



Grower Update

ISSUE 28 – DECEMBER 2017

Welcome to the December issue of our BPS newsletter. We hope you find the articles contained in this issue informative.



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The directors, management, and staff of BPS would like to wish all growers and industry personnel a merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year.

The BPS office will close at 4pm on December 22, 2017 and reopen at 7am on January 2, 2018.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS



With 2017 drawing to a close, all BPS staff and members are looking forward to a well-deserved break. This year has seen some challenges, opportunities and successes. I would like to thank the staff for their tireless dedication and effort in giving members the best possible service through variety distribution, pest and disease services, agronomic advice and extension and field experiments and trials.

Over the last 5 years, BPS has significantly increased the level of service to members, some examples include:

- Greater volumes of approved seed cane sold through approved seed plots
- Increased RSD testing (over double the number of samples)
- Increased pachymetra surveys
- Increased mapping, rogueing, control and monitoring of itch grass and wild sorghum
- Increased pest monitoring on members' farms
- Introduction of commercial variety strip trials (now 12 sites across the district)
- Runoff water quality monitoring for members
- Crop nutrition trials (nitrogen, potassium, phosphorus, enhanced efficiency fertilisers)
- Smartcane BMP facilitation and support
- Assistance in access to various grants for members
- Increased on farm support for equipment calibrations, fertiliser and chemical recommendations and soil testing

All of the above has been achieved with no rise in levies during the last 6 years. None of the above could have been achieved without significant effort from staff and directors, nor the support and input of BPS members. I would particularly like to thank the BPS approved seed cane plot holders, and associated contractors as well as growers and contractors involved in various trials BPS have conducted over the last 12 months. Without the support of these growers and contractors, the industry would not have access to the volume of approved seed cane, or data on crop performance specific to our region.

I would like to wish all BPS staff, directors and members the very best for the festive season, hope all have a safe and relaxing break, and look forward to a profitable and productive 2018.

Rob Milla

Manager

December 2017

BPS ACTIVITIES

In the last 3 months, field staff been active assisting members with a variety of tasks. Approximately 80 pachymetra samples were collected from various farms and sent to SRA for testing. Farm blocks and approved cane plots throughout the district have been inspected for evidence of smut infection in the new variety SRA8. Smut counts were completed on the blocks found to be infected.

All approved seed cane plots throughout the district have been ridden through on at least 2 occasions to search for evidence of damage from pest or disease. All varieties have been found to be in disease free condition apart from smut in SRA8 and in a small amount of Q252. This has resulted in some areas of some approved seed cane plots being ploughed out to preserve the integrity of these approved seed cane plots.

Growers have been assisted by staff with advice on nutrient management, identifying pests and disease in crops before recommending control measures and conducting machinery inspections. Itch grass and wild sorghum hot spots have been intensively rogued and this work continues while dry conditions prevail. Follow up chemical control is essential to control these weeds and BPS staff have made several recommendations to growers to this point and will continue to monitor into the new year.

Crop data collection is well underway and growers should expect a visit from their designated field officer any time soon, if they have not been called on already. Field officers will also be asking about seed cane orders for next season. A seed cane order form is included in this newsletter.

RAY HILDEBRANDT RETIRES AFTER 35 YEARS

BPS would like to say farewell to Ray Hildebrandt after 35 years of service as field officer to the Inkerman grower members.

Ray started with the Inkerman Cane Protection and Productivity Board in April 1982, and continued with them until all Burdekin based productivity boards were combined to become Burdekin Productivity Services Ltd in 2004. He then became an employee of BPS.

Ray's knowledge of pests and diseases, cane varieties and the Inkerman area remained first class throughout his career. He knew each farm intimately and was always first to complete the annual crop data surveys. This record keeping duty was an aspect of the job that he was very proud of.

The directors, management and staff at BPS wish Ray a long and peaceful retirement.



Ray receiving his retirement gift from Mark Rickards and Chris Hesp

FARM BIOSECURITY – WHY BOTHER?

