

Dear Cane Grower,

Burdekin Shire Council is helping to drive diversification in the agricultural sector after announcing it would contribute to the North Queensland Agricultural Market and Supply Chain Study.

The 12-month project by North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (NQROC) and Townsville Enterprise (TEL) is investigating emerging markets and analysing supply chain gaps and sector capacity within the agricultural industry.

Research stages commenced in May after a \$250,000 grant was provided by the Cooperative Research Centre for Developing Northern Australia.

A strong market outlook driven by Asia's rapidly growing middle class and numerous regional development options currently under consideration make agriculture an exciting growth sector for Townsville North Queensland.

The opportunity exists to identify the key products and markets that our primary producers should target in order to maximise future return on investment and consolidate Australia's international reputation for high quality, safe and clean food.

This project came after NQROC and TEL identified the need for collective industry action on transforming North Queensland's agriculture, production, infrastructure and export sectors to meet existing and future international market demands.

Whilst the Burdekin has traditionally been a sugar cane growing district, Council has in recent years been proactively pursuing diversification to bring new industries to the shire, increasing employment opportunities and further stimulating the economy.

This project will identify the strongest opportunities for diversification and will then work backwards to identify the requirements, gaps and benefits of new markets.

Earlier this year, Townsville Enterprise announced that KPMG, Premise and AEC were the successful consultants commissioned to conduct the North Queensland Agricultural Market and Supply Chain Study.

The consultants will be available to meet with Burdekin stakeholders on 10 and 11 September. Any growers or farmers who are interested in meeting with the consultants can register with Council's Economic Development Coordinator on (07) 4783 9800.

Regards,

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