



Sugar Research
Australia

eNewsletter

Half way through February and the calendar is filling with interesting events for members. Be sure to check the events list for your location, and register today.



Team responsive to grower issues

An SRA entomologist has helped a cane grower south of Sarina identify a pest in his crop, without the need for expensive follow up action. The grower noticed the tender young leaves of his plant cane were being eaten and armyworm was found in several paddocks.

Due to recent publicity, the grower was concerned that the pest could be Fall armyworm (FAW). SRA district staff collected samples and took photos of the leaf damage to send to SRA entomologist, Dr Pauline Lenancker (pictured) in Meringa for identification.

“Fortunately, the armyworm turned out to be a common armyworm species, not FAW, and no spraying was necessary,” said Dr Lenancker. “There are many species of armyworm in the sugar industry and they often look very much alike. However, not all of them are a threat to yields. If you suspect fall armyworm and would like a conclusive identification please contact SRA. We welcome the opportunity to help you.”

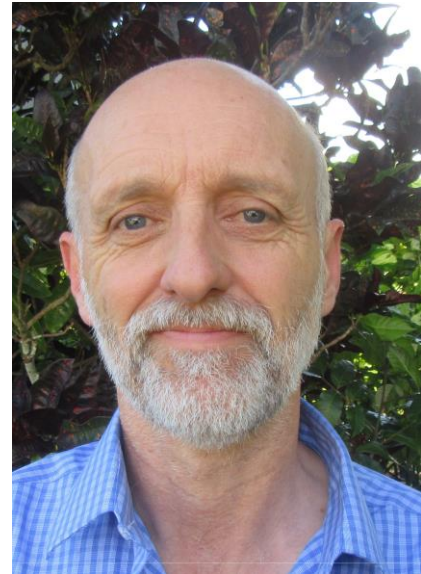
Soil test data sought

A new Australian Government program will offer payment to farmers and other land managers for sharing their historical soil test data. The \$21 million program will fund land managers to contribute to a publicly available database. A tender has been opened seeking service providers to perform the role of data brokers.

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YCS confirmed for some, not all, yellowing crops

After several reports of sugarcane exhibiting potential yellow canopy syndrome (YCS) symptoms in the Herbert, SRA experts, in collaboration with Herbert Cane Productivity Services Limited, examined several blocks in the region. Following thorough assessment by SRA Entomology Leader, Dr Kevin Powell (pictured), some fields were confirmed to exhibit YCS characteristics, particularly in the Macknade area.



“Although there are some pockets of yellowing in the district, YCS is by no means widespread and not all the yellowing observed is characteristic of classic YCS symptoms,” said Dr Powell. “Some may be remnants of old YCS symptoms, which the cane appears to be growing out of, and some is due to leaf deterioration caused by a variety of factors.”



Monitoring plan enacted

Four monitoring sites on paddocks showing typical YCS symptoms have been established in the Herbert to collect relevant data.

This includes setting up sticky traps and collecting leaf samples every fortnight until the end of April at sites in the Orient, Burnside, Macknade, and Blackrock areas.

“This data will be collected and sent to Meringa for further analysis,” said SRA District Manager Herbert Phil Patane.

“The data will be incorporated with other datasets which are being collected from the Burdekin, north Queensland and central regions. YCS remains a productivity constraint and SRA’s targeted sampling strategy in all districts will assist in better understanding the cause.”

Updates will occur in the district prior to the start of the 2022 crush. For more information [contact Herbert District Manager Phil Patane.](#)

Department recognises BMP accredited growers

The Queensland Department of Environment and Science (DES) has recognised growers committed to improved sugarcane farming practices. Growers accredited under the Smartcane Best Management Practice (BMP) program do not need to pay for an external ‘appropriate

person' to develop or verify their farm nitrogen and phosphorus budgets before applying fertiliser.

Since December, growers in the Wet Tropics, Burdekin and Mackay Whitsunday areas have been required to develop an N and P budget under the Reef regulations. Those who are accredited under Smartcane BMP already have the relevant qualifications, training, skills and experience to develop their own N and P budgets.

They will also be the lowest priority for compliance inspections under the regulations.

To begin your journey to Smartcane BMP accreditation visit: www.smartcane.com.au



Farm management tender open

Maintaining the highest levels of cleanliness and hygiene are key criteria in a farm management contract on offer for an 85 hectare cane farm in the Burdekin. P&K Farming hosts a 45 ha seed cane distribution plot and a four ha seed cane mother plot on the property, on behalf of SRA and Burdekin Productivity Services at Ayr.

Approved sugar cane varieties bred by Wilmar Sugar and SRA are treated, propagated and distributed from the plot to Burdekin growers as clean seed cane.

Cleanliness and hygiene are essential, in line with the high standard established by SRA's technical guidelines: *Procedures for the Establishment and Operation of Approved-Seed Plots*.

The contract also requires a high standard of performance of normal farming operations in consultation with P&K Farming.

The Boards of the Pioneer Cane Growers Organisation and the Kalamia Cane Growers Organisation have called for tenders, which close at 5 pm, Monday 28 February. For more information and to obtain the tender documents [email Lisa Parker](mailto:Lisa.Parker@pcgo.com.au), Manager, PCGO.

Upcoming Events

Tully - Nutrient Rate Control Technology grower shed meeting

24 February

Woodford - Identifying sugarcane diseases workshops

1-2 March: experienced advisors and industry

3-4 March: industry newcomers

Burdekin - Farm Economic Analysis Tool (FEAT Online) workshops

10 March and 11 March

Mackay - SIX EASY STEPS® Nutrient Management workshop

15 March

[See all event details](#)

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Telephone: 07 3331 3333 | Email: sra@sugarresearch.com.au

Our address is 50 Meiers Road, Indooroopilly, QLD 4068, Australia

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