BPS staff spend considerable time and resources conducting activities to ensure that risk of spread of pest and disease is minimised. These activities include:

- Hot water treatment and propagation of approved seed cane
- Sterilisation of equipment moving onto approved seed cane plots
- Inspection and permits for movement of machinery between biosecurity zones
- Itch grass and wild sorghum rogueing and monitoring
- Canegrub monitoring
- Pachymetra monitoring
- RSD surveys and on farm testing.

Every person in the industry has a part to play to minimise risk of spread of pests and diseases. Grower activities that should be undertaken to minimise risk include:

- Regular purchase of approved seed cane
- Washdown and sterilisation of equipment moving on and off farm
- Permits acquired for movement of machinery between biosecurity zones
- Control of declared or invasive weed and pest species
- Regular on farm monitoring of pest and disease pressures and risks.

If you are not conducting some or all of these activities, you are not only increasing the risk of pest and disease incidence on your own farm, you are also increasing the risk for the whole of the industry. Every grower is under a general biosecurity obligation, which means you need to take all reasonable and practical steps to minimise risk of spread of pest or disease.

While some of these activities may seem onerous, it is important to remember that they are there to protect your livelihood. Pests such as itch grass can be both difficult and expensive to control and diseases like RSD can affect yield. Other regions also have pests and diseases that are not present in the Burdekin e.g. Fiji Leaf Gall or Siam Weed, and an invasion of one of these pests or diseases could be devastating for our area.

