



Sugar Research  
Australia

# eNewsletter

In this eNewsletter, we bring you the results of the sugarcane farm business survey, and share some new data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Read up on the new Drought Assistance Program for Queensland that was recently launched, how electromagnetic mapping can help you to improve your soil health, and find out about a new organic waste grant program. And if you have greyback beetles, we would like to hear from you.

## Farmers report improved financial performance

Sugarcane farming businesses are performing better financially than they were seven years ago, according to new insights from the ABARES sugarcane farm business survey.

Average farm cash income for 2021 was around \$190,800 per farm, 91% higher than 2014.

The survey, commissioned by Sugar Research Australia and the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, examined the financial performance and management practices of Australia's sugarcane farming businesses.

Further information on the findings, including the full report and an interactive digital dashboard, is available on the SRA website [information and insights page](#).

**SIX  
EASY  
STEPS<sup>®</sup>**

## Many growers already compliant with nutrient management requirements

[Reef protection regulations](#) are continuing to roll out in more regions with new requirements for **sugarcane nutrient management** in the **Wet Tropics, Burdekin and Mackay Whitsunday regions** from **1 December 2021**.

Growers who are Smartcane Best Management Practice (**BMP**) accredited are deemed to be compliant with the regulated standards and will be the lowest priority for compliance inspections. They will also not need to update, review or have their nutrient management approach verified.

Growers who are not BMP accredited will need to develop a farm nitrogen and phosphorus budget to calculate the amount of fertiliser they can apply in the 2022 season.

The requirements still use soil testing and the regulated method (including parts of the SIX EASY STEPS®) to work out nitrogen and phosphorus rates for each block. However, growers can now refine these rates across their farm as long as they do not exceed the whole-of-farm amount.

For more information, including a video outlining the process to develop a budget, registering for an online information session and ordering an information pack:

**Visit:** [www.qld.gov.au/ReefRegulations](http://www.qld.gov.au/ReefRegulations)

**Phone:** 13 QGOV (13 74 68)

**Email:** [officeofthegbr@des.qld.gov.au](mailto:officeofthegbr@des.qld.gov.au)

## New Queensland drought assistance

Eligible primary producers across all agricultural industries can apply for the new drought preparedness assistance, without needing a drought declaration.

More information, including an explanation and templates for developing a Farm Business Resilience Plan, is available on the Drought Assistance Program website.

The Farm Business Resilience Program and the Farm Management Grants are jointly funded through the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund and the Queensland Government.

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## Electromagnetic mapping to improve soil health

In the last newsletter there was information on electrical conductivity (EC) mapping. This time, we are bringing you information on electromagnetic mapping (EM).



Electromagnetic mapping can help you identify opportunities to improve soil health.

An information sheet about EM has recently been developed and is available on the SRA website as part of the Soil Health Toolkit. (The information sheet was produced by the Central soil health project but the information is relevant across all regions.)

Contact your local trusted advisor for more information or to discuss opportunities to undertake EM on your farm.

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## Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) trials new methods to provide sugarcane statistics

The ABS has released new statistics on sugarcane production, area of harvest and business counts, using a combination of the Levy Payer Register and satellite mapping data.

The new methods produce accurate and timely statistics on a regional level that is usually only available from an agricultural census.

More information, examples of the data available, and downloads of the data are available on the ABS website.

[READ MORE](#)



## SRA contributes to innovation platform

From its launch early this year, SRA has been a partner in growAG, a collaboration between the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment and the 15 rural regional development corporations (RDCs).

The purpose of growAG is to act as a platform to showcase Australia's world leading agricultural research, unique technologies and commercialisation opportunities.

Visit the [growAG website](#) to find out more.

growAG recently conducted an interview with SRA's CEO, Ros Baker, and the article has been published. Read it [here](#).

SRA will continue to engage with growAG to build a presence on the platform and ensure that SRA is able to leverage the opportunities it brings to support the sugarcane industry.

## La Nina declared – update from the Bureau of Meteorology

The Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) recently declared that La Nina is underway. For more information, the BOM website has a range of resources.

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## Soybean preseason workshops in Mackay and the Burdekin

Grains Research & Development Corporation in conjunction with the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries is holding soybean preseason workshops on Monday 13 December (Mackay) and Tuesday 14 December (Burdekin).

More information and RSVP details are available.

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## Grant program for diverting organic waste from landfill

The Queensland Government is partnering with the Australian Government to deliver the Queensland Food Waste for Healthy Soils Program.

The program is open to private industry for projects that divert organic material from landfill and produce outputs that can be safely used on soils.

Round 2 applications close 25 February.

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## We need your help collecting greyback beetles

SRA entomologists need to rear live greyback beetles to obtain healthy canegrub larvae for bioassays to assist with our ongoing work to find alternatives to imidacloprid.

We are looking for beetles on feeding trees. Feeding trees should be easy to spot. They're usually mango or fig trees with stripped leaves due to very hungry beetles coming to feed in large numbers!

Contact SRA's entomologist or your local district manager for details if you have noticed beetles feeding on your property:

Central, Dylan Wedel: 0490 029 387

Burdekin, Terry Granshaw: 0457 650 181

Herbert, Phil Patane: 0431 818 482

Far North, Gavin Rodman: 0476 807 355

Entomologist, Pauline Lenancker: 0436 914 152

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