



## **Sugarcane research and investment being driven further through Rural R&D for Profit**

The Australian sugarcane industry will benefit from the investment in three new research projects that have just been announced through Round 4 of the Rural R&D for Profit program.

The Rural R&D for Profit program is funded by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture and works across the agricultural sector to improve productivity and profitability. It sees industry Research and Development Corporations (RDCs) partner with a range of other research agencies and businesses.

SRA CEO Mr Neil Fisher said the Australian sugarcane industry would benefit specifically from investment in these three new projects:

- *Biorefineries for Profit – Phase 2.*
- *Smarter Irrigation for Profit – Phase 2.*
- *Boosting diagnostic capacity for plant production industries.*

“SRA is the lead RDC on the *Biorefineries for Profit – Phase 2* project, and a major participant in these two other projects,” Mr Fisher said. “All three projects are looking at critical research areas for the Australian sugarcane industry and align with the needs of our investors through our five-year Strategic Plan. Our participation in these projects allows SRA to leverage our grower and miller investment into SRA, driving their dollar further.”

*Biorefineries for Profit – Phase 2* is being delivered by Queensland University of Technology (QUT) as the main research agency. It is investigating the critical issue of turning agricultural by-products from sugarcane and cotton into higher-value products such as highly digestible animal feeds, feed

supplements, and high value industrial chemicals. This project presents the opportunity to capture greater value from sugarcane.

*Boosting diagnostic capacity for plant production industries* will enhance Australia's plant biosecurity system. Through this project, improved national diagnostics for key biosecurity threats will be achieved through capacity building for industry for early detection of pests and improved sensitivity of diagnostic 'blitzes' to test industry and government responses to key threats. The overarching aim is to create maximum value to industry through better partnerships in diagnostic decision-making for biosecurity response efforts.

*Smarter Irrigation for Profit – Phase 2* builds on the first phase of this project and will focus on several sugar industry-specific initiatives, including work looking at improved irrigation system selection and operation for increased productivity and profitability; and precision automated furrow irrigation.

Mr Fisher said these projects were in addition to seven new research projects that SRA had announced last month.

SRA's investment is funded by the statutory levy of 70 cents per tonne of cane, to which growers and millers each contribute 35c per tonne of cane each. This investment in research is supported by a co-contribution of about \$6.6M from the Federal Government and \$2.85 million from the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF).

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