season, at least 10 to 12 per cent of what's taken from the cane paddocks to be processed at mills the entire length of the Queensland coast, does not produce sugar.

Technically, it's known as Extraneous Matter (EM), or trash.

Basically, the unproductive cane fibre and dirt picked up by the harvester ends up in cane bins and ultimately, goes over the rollers.

It clogs up the factory and limits crushing capacity which, in a long, hard season like the one that's just ended in Queensland, has never been more apparent.

In far north Queensland, the Tully Sugar Mill last week finished pushing through a record crop of 2.898 million tonnes, making it the longest and largest season of any milling district.

To many growers, it highlighted the ongoing failure of the mill's owner, the Chinese government agri-giant, COFCO, to ensure the factory kept pace with the expansion of land under cane.

But Tully Sugar's general manager Barry Dun says there's no avoiding the issue of Extraneous Matter.

He told a recent meeting of growers had it not been for EM, the mill would have finished crushing in the second week of December, rather than January 4.

"There aren't too many industries, certainly agricultural ones, that would be satisfied with processing 12 or 15 per cent of product that wasn't what they were looking for and we're no different," Mr Dun said.

"It's going to take an industry solution to solve the problem."

TACKLING TRASH TAKES TIME AND MONEY

Growers already take on considerable risk in getting a fair crop off to the sugar mill, working against the vagaries of a distorted global sugar market and Queensland's unpredictable and at times, unforgiving natural elements.

At Euramo, just south of Tully, second generation canegrower David Marsillio needs to get the crop off in a timely way in the best possible condition for milling.

"I think we probably could improve," Mr Marsillio said.

"We want our crop off so we want the mill to be going as reliably and as good as it can go.

"Slowing down would help a little bit, but being in a wet area, as soon as it rains, our EM goes through the roof and there's not a lot we can do about that.

"We've got to keep moving or else the crop will stay in the paddock.

"So, yeah it's a hard one."

Photo: Tully Sugar and Tully Canegrowers agree on one critical point - both want more cane going over the rollers (Allyson Horn)

EM A 'BURNING' ISSUE

Historically, burning cane not only reduced pest and disease problems for those cutting cane by hand, but also the volume of leaf matter, however today, more than 85 per cent of Queensland's sugar cane is harvested green by mechanical harvester.

Extraneous Matter, or EM, levels are inextricably linked to the ground speed and pour rates of the harvesting machine.

In other words, the tons/hectare and rate at which harvested cane is delivered on a mat through the cleaning chamber.

A large, extractor fan blows out the 'trash', separating it from the heavier cane billets as they're emptied into waiting bins.

But experienced harvesting haul-out teams know what a tricky balancing act it can be to achieve effective cane cleaning while minimising harvesting losses, with data showing cane losses triple when fan blades exceed 800 revolutions per

Interesting News Articles

minute.

Sugar Research Australia's harvesting and machinery development officer Phil-Anthony Patane knows the solution isn't as simple as slowing down the harvesters to allow a more effective clean.

Mr Patane is based in North Queensland's Herbert River district where, he says, it's no coincidence the rate of EM has more than doubled (from 7 to 15 per cent) in the same period as the number of harvesting contractors has nearly halved (103 to 58) in the past 15 years or so.

As harvesting machines have become bigger and more powerful - with a price tag to match - so, too, has the economic pressure on the contractors who operate them.

"A lot of the groups have had to go big and when groups have gone big, pour rates and ground speeds have increased," Mr Patane said.

He stressed improving field efficiency could dramatically reduce turnaround time for the contractor during harvest and in turn, bring down pour rates and reduce EM.

"I know every single grower's going to have shorts but it's minimising those shorts.

"So, instead of cutting two separate blocks, maybe try to improve your variety management or get into a variety rotation where you can join blocks... you might have a few headlands in between but you're able to cut straight through," Mr Patane said.

TIME AND TONNAGE

One of the largest growers and contract harvesters in Tully, Brian Dore, cuts well over 100,000 tons of cane in an industry where his pay cheque is determined by tonnage and the time it takes to cut a crop.

When it comes to harvesting efficiency,

Photo: Brian Dore has a complete breakdown of harvest statistics at his fingertips (Charlie McKillop)

a touch of his tablet screen gives a complete breakdown of the tons/hour, soil levels, cane purity and bin weights his teams deliver to the rail sidings to go to the mill.

"As growers and millers, everyone wins out of a reduced EM level," Mr Dore said.

"I think it's the elephant in the room. Everyone knows that a better job could be done of it, but it's a baseless argument.

"There's plenty of facts around how much loss is incurred with harvesting - I think SRA (Sugar Research Australia) are doing a great job of that.

"But what I don't know is if I slow the harvester down by a nominal pour rate, I'll recover x amount of sugar and juice losses and that'll pay for the extra harvesting costs, and some.

"The millers will get a better product with less EM, they'll recover x amount.

"So, that's what the problem is, that as a grower I don't know how much to slow the machine down by to recover the extra costs of harvesting and some."