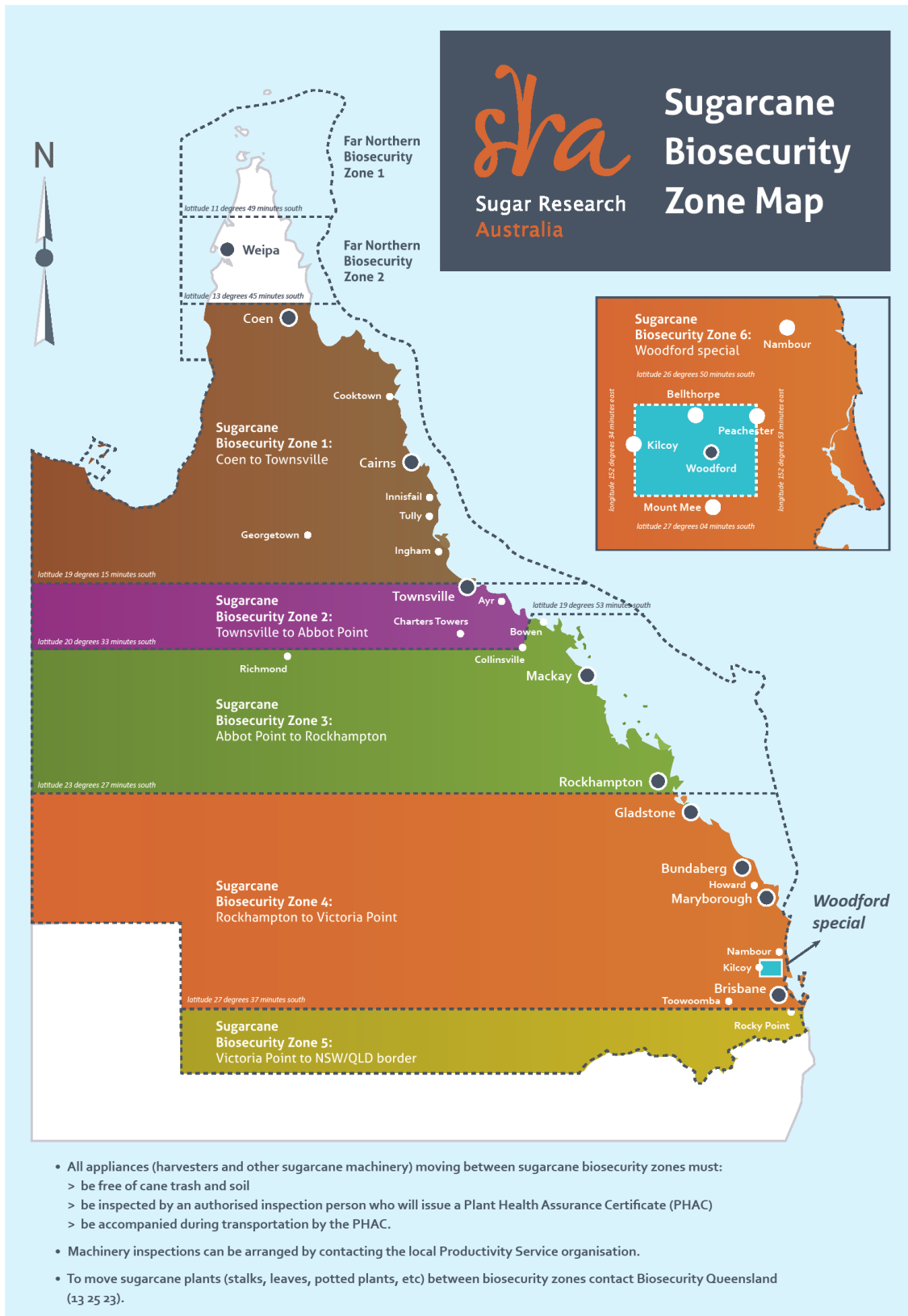
PLANT AND MACHINERY MOVEMENT

To protect the sugar industry from pests and diseases biosecurity zones are in place (see map). No plants or machinery can be moved between these zones without approval. Only Biosecurity Queensland staff can issue approvals to move plant material; local productivity services staff are able to issue certificates for the movement of machinery.



Before moving any machine that has been in contact with sugarcane plants or soil out of the Burdekin it **must** be inspected and a plant health assurance certificate issued. Certificates will only be issued when the machine has been inspected and found to be clean of sugarcane pest carriers i.e. that there is no dirt and trash remaining on the machine. All machinery coming into the Burdekin from other regions should also have a certificate – this must travel with the machine.

To arrange an inspection please contact BPS, allowing several days before the machine is due to be transported. Cane harvesters in particular are difficult to clean and will usually need to be inspected at least twice before a certificate will be issued.



- All appliances (harvesters and other sugarcane machinery) moving between sugarcane biosecurity zones must:
 - > be free of cane trash and soil
 - > be inspected by an authorised inspection person who will issue a Plant Health Assurance Certificate (PHAC)
 - > be accompanied during transportation by the PHAC.
- Machinery inspections can be arranged by contacting the local Productivity Service organisation.
- To move sugarcane plants (stalks, leaves, potted plants, etc) between biosecurity zones contact Biosecurity Queensland (13 25 23).

VARIETY UPDATE – NEW RECOMMENDED VARIETY LIST RELEASED

With new Biosecurity legislation introduced in July 2016, all growers are required to act under a **General Biosecurity Obligation** - which means that all growers must take all reasonable and practical measures to minimise the risk of spreading pest or disease from their farm. Part of meeting your general biosecurity obligation (GBO) is by planting varieties on the recommended variety list.

The recommended variety list is determined by the Regional Variety Committee (RVC), which comprises members from a range of organisations including: BPS, SRA, CBL, ICGO, PCGO, Kalagro, Wilmar and independent agronomists and growers. This group considers data collected from a range of sources and field observations to determine if a variety should be released to the industry or not. To release a variety, a clone has to meet the productivity, milling and biosecurity criteria pertaining to the region. This information is collected from SRA and BPS trials, pathology and milling characteristic trials, and field observations. There are 5 voting members on the committee - CBL, ICGO, PCGO, Kalagro and Wilmar. Growers are encouraged to contact their respective collective if they have further questions about the voting process for variety releases.

