

## **New permit allows Queensland sugarcane growers to control rats from the air**

Sugar Research Australia (SRA) and CANEGROWERS have worked together to help Queensland sugarcane growers control rat infestations.

Working with the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA), the organisations have secured a minor use permit to allow for aerial baiting of the rat poison RATTOFF® (zinc phosphide bait sachets) to control rats in lodged sugarcane crops.

SRA Executive Manager for Biosecurity and Production, Dr Andrew Ward, said that the permit had previously only covered the Mackay and Herbert Regions, but now extended across Queensland.

“SRA and CANEGROWERS have worked together over the last few months to develop this minor use permit for the industry, gaining an extension across Queensland to the existing permit held by CANEGROWERS,” Dr Ward said. “In essence, the permit will allow the application of baits by helicopters or drones in lodged cane only.”

Dr Ward said that lodged cane was almost impossible to access to apply baits, so the aerial application granted by the APVMA was vital.

“We thank the APVMA for their work on this issue for the industry, which will help the industry manage a significant productivity constraint across a widespread geographic area.”

The permit covers an area of 10,000 hectares.

Rats have caused major damage in parts of the Australian sugarcane industry in recent years, and their losses can range from 10-30 percent as a result of a combination of lost tonnes and reduced sugar content.

The permit builds on previous work by SRA and CANEGROWERS, where the organisations demonstrated the need for the permit for lodged crops. These organisations also demonstrated that there were minimal risks to the environment and that the baits would not poison other species. The APVMA will soon advise of the formal timeframe for the permit, and growers should contact their local productivity services organisation for more information.

### **Media Contact:**



#### **Brad Pfeffer | Executive Manager Communications**

Tel 07 3331 3340 | Mob 0419 175 815

Email [bpfeffer@sugarresearch.com.au](mailto:bpfeffer@sugarresearch.com.au) | Web [sugarresearch.com.au](http://sugarresearch.com.au) | ABN 16 163 670 068

PO Box 86 | 50 Meiers Road | Indooroopilly Q 4068 Australia