WORKING TOGETHER

Up the road, Euramo grower Dave Marsillio works closely with his harvesting contractor throughout the year, not only when the harvest begins.

"We have a good relationship, we talk to each other," Mr Marsillio said.

"When it comes to filling in a crop of cane and hilling it up, I always get his opinion because he's the man that's got to cut it and put it in the bin.

"If he leaves cane behind and I leave cane behind, then he loses and I lose."

Sugar Research Australia's Phil Patane agrees it will take a cooperative approach from millers, growers and harvesting contractors.

Mr Patane may have helped write the book on harvesting best practice, but he's the first to acknowledge the responsibility for reducing EM should not be borne by the harvesting sector alone.

"You know there's a big piece of the pie out there, we need to share it around equally so all three sectors remain profitable.

"If we can pick up just 10 per cent of losses, we cut 32 million tonne - 10 per cent of that, 3.2 million tonnes - that's a significant benefit to the Australian sugar industry."

But ultimately, is the industry ready to review pay structures with a view to rewarding harvesting contractors who are able to achieve a better, cleaner job?

Operating with such big volumes and low margins, cane growers such as Dave Marsillio are feeling the squeeze, but for that reason also recognise the importance of minimising EM ending up at the mill.

"It's a hard one to answer. (The) cane price is up and down all the time. I wish there was a lot more in the cane for us, value wise," Mr Marsillio said.

"It's a bit like the carrot in front of the donkey, I think if there was a lot more in it for us it could be a consideration.

"But at the moment, I'm happy with the way he's doing it and he's happy so yeah, we'll keep going the way we are and doing the best we can."

Interesting News Articles

Rice crop doubles in Burdekin, country's largest cane growing district, as grower interest rises

ABC Rural – www.abc.net.au/rural
By Eliza Rogers

Extra farmer interest and bigger plantings have doubled this year's rice crop in north Queensland's Burdekin region, Australia's largest cane growing district.

SunRice states that about 32 growers are on track to produce 4,300 tonnes by the end of the season, in two weeks' time.

As sugar marketing battles, volatile prices, and cane diseases continue to shake farmers' confidence, rice is becoming a more attractive option to secure extra income and improve soil health and yields.

Gary Spotswood grows cane and organic produce at his farm near Home Hill, and has just turned off his first rice crop, which spanned 15 hectares, produced 80 tonnes, and took only one day to harvest.

But he said teething problems with patchy water penetration in the flood-irrigated crop meant the yield was not as high as it could have been.

Plans for the next crop include lowering the rows to encourage more even-water soakage.

"For the first time in growing it, you have to start somewhere, so you have to learn how to do it and work from your mistakes," Mr Spotswood said.

Diversification has been central to the Spotswood family's farming ethos for generations, and Mr Spotswood said it was always good to grow something new.

"A mix of anything; it's a financial decision to spread the risk, and it's more interesting," he said.

"I find farming can get boring if you're in the one crop."

SunRice is also branding north Queensland rice specific to its location, which Mr Spotswood said gave the grower more connection to the end product.

"It's good to see your product that you're growing on the shelf locally and you know it's from your area, so it gives you a little bit more connect with it," he said.

The harvested rice field will now be irrigated and ratooned, and planted with a bean crop, before being replanted with rice later next year, and then returned to cane.

Mr Spotswood said the crops could all work together for the benefit of the soils and the ultimate crop yields.

"It's all benefit for the soil, and at the end of the day, we have to look after the soil more, and it will look after us," he said.

Photo: Burdekin farmer Gary Spotswood and farmhand Jordy Oostrom stand in front of their first freshly-harvested rice crop. (Eliza Rogers)

Photo: Grains of rice straight out of the husk. (Eliza Rogers)

Interesting News Articles

Millers warn lack of forward pricing options undermines sugar certainty

ABC Rural - www.abc.net.au/news
By Charlie McKillop

Australian sugar millers have completed their best crushing season in almost a decade, but uncertainty about marketing and forward pricing continues to dog the industry.

More than 32.654 million tonnes of cane was processed in the 2015-16 harvest, which is expected to put the raw sugar tonnage slightly above 2014's tally of 4.37 million tonnes.

Overall, the Australian Sugar Milling Council said it was a good result reflecting a small increase in area under cane and ideal growing conditions in far north Queensland, as well as the end of drought conditions in southern districts.

But chief executive officer Dominic Nolan said despite a rally in the sugar price and predictions of a small deficit in global production compared with consumption, the future remained volatile.

Mr Nolan said it was not clear how new laws giving growers a choice in marketing would work when several large companies exited the sugar marketing pool after the 2016 season.

One of the most obvious casualties, he said, was the lack of forward pricing options for sugar in the absence of cane supply agreements between millers and growers.

"The macro prospects are looking relatively strong... but there is a real volatility about the amount of sugar that's going to come onto the export market," Mr Nolan said.