The Regional Variety Committee met in December 2017 to review the Recommended Variety List, as several varieties on the list were either obsolete or posed an increased disease risk. The most significant change was the transition of Tellus from a 'planting and ratooning' variety to a 'ratooning only' variety. This means that growers can still ratoon Tellus crops and be acting under their General Biosecurity Obligation, however they may not be acting under their GBO if Tellus is planted. Tellus is highly susceptible to smut and growers managing Tellus will need to keep disease levels low within the crop to meet their GBO. The current full list is below. Please contact your grower collective or any BPS staff member if you have further questions.

Variety	Date Approved	Approval Type
SRA8	19/04/2016	Planting and Ratooning
Q253	30/08/2013	Planting and Ratooning
Q252	30/08/2013	Planting and Ratooning
Q240	16/09/2011	Planting and Ratooning
Q238	16/09/2011	Planting and Ratooning
Q247	16/09/2011	Planting and Ratooning
Q232	18/09/2008	Planting and Ratooning
Q200	19/03/2007	Planting and Ratooning
KQ228	10/04/2006	Planting and Ratooning
Q96	5/09/2003	Planting and Ratooning
Q208	5/09/2003	Planting and Ratooning
Q183	5/09/2003	Planting and Ratooning
Q177	5/09/2003	Planting and Ratooning
Q171	5/09/2003	Planting and Ratooning
Q156	5/09/2003	Planting and Ratooning
CP74-2005	5/09/2003	Planting and Ratooning
Q133	5/09/2003	Planting and Ratooning
TELLUS	5/09/2003	Ratooning only



Note that some of these varieties are specialist varieties for disease resistance (eg: Q156, CP74-2005 for striate mosaic) and are not recommended for wide scale planting. Contact your BPS field officer for the most suitable variety mix for your farm.

VARIETY TRIAL RESULTS

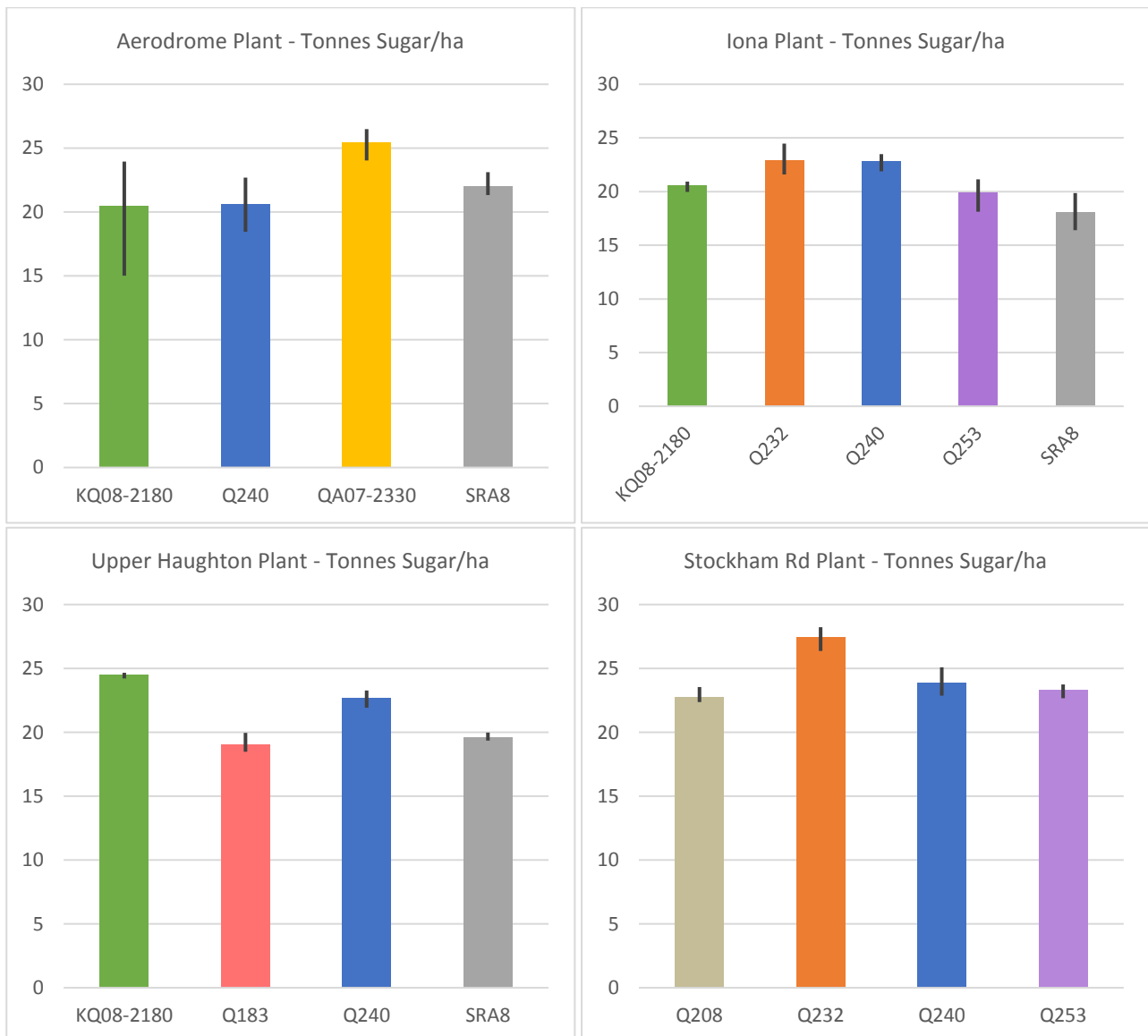
Since 2013 BPS has been running a series of variety strip trials to assess the performance of new and potential varieties that are coming through the SRA breeding program. The 2017 harvest results are now available.

