

MEMBERS CIRCULAR

RE: RATOON STUNTING DISEASE (RSD) POSITIVE SAMPLE IN ONE VARIETY IN THE P&K PLOT

Burdekin Productivity Services has this morning advised PCGO and KCGO that after intensive resampling RSD has been detected in a single variety in the P&K Plot. This variety has been quarantined and BPS will now undertake an intensive resampling of all blocks and retesting the single variety to confirm the results. The turn around period for the results will be approximately two weeks, however Sugar Research Australia have indicated that they will prioritise the testing of these samples. Due to all blocks being too wet to cut and as a result of the single variety positive test, supply from the plot will be suspended until the results of the further testing are known.

Further information will be provided by BPS shortly. We will circulate the information as soon as it comes to hand.

Again, we emphasise the importance of our respective members contacting their planting and harvesting contractors to ensure that those contractors are undertaking the procedure recommended by Sugar Research Australia for clean down before moving between farms.

We note that the recommended procedure for disinfecting implements is as follows:

Thoroughly clean all implements removing all dirt and cane residues. A high-pressure cleaner is recommended. Implements include:

- 1. Harvesters-include topper, throat, basecutter, feed rollers, chopper box, boot elevator and primary and secondary extractors.*
- 2. Planters-include planter trailer, feed chute, blades and rubbers, and exit chute. If recirculating fungicide spray or dip is used, ensure that tank and spray-lines are completely emptied and flushed with disinfectant.*
- 3. Plant cutters-include toppers, base-cutter and gathering chains.*
- 4. Stripping machines-include guards on inter-row tractor and fan, and fan blades.*
- 5. Cultivation equipment-include tines, coulters, discs and tool bars. Special attention should be paid to disinfecting stool-splitting fertiliser boxes.*
- 6. Other equipment-include cane knives, slicing knives, brix dribblers, chain saws used to trim stalks, truck used to transport cane.*

Spray or dip equipment using Steri-max at a 1 in 100 dilution, allowing a 5 minute treatment time. Renew disinfectant solution daily or whenever it becomes dirty.

Alternatively, implements can be disinfected with 70% methylated spirits and if this method is utilised, the implements can be utilised after 1 minute treatment time. Methylated spirits is flammable, and care should be taken to using it near ignition sources.

In the meantime, we confirm that in addition to assisting with the management of RSD, the planting of approved seed cane is a key component of general disease management in cane.

As advised above further information in relation to the infection in the P&K Plot will be circulated shortly.

Lisa Parker
MANAGER AND COMPANY SECRETARY
Pioneer Cane Growers Organisation Pty Ltd

David Paine
MANAGER AND COMPANY SECRETARY
Kalamia Cane Growers Organisation Pty Ltd