"We do have strong price risk management tools in place, currently. The capacity to forward price has been a strong tool for the industry although, of course, that right now is very much in question as we work through commercial arrangements for the years beyond 2016."

"Without contracts in place, currently there is no new pricing for 2017 and beyond."

Mr Nolan rejected the notion the new sugar marketing laws delivered security of supply to the industry's marketing company, Queensland Sugar Limited, which traditionally offered pre-crop finance and forward pricing options to growers.

"No, I don't think it provides security at all. I think it opens up the marketing arrangements, it tips them on their ear.

"It tips the whole sugar supply chain on its ear and how those commercial arrangements will be enacted on a company-by-company basis is really an unknown."

Photo: Marketing uncertainty continues despite the sugar industry eclipsing the 2014 raw sugar tally of 4.37 million tonnes.

Exports of Australian mangoes to America growing rapidly

ABC Rural – www.abc.net.au/rural
By Matt Brann

America is looming as a major customer for Australian mangoes and is expected to import up to 200 tonnes this season, compared to just 5 tonnes last year.

The first trays for 2016 are due to land in Los Angeles next week, and there to supervise their arrival will be Michael Daysh, a market development officer with the Northern Territory Department of Primary Industry.

"I'll be there to look at as many arrivals as possible over the next couple of weeks. We're expecting six to seven shipments," Mr Daysh said.

"My job is to have a solid look at that fruit and report back to exporters and growers.

"I'll be sending emails with pictures and details [and] we'll be looking for consistency of arrival and looking for happy importers and happy retailers."

The mango trade to the US started last year, with Australia exporting 5 tonnes of Calypso and Keitt mangoes.

About 20 growers and six exporters are now involved in the trade, with a wider range of varieties heading there this season, including Kensington Pride, R2E2s and Honey Gold.

Mr Daysh said the trade was growing solidly and the industry had set a target of exporting up to 1 million trays to America in 2020.

Photo: Australian mangoes being loaded in Brisbane bound for Los Angeles, USA. (Michael Daysh)

He said all the mangoes had so far been sourced from Queensland, but there were a number of Northern Territory growers interested in the US export market and would likely get involved during the 2016/17 season.

Photo: L-R: Michael Daysh inspecting Australian mangoes with Ben Reilly from US importer, Giumarra (Michael Daysh)

Interesting News Articles

What is El Niño and what might it mean for Australia?

Australia's weather is influenced by many climate drivers. El Niño and La Niña have perhaps the strongest influence on year-to-year climate variability in Australia. They are a part of a natural cycle known as the El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) and are associated with a sustained period (many months) of warming (El Niño) or cooling (La Niña) in the central and eastern tropical Pacific. The ENSO cycle loosely operates over timescales from one to eight years.

Potential effects of El Niño on Australia include:

» Reduced rainfall
» Warmer temperatures
» Shift in temperature extremes
» Increased frost risk
» Reduced tropical cyclone numbers
» Later monsoon onset
» Increased fire danger in southeast Australia
» Decreased alpine snow depths

WHAT CAUSES AN EL NIÑO?

An El Niño occurs when sea surface temperatures in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean become substantially warmer than average, and this causes a shift in atmospheric circulation. Typically, the equatorial trade winds blow from east to west across the Pacific Ocean. El Niño events are associated with a weakening, or even reversal, of the prevailing trade winds.

Warming of ocean temperatures in the central and eastern Pacific causes this area to become more favourable for tropical rainfall and cloud development. As a result, the heavy rainfall that usually occurs to the north of Australia moves to the central and eastern parts of the Pacific basin.

MONITORING EL NIÑO

The term El Niño describes a particular phase of the ENSO climate cycle. ENSO is a coupled atmosphere-ocean phenomenon, which means that the transition between La Niña, El Niño and neutral conditions (neither El Niño nor La Niña) is governed by interactions between the atmosphere and ocean circulation.

In the ocean, ENSO is most commonly monitored through observed sea surface temperatures within a boxed region of the central and eastern tropical Pacific known as NINO3.4. In the atmosphere, ENSO is monitored via the Southern Oscillation Index (SOI), a measure of atmospheric circulation that takes the difference of atmospheric pressure between Darwin and Tahiti.

El Niño and La Niña are not turned on and off like a switch. Rather, El Niño and La Niña are a function of the strength of departures from average in NINO3.4 and the SOI.

El Niño events are typically defined when SOI values fall below −8 and NINO3.4 temperatures are more than 0.8 °C above average.

Events that maintain close to these threshold values are generally classified as moderate to weak, while those that greatly exceed them are referred to as strong. The strength of an event is not always reflected in the strength of its effects on weather, and events which don't quite reach El Niño threshold levels may sometimes be associated with El Niño-like effects on weather.

REDUCED RAINFALL

The shift in rainfall away from the western Pacific, associated with El Niño, means that Australian rainfall is usually reduced through winter–spring, particularly across the eastern and northern parts of the continent.