Plant cane results – trials planted 2016

Of the four trials planted in 2016, three are assessing the performance of the experimental variety KQ08-2180 to the current industry standards. The Aerodrome site also included a second experimental variety QA07-2330. The fourth trial at Stockham Rd is primarily comparing the performance of varieties on sodic soils and in particular how Q232 performs.

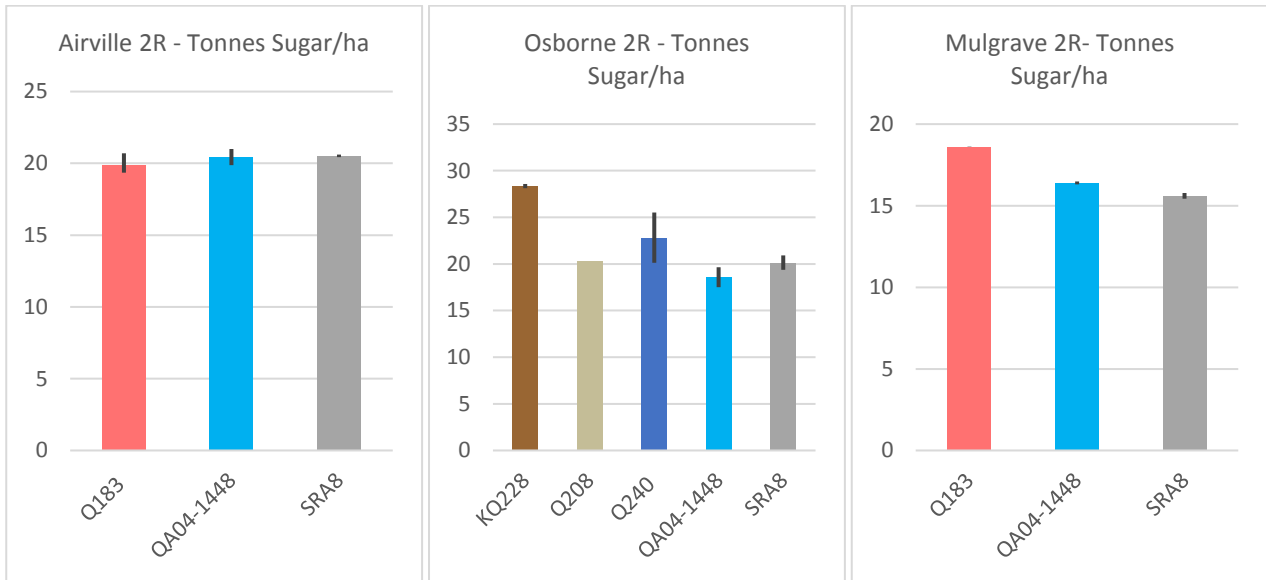
No variety was a standout across the trials. KQ08-2180 was the best performing variety (tonnes sugar/ha) in the Upper Haughton trial, but the worst variety at Aerodrome where it was let down by low average CCS (note: the CCS results at the Aerodrome site were highly variable and ranged from 10.1 to 14.2). The Regional Variety Committee will make a decision on whether to release KQ08-2180 and QA07-2330 at the variety meeting next year.

