

30 January 2018

Case IH Step UP! 2018 Conference all set for 26-28 March

After Cyclone Debbie all but washed the 2017 conference away, Next Gen is pleased to announce that the Case IH Step UP! Conference will return in 2018 to Mackay on 26-28 March 2018.

More than 130 cane farmers, cane professionals and industry stakeholders are already set to meet at the Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre on Monday 26 to Wednesday 28 March 2018 to discuss topics of interest to the next generation of the Australian sugar industry. New ticket sales are available and selling fast.

The 2018 conference program will continue to build on the Next Gen program's burgeoning network of young and established cane farmers and professionals across Queensland and Northern New South Wales.

Gerard Puglisi, Next Gen Officer says the Case IH Step UP! 2018 conference has been designed to build on the previous conference outcomes and aims to give a voice to young farmers, many of whom work with their parents or off the farm to supplement their incomes.

"We want to encourage younger people to step up and take more of an industry role.

"Decisions are being made about our industry that are not going to necessarily affect the decision-makers for as long as they will impact on the next generation of cane farmers.

Gerard Puglisi, Next Gen Officer encourages all who have an interest in the future of the industry to attend the event and participate in the conversation.

"In 2015 we had the first hugely successful Case IH Step UP! Conference with a gathering of more than 150 people.

"Of the group, around 80 younger farmers were able to identify and address issues of succession planning and the flow of information from mills to the younger generation as common issues across all mill areas.

"The event theme, *Transition & Innovation*, will focus on ever-advancing technology like drones, automation and blockchain; emerging world best practices and how we can ensure our industry remains a global leader as it transitions from one generation to the next," Gerard continued.

"Our speakers are from all corners of the industry. They include Australia and New Zealand Case IH Marketing Manager Pete McCann, Queensland Sugar Limited's (QSL) Managing Director Greg Beashel and Professor Ian O'Hara from QUT's Centre for Tropical Crops and Biocommodities.



While there will be plenty of interesting ideas discussed by the speakers, Case IH Step UP! will also present a rare opportunity for guests to network and socialize with key industry leaders and other progressive stakeholders, particularly at the Welcome Function (hosted by NAB Agribusiness), the event Gala Dinner and in the trade hall, which too is set to be the biggest and most diverse to date.

In addition to these events, guests at Case IH Step UP! 2018 will also have the chance to participate in daily field trips to experience world class technology in action.

“Tickets are selling fast, and with only a limited number available I encourage anyone interested in attending to register as soon as possible to avoid missing out,” Gerard concluded.

Case IH Step UP! 2018 will be held at the Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre (MECC) from 26th to 28th March. Find out more by visiting www.nextgenstepup.com

Case IH is joined by several other leading brands in supporting Case IH Step UP! 2018 including Australian Cane Farmers Association (ACFA), QSL, NAB Agribusiness, Sugar Research Australia (SRA), Smartcane BMP, CANEGROWERS, Mackay Sugar, QRAA, Reef Catchments, Farmacist, Wilmar, Whitson Dawson and Stoller Australia.

Follow us on **Facebook** for event information at [OurCommunity@ACFANextGenfarmers](https://www.facebook.com/OurCommunity@ACFANextGenfarmers)

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To speak to Next Gen Officer Gerard Puglisi, please contact him on 0428 988 136, alternatively please call Conference Organiser, Kellie-Ann Robinson, on 0418 306 333.