Nine of the ten driest winter–spring periods on record for eastern Australia occurred during El Niño years. In the Murray–Darling Basin, winter–spring rainfall averaged over all El Niño events since 1900 was 28% lower than the long-term average, with the severe droughts of 1982, 1994, 2002 and 2006 all associated with El Niño.

» Australian winter spring mean rainfall deciles averaged for twelve strong El Niño events.
» Australian winter spring mean rainfall deciles averaged for twelve strong El Niño events.

Although most major Australian droughts have been associated with El Niño, analysis of past El Niño events shows that widespread drought does not occur with every event, and the strength of an El Niño is not directly proportional to the rainfall impacts. For example, during the very strong El Niño that occurred in 1997–98 impacts on rainfall were generally confined to coastal southeastern Australia and Tasmania, while the relatively weak event of 2002–03 saw widespread and significant drought.

Growing season (April–November) rainfall anomalies for eastern Australian plotted against the SOI averaged for April–November for all years from 1900 to 2013, showing the varied effect of both strong and weak El Niño events on rainfall. El Niño is typically associated with sustained negative SOI values.

Growing season (April–November) rainfall anomalies for eastern Australian plotted against the SOI averaged for April–November for all years from 1900 to 2013, showing the varied effect of both strong and weak El Niño events on rainfall. El Niño is typically associated with sustained negative SOI values.

WARMER TEMPERATURES

El Niño years tend to see warmer-than-average temperatures across most of southern Australia, particularly during the second half of the year. In general, decreased cloud cover results in warmer-than-average daytime temperatures, particularly in the spring and summer months. Higher temperatures exacerbate the effect of lower rainfall by increasing evaporative demand. Prior to 2013 (a neutral ENSO year), Australia's two warmest years for seasonal daytime temperatures for winter (2009 and 2002), spring (2006 and 2002), and summer (1982–83 and 1997–98) had all occurred during an El Niño. The warmth of recent El Niño events has been amplified by background warming trends which means that El Niño years have been tending to get warmer since the 1950s.

» Australian winter–spring mean maximum temperature deciles averaged for twelve strong El Niño events.
» Australian winter–spring mean maximum temperature deciles averaged for twelve strong El Niño events.

SHIFT IN TEMPERATURE EXTREMES

For temperature extremes, there are three different measures of heat that are relevant to El Niño: wide-area heatwaves (as indicated by a very warm national area-average temperature); single-day extremes at specific point locations; and long-duration warm spells. The relationship of El Niño with each of these elements may be quite different, and location dependant.

During the warmer half of the year, there is a tendency for weather systems to be more mobile during El Niño years, with fewer blocking (stationary) high pressure systems. This means that for southern coastal locations such as Adelaide and Melbourne, individual daily heat extremes tend to be of greater intensity (hotter) during El Niño years but there is a reduced frequency of prolonged warm spells. Further north, El Niño is associated with both an increase in individual extreme hot

Interesting News Articles

days and multi-day warm spells.

INCREASED FROST RISK

Although maximum temperatures are generally warmer than average during El Niño years, decreased cloud cover often leads to cooler-than-average night-time temperatures during winter–spring, particularly across eastern Australia. For example, regions of southern New South Wales and northern Victoria can experience 15–30% more frost days during El Niño than the historical average; frost days which occur during spring can have significant impacts on agriculture. The Australian record cold temperature of −23.0 °C was observed at Charlotte Pass, New South Wales, on 29 June 1994 in an El Niño year.

REDUCED TROPICAL CYCLONE NUMBERS

On average, there are fewer tropical cyclones in the Australian region during El Niño years. This is particularly true around Queensland, where cyclones are half as likely to cross the coast during El Niño years compared to neutral years. This means a decreased likelihood of major damage and flooding related to strong winds, high seas and heavy rains associated with tropical cyclones.

LATER MONSOON ONSET

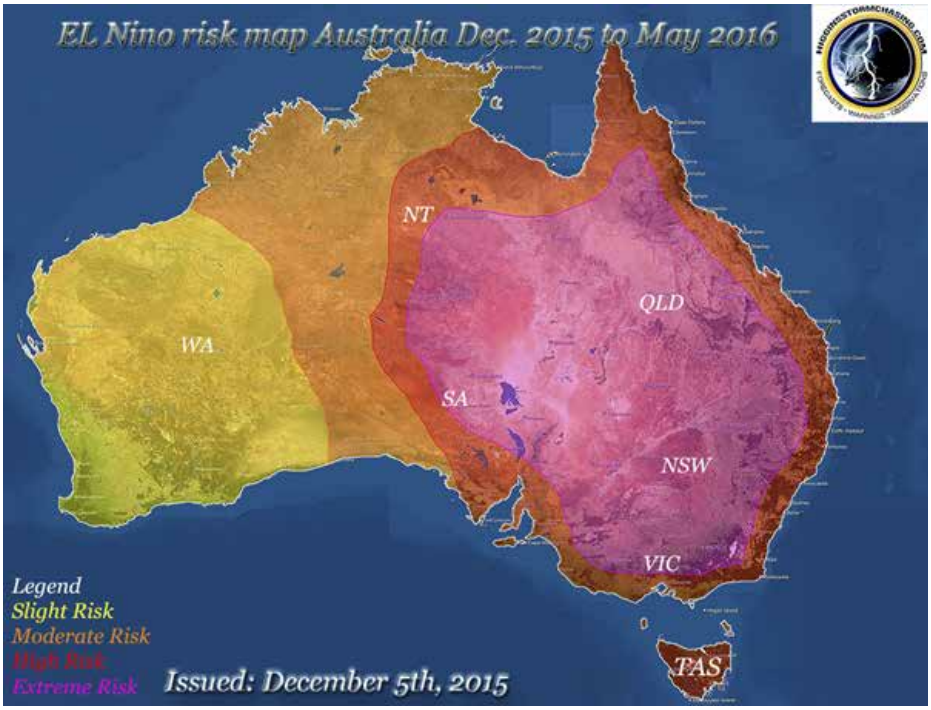
The date of the monsoon onset in tropical Australia is generally 2–6 weeks later during El Niño years than in La Niña years. This means that rainfall in the northern tropics is typically well-below-average during the early part of the wet season for El Niño years, but close to average during the latter part of the wet season.