At the Stockham Rd trial Q232 proved its worth as a variety for sodic soils, cutting both the highest tonnes cane and tonnes sugar/ha at this site.



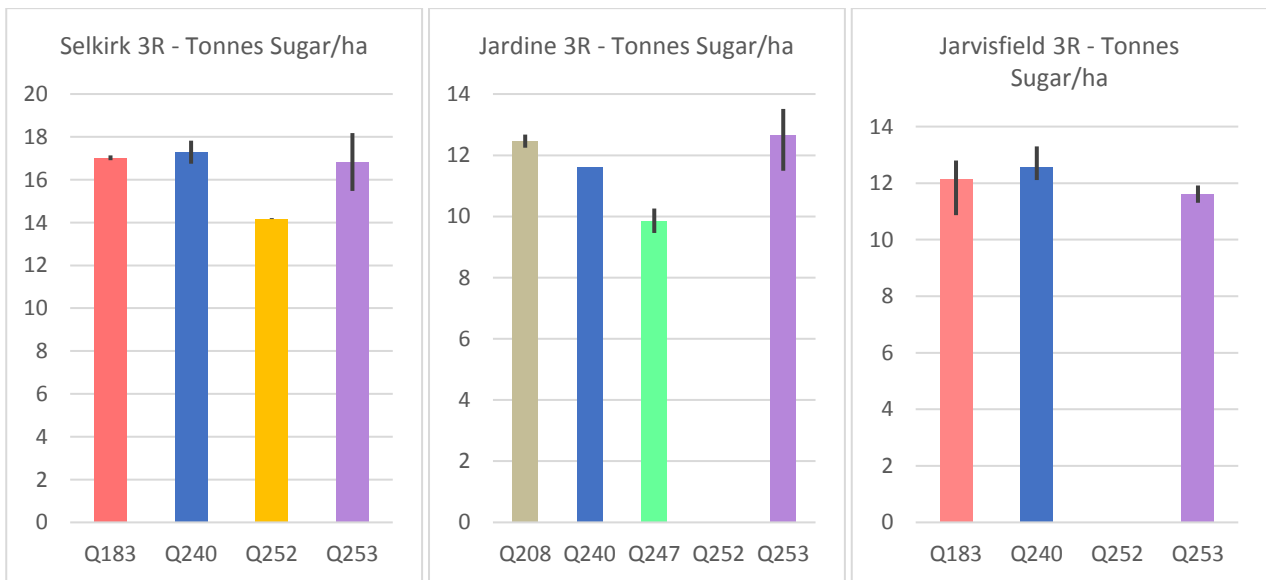
Second ratoon results – trials planted 2014

This series of trials focussed on the performance of SRA8 and QA04-1448 with both varieties being included at the three sites. SRA8 had the lowest tonnes cane/ha and tonnes sugar/ha at both the Osborne and Mulgrave sites, but at Airville it had the highest TSH. The best performing variety at any site was KQ228 at Osborne, this reconfirms the value of this variety on the better quality delta soils.