Australian mean rainfall deciles during October–December averaged for twelve strong El Niño events. Australian mean rainfall deciles during February–April averaged for twelve strong El Niño events.

Australian mean rainfall deciles during October–December (left) and February–April (right) averaged for twelve strong El Niño events.

INCREASED FIRE DANGER IN SOUTHEAST AUSTRALIA

As a result of decreased rainfall and increased maximum temperatures, the frequency of high fire danger ratings and risk of a significant fire danger season in southeast Australia are significantly higher following an El Niño year, particularly when combined with a positive Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) event. Some El Niño years have been followed by very severe summer fires, including Ash Wednesday (16 February 1983) and the 2002–03 and 2006–07 seasons.



However, not all major fires follow El Niño years. The spring bushfires in the Blue Mountains during October 2013 occurred during a neutral ENSO year, while Black Saturday (7 February 2009) in fact followed a weak La Niña (but notably, a positive IOD).

DECREASED ALPINE SNOW DEPTHS

El Niño years (as well as positive IOD years) tend to have lower snow depths in Australia's alpine regions. On average, the peak snow depth measured at Spencer's Creek is 35 cm lower during El Niño years, and the season length (i.e. the period of time with snow depths greater than 100 cm) is 2.5 weeks shorter. The four lowest peak snow depths on record were all measured during El Niño years; notably, snow depths never reached 100 cm in 1982 or 2006.

However, El Niño does not guarantee a poor snow season. Indeed, three El Niño years (1972, 1977 and 1991) actually had well-above-average peak snow depths. Cooler night-time temperatures and lower rainfall during El Niño years can often mean that the snow which does fall is retained and can aid artificial snowmaking which many resorts use to supplement the natural snow they receive.

FORECASTING ENSO

The significant impacts that El Niño and La Niña can have across Australia and the wider globe make the ability to forecast these events important for agriculture, businesses and communities. The Bureau of Meteorology routinely issue seasonal forecasts which include ENSO outlooks for the next several months. While the skill of these longer-range outlooks varies with the time of year and decreases the further into the future they go, the outlooks can provide useful information about when an El Niño or La Niña is likely to occur and how long it might last.

Forecasts of the likelihood of ENSO events take into account temperature patterns across the tropical Pacific Ocean, both at the surface and in the sub-surface, variations in trade wind strength and atmospheric pressure, and ocean currents. The atmospheric and oceanic conditions are analysed by climate models designed for long-range seasonal outlooks. Ultimately, the occurrence of an El Niño requires ocean and atmospheric anomalies to come together and become self-reinforcing.

For the most recent information on the likelihood of El Niño or La Niña events, visit the Bureau's ENSO Wrap-Up and ENSO tracker web pages, both updated every fortnight. For a summary of climate model outlooks for El Niño and La Niña, our Climate Model Summary page surveys eight international models, and is updated on the 16th of every month. You can sign up to email alerts for all these products.

See our website for further information about average El Niño rainfall patterns and past events, as well as current ENSO conditions.

References: Alexander B, Hayman P. 2008.

Interesting News Articles

The Madden-Julian Oscillation

AT A GLANCE

The Madden-Julian Oscillation is associated with weekly to monthly periods of enhanced and suppressed rainfall over parts of Australia.

This climate influence is related to:

- The Australian Monsoon
- Tropical Cyclones
- Tropical Depressions

WHAT IS IT?

The Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO) is a global-scale feature of the tropical atmosphere.

The MJO is the major fluctuation in tropical weather on weekly to monthly timescales. The MJO can be characterized as an eastward moving "pulse" of cloud and rainfall near the equator that typically recurs every 30 to 60 days. However, the signal of the MJO in the tropical atmosphere is not always present.

MJO effects are most evident over the Indian Ocean and western equatorial Pacific. It influences the timing, development and strength of the major global monsoon patterns, including the Indian and Australian monsoons.

Tropical cyclones are also more likely to develop in association with certain phases of a strong MJO event.

The MJO is associated with variations in wind, cloudiness, and rainfall. Most tropical rainfall comes from tall thunderstorms which have very cold tops. Thunderstorms that have cold tops emit only low levels of longwave radiation. Therefore, the MJO can be monitored by using satellite measurements of outgoing longwave radiation (OLR) to identify areas of cloudiness (low OLR) within the tropics.

WHERE, WHEN AND FOR HOW LONG DOES IT OCCUR?

The diagram above shows the area most affected by the Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO), the seasons during which the MJO's influence on Australia is greatest, and for how long each active phase of the MJO typically lasts.

HOW DOES IT AFFECT AUSTRALIA?

The MJO has its greatest effect on the tropical areas of Australia during summer. It may have some effect on parts of southern Australia, however this impact appears small when compared to the effect on northern regions, and remains the subject of research.

The MJO can have an effect on the timing and intensity of "active" monsoon periods in northern Australia. This can lead to enhanced rainfall - in both the intensity of the rainfall and the duration of the rainfall.

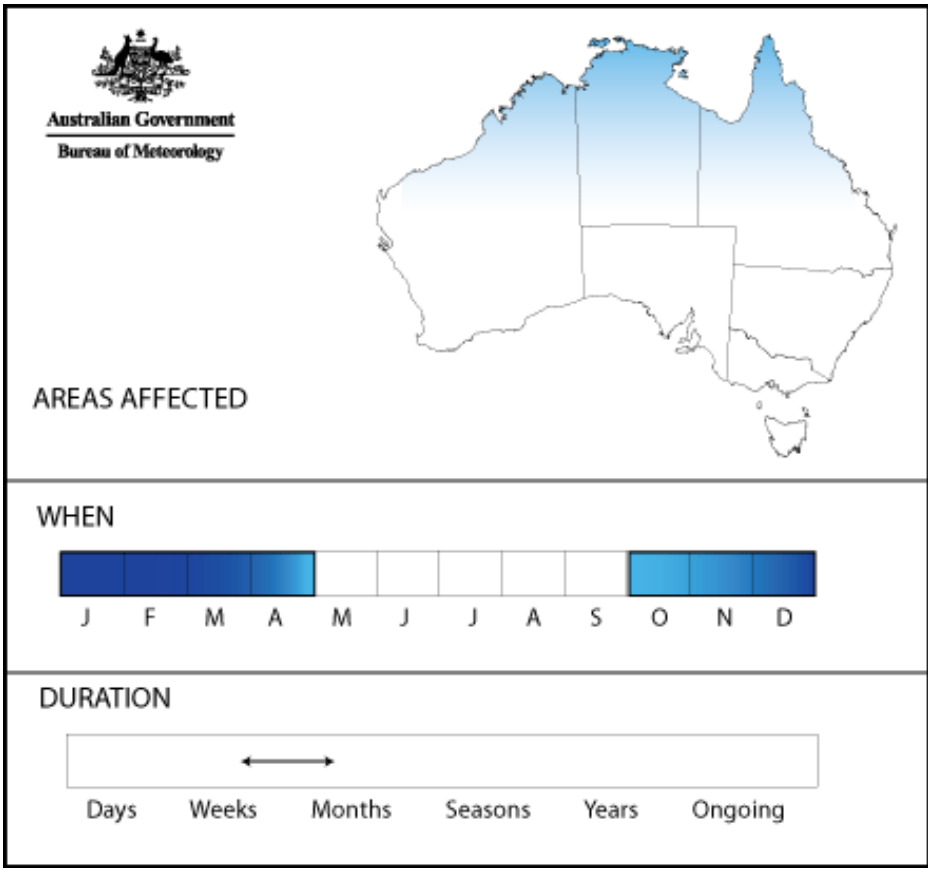
AN EXAMPLE

During late January 2006, an active phase of the MJO coincided with an active monsoon period, resulting in enhanced rainfall over northern Australia.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The Weekly Tropical Climate Note provides information on the current phase of the MJO.

Technical information and maps relating to the Real-time Multivariate MJO Index, which is a way of monitoring the climate and weather variations caused by the MJO. Please note that this product is a research product, and as such is not always updated and may be under-going continual changes as it is developed.



Sweet Info

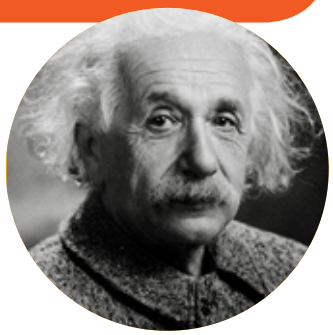
Word of the Month

jocular

adjective (jok-yuh-ler)

given to or characterised by joking ar jesting.