Third ratoon results – trials planted 2013

As in previous years, Q253 continued to have the highest tonnes cane/ha, but it also had the lowest CCS at all sites. Q240 was the highest yielding variety for tonnes sugar/ha at both Selkirk and Jarvisfield, but was beaten by both Q253 and Q208 at Jardine. Q252 was the worst variety at all sites, with insufficient cane for CCS sampling at Jardine and Jarvisfield.



Note: for all graphs the length of the black line shows the range of results for that variety, the longer the line, the greater the range of results.

Jardine and Jarvisfield – no CCS result for Q252 due to insufficient cane for a mill sample

Summary of 2017 harvest results

Note: not all varieties are planted at each site

Plant Variety	Tonnes cane/ha				CCS				Tonnes Sugar/ha			
	Aerodrome	Iona	Upper Houghton	Stockham Rd	Aerodrome	Iona	Upper Houghton	Stockham Rd	Aerodrome	Iona	Upper Houghton	Stockham Rd
KQ08-2180	164	165	197		12.5	12.5	12.5		20.5	20.6	24.5	
Q183			151				12.6				19.0	
Q208				149				15.3				22.8
Q232		191		182		12.0		15.0		22.9		27.4
Q240	155	182	176	154	13.3	12.5	12.9	15.5	20.6	22.8	22.6	23.9
Q253		182		165		10.9		14.2		19.9		23.3
QA07-2330	170				14.9				25.5			
SRA8	150	139	150		14.6	13.0	13.0		22.0	18.1	19.6	

2 Ratoon Variety	Tonnes cane/ha				CCS				Tonnes Sugar/ha			
	Airville	Osborne	Mulgrave		Airville	Osborne	Mulgrave		Airville	Osborne	Mulgrave	
KQ228		199				14.3				28.4		
Q183	127		120	15.7			15.5		19.9			18.6
Q208		141			14.4					20.3		
Q240		166			13.8					22.8		
QA04-1448	141	152	120	14.5	12.2	13.7		20.4	18.6		16.4	
SRA8	137	135	108	14.9	14.9	14.5		20.5	20.2		15.6	

3 Ratoon Variety	Tonnes cane/ha				CCS				Tonnes Sugar/ha			
	Selkirk	Jardine	Jarvisfield		Selkirk	Jardine	Jarvisfield		Selkirk	Jardine	Jarvisfield	
Q183	116		85	14.6			14.3		17.0			12.2
Q208		92			13.5					12.5		
Q240	117	88	98	14.8	13.2	12.8		17.3	11.6		12.6	
Q247		78			12.6				9.9			
Q252	105	78	79	13.5				14.2				
Q253	128	105	101	13.1	12.1	11.5		16.8	12.6		11.6	

IRRIGWEB – AN IRRIGATION SCHEDULING TOOL FOR THE SUGAR INDUSTRY



Improving irrigation management for a profitable and sustainable future

What is IrrigWeb?

IrrigWeb is an irrigation scheduling tool that has been developed specifically for the sugarcane industry. It uses a sugarcane crop model to calculate crop water use based on daily climate information. Data is drawn from the Bureau of Meteorology weather sites and the BPS weather station network.

Users enter information on soil types, crop growth stage and their irrigation system. IrrigWeb uses this information in conjunction with climate data to determine crop water use and to schedule future irrigation events.

A range of outputs are provided in both tables and graphs for easy interpretation to assist with irrigation scheduling and management. Users can also elect to receive a weekly email outlining the irrigation schedule for the next week.

IrrigWeb is a web-based system that can be accessed from anywhere on a PC or smartphone.

The RWUE-IF project has provided funding to give BPS members free access to the tool.

IrrigWeb and BMP

The SmartCane BMP program requires growers to know and record:

- Soil water holding capacity
- Crop water requirement
- Irrigation applications (volumes and timing)
- How scheduling decisions are made
- Rainfall records

All of these requirements are met by using IrrigWeb.

Users add irrigation events. Rainfall is automatically captured from weather station data, but can be edited by the user.

Irrigation Details		Rainfall Details
New Rainfall Record		
Rainfall Date	Rainfall (mm)	
17/12/2017	0.2	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
16/12/2017	0.2	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
13/12/2017	1.3	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
12/12/2017	8.2	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
05/12/2017	0.7	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
04/12/2017	8.3	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
02/12/2017	6.8	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>



Season Report - Current

Paddock	Harvest Date	Total Irrig. (mm/ha)	Total Rain (mm/ha)	CWU (mm/ha)	Pot. CWU (mm/ha)	Run-off (mm/ha)	Deep Drain (mm/ha)
BPS_Jul	14/07/2018	490	131	507	741	0	66
BPS_Aug	14/08/2018	350	129	390	634	0	34
BPS_Sep	14/09/2018	280	128	297	500	0	62
BPS_Oct	14/10/2018	140	127	126	353	0	78



2018 SEED ORDER FORM

FARM NAME: _____

FARM NUMBER: _____

PLOT...(PLEASE CIRCLE) BROCK RD, RAPISARDA, GIRU, MILLAROO, INKERMEN, P&K (Whitsons)

VARIETY	QUANTITY (t)	PLOT
Q183		
Q208		
KQ228		
Q240		
Q232		
Q253		
Q252		

To ensure adequate allocation of clean cane supplies for the 2016 planting season, could you please take the time to fill out and return the above order form by the end of January.

Depending on demand, some varieties may need to be allocated based on hectares of BPS levies paid.

Any enquires please contact:

Invicta

Brendan Arboit
0427 372 124
barboit@bps.net.au

Pioneer and Kalamia

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

Inkerman

Ashley Taran
0407 960 057
ataran@bps.net.au

BPS office 4783 1101

reception@bps.net.au

UPCOMING EVENTS



SMARTCANE BMP SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKSHOPS

BMP self-assessment workshops will be held fortnightly on Monday mornings (9-11 am) starting January 15, 2018.

The self-assessment is the first step towards BMP accreditation. Growers who have completed the self-assessment and would like to continue on to accreditation should also contact Terry or Jasmine.

Please RSVP to:

Terry Granshaw – 0437 553 149
Jasmine Connolly – 0438 934 601



IRRIGWEB WORKSHOPS

IrrigWeb workshops will be held fortnightly on Thursday mornings (8.30 – 11 am) starting January 18, 2018.

Workshops will cover: setting up a farm and paddocks; determining the irrigation point; and entering irrigation information.

You will need an internet capable laptop or tablet. Phones are suitable for recording irrigation events but their screens are too small for the initial setup. If you don't have a laptop or tablet please let us know so we can organise one.

Please RSVP to Marian Davis – 0428 927 079

SHED MEETINGS

The next round of shed meetings will likely commence in mid-February. Productivity data will be available for these meetings.

Field officers will be in contact when the meeting dates have been confirmed.

STAFF CONTACTS

Contact	Title	Contact Number	Email
Office		(07) 4783 1101	reception@bps.net.au
Fax		(07) 4783 5327	
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Rob Milla	Manager	0490 036 329	rmilla@bps.net.au
Mark Rickards	Commercial Manager	0427 834 800	mrickards@bps.net.au
Marian Davis	Extension Agronomist	0428 927 079	mdavis@bps.net.au
Cherrie Johnson	Trainee Extension Agronomist	0447 069 887	cjohnson@bps.net.au
Terry Granshaw	Extension Officer	0437 553 149	tgranshaw@bps.net.au
Jasmine Connolly	Extension Officer	0438 934 601	jconnolly@bps.net.au
David Paine	Field Officer – Kalamia/Pioneer	0427 167 159	dpaine@bps.net.au
Brendan Arboit	Field Officer – Invicta	0427 372 124	barboit@bps.net.au
Ashley Taran	Field Officer - Inkerman	0407 960 057	ataran@bps.net.au
Maddy Molino	Trainee Field Officer	0407 167 159	mmolino@bps.net.au