> *'Imagination is more important than knowledge'*
>
> ALBERT EINSTEIN



JOKE OF THE MONTH

Q: Why did the scarecrow get promoted?
A: Because he was outstanding in his field.

Q: Why can't you trust an atom?
A: Because they make up everything.

DID YOU KNOW...?

- **Did you know a duck can't walk without bobbing its head**
- **Did you know in 1878 the first telephone book made contained only 50 names**
- **Did you know the oldest word in the English language is 'town'**
- **Did you know a group of frogs is called an army**

CAPPUCCINO MOCHA CHEESECAKES

Step 1

Preheat oven to 160C/140C fan forced. Release the bases from six 10cm springform pans and turn over. Place a sheet of baking paper over 1 base, allowing a 4cm overhang. Secure the base, paper-side up, back in the pan. Repeat with remaining pans.

Step 2

Process biscuits and extra 1 tsp coffee in a food processor until finely crushed. Add butter and process until well combined. Transfer the biscuit mixture to the prepared pans. Press the mixture firmly over the base of the pans and place in the fridge for 20 minutes to chill.

Step 3

Combine coffee and water in a heatproof bowl. Stir until combined. Set aside to cool completely.

Step 4

Process cream cheese and sugar in the clean bowl of the food processor until smooth. Add coffee mixture. Process until well combined. Add eggs. Process until combined. Spoon into pans. Bake for 20 minutes or until just set in centre. Turn oven off. Leave cheesecakes in oven, with door slightly ajar, for 30 minutes or until cooled. Place in fridge for 2 hours to chill and firm the crust.

Step 5

Meanwhile, for the glaze, place chocolate, cream, coffee and sugar in a saucepan over low heat. Stir for 5 minutes or until smooth. Set aside to cool completely.

Step 6

Use electric beaters to beat double cream and thickened cream in a bowl until soft peaks form. Swirl through 2 tbs of the mocha glaze. Spoon onto cheesecakes. Drizzle with remaining glaze. Dust with cocoa. Top with a coffee bean.

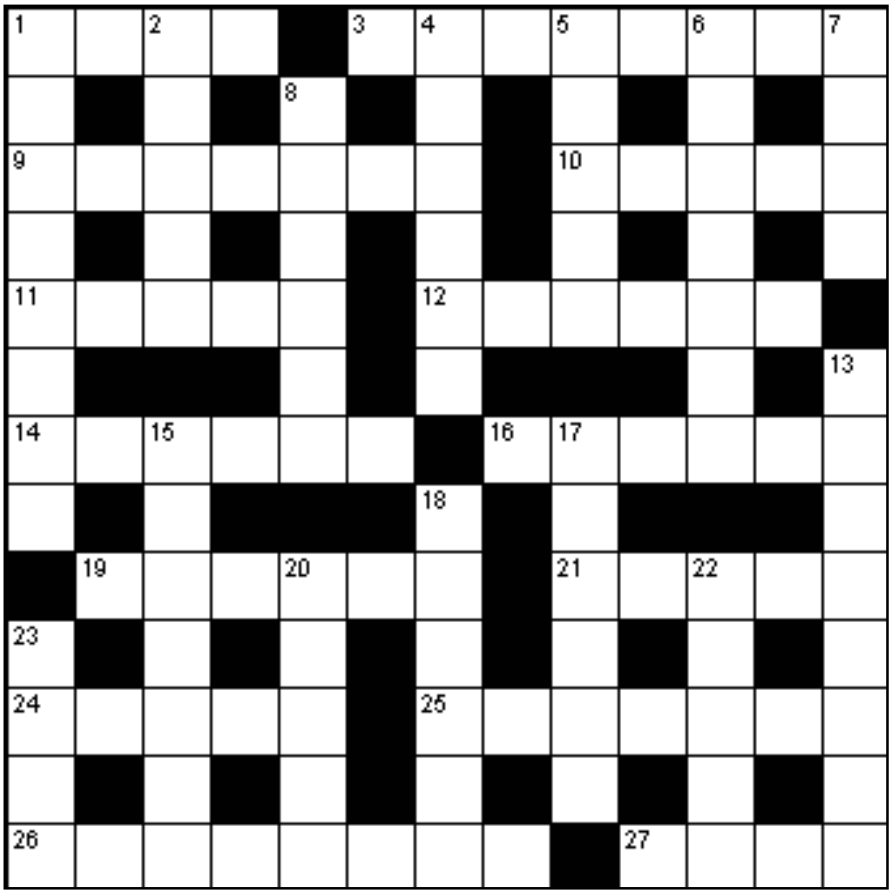
INGREDIENTS

200g Arnott's Choc Ripple biscuits
2 tablespoons instant coffee granules, plus 1 teaspoon extra
80g butter, melted
1 tablespoon water, boiling
3 x 250g pkts cream cheese, at room temperature
155g (3/4 cup) brown sugar, firmly packed
2 eggs
300ml double cream
250ml (1 cup) thickened cream
Cocoa powder, to dust
Chocolate coated coffee beans, to serve

MOCHA GLAZE

100g dark chocolate, finely chopped
250ml (1 cup) thickened cream
2 teaspoons instant coffee granules
1 tablespoon brown sugar

Crossword



ACROSS

1 Daring (4)
3 Three born at the same time (8)
9 In the wrong (2,5)
10 Making false statements (5)
11 Eskimo canoe (5)
12 Ronald --, US president (6)
14 Prairie wolf (6)
16 Male parent (6)
19 Champagne (6)
21 Leading performers (5)
24 Large bird of prey (5)
25 Whaling weapon (7)
26 Male singing voice (8)
27 Couple (4)

DOWN

1 Road hazard in winter (5,3)
2 Elevated (5)
4 Two-way ticket (6)
5 Lively Bohemian dance (5)
6 Tombstone inscription (7)
7 Savant (4)
8 Pail (6)
13 Captive (8)
15 Not so old (7)
17 Preposterous (6)
18 Large snake (6)
20 Sheep noise (5)
22 Fragrance (5)
23 Pavement edge (4)

Classifieds

FREE FOR MEMBERS TO ADVERTISE

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- 2006 Grizzly Billet Planter – Large Stainless steel fertiliser boxes, stainless steel shute, Plough front, Plus – double disc opener front, Suscon applicator, Talstar tank. Good condition $45,000 plus GST ONO Ph 0427735305
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- Loader Back Hoe Combo Massey Ferguson 65 $3,000 + GST. Ph: 0418 187 565
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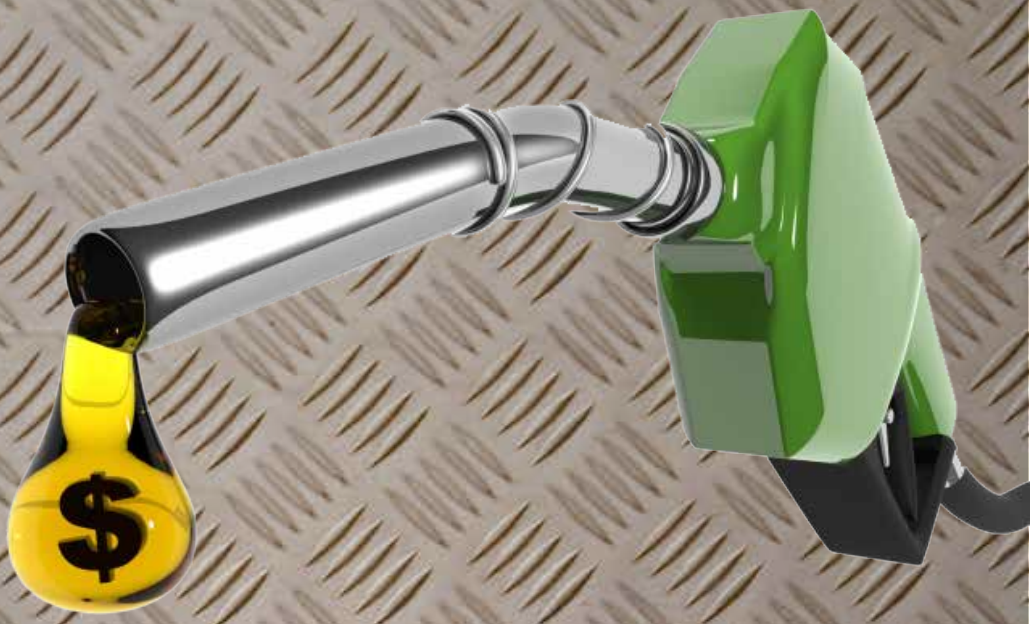
- 1,000L trailer fuel tank. Ph: 0407156956
- Break pusher trailer - 24 or 28 plate international offset discs. Ph A/H: 47825556
- 5 Tyne Delta Ripper and Water Tank – 5000L. Ph: 47825112 M: 0408199336

Across – 1 – Bold, 3 – Triplets, 9 – At Fault, 10 – Lying, 11 – Kayak, 12 – Reagan, 14 – Coyote, 16 – Father, 19 – Bubbly, 21 – Stars, 24 – Eagle, 25 – Harpoon, 26 – Baritone, 27 – Pair
Down – 1 – Blacktice, 2 – Lofty, 4 – Return, 5 – Polka, 6 – Epitaph, 7 – Sage, 8 – Bucket, 13 – Prisoner, 15 – Younger, 17 – Absurd, 18 – Python, 20 – Bleat, 22 – Aroma, 23 - Kerb



FUEL ORDERS

KCGOL is still taking fuel orders.

Delivery schedules are booking up quickly each week so get in early to avoid disappointment!

Members Advantage

Currently 46 members are reaping the rewards with bulk fuel savings purchasing Diesel and Unleaded fuel through Kalagro Limited.

Please take advantage of these special fuel prices by contacting our office to place your orders.

A daily email of Kalagros special fuel prices will commence 1st February 2016

Kalamia Cane Growers Organisation Limited (KCGOL)

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