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Sugar Research  
Australia

# eNewsletter

With temperatures plummeting, Central Queensland was the place to be this fortnight with warm welcomes from SRA staff at grower events and workshops held in Proserpine and Mackay. There's also plenty happening across other districts.



## Good crowd at MAPS/SRA Field Day in Mackay

The Victoria Plains Clean Seed Plot near Mackay was the centre of attention for about 150 growers and industry personnel on 2 June for the MAPS SRA annual Field Day.

Highlights included a talk on the variety trials by SRA's Dr George Piperidis, Variety Development Manager Central (pictured above talking to growers in front of the trial cane), together with the release of this year's Central region variety guide.

[Highlights and more photos from a great day](#)



## Training the trainers in the Central region

In a Central region initiative, SRA Weed Scientist Emilie Fillols held a weed management workshop for representatives of all Central region Productivity Boards in Mackay.

The aim was to “train the trainers” in order to further assist sugarcane growers through a greater understanding of and knowledge in identifying weeds, the diverse options for controlling weeds and how to put together prescriptions for a range of scenarios on farm. Feedback was positive and it is hoped more workshops can be arranged.

*"The workshop showed the complexity of decision-making in the face of a range of weed management options."*

Damian Baxter, Manager, Plane Creek Productivity Services Limited (PCPSL)



## **Yield impact of harvesting practices draws Bundaberg and Maryborough crowd**

SRA's Agricultural Machinery Specialist, Phil Patane, continued to draw interest from growers, harvesting contractors and milling personnel with workshops in Bundaberg and Maryborough reviewing the impact of harvesting practice on cane and sugar yield.

Participants agreed the workshops were a worthwhile investment of their time where they gained useful knowledge and which they would recommend to other sugar industry personnel. Among topics, Phil discussed correct machine set-up, changes to harvesting parameters and new technologies to assist in achieving optimum harvesting practice.

## **Remembering Mario Raccanello**

The SRA family were saddened to hear of the recent loss of a friend and valued collaborator.

Mario Raccanello was a strong supporter of industry research and early adopter of innovative and efficient farming practices that resulted in profitable and sustainable sugarcane production in the Tully mill area. For many years Mario supported SRA activities relating to nutrient management, soil health and harvesting projects. Mario was generous with his time, provision of equipment and willingness to host research trial sites. He will be missed by many. Our condolences to Mario's family, friends and colleagues.





## Burdekin show entries closing soon

Burdekin sugarcane growers are running out of time to enter the sugarcane sections at the upcoming Burdekin show, with entries closing at 4pm on Friday 17 June.

Sponsored by Wilmar, entries are open in 17 classes including longest stick, heaviest stick, CCS and best three sticks across Q240, KQ228, Q208 and 'any other variety'. There's also a section for best collection of sticks.

Champions for each section and champion exhibitor of show awards will also be presented at the event on 22 June, as well as the Brian K Strathdee Memorial Award. Brian was the Burdekin Show President for many years and a great supporter of the sugarcane section.

Find out more about the sections, prize money and judging requirements in the [show schedule](#).



## NSW crushing season begins

Despite a dispiriting season weather-wise, NSW's three mills will begin their crushing season this month with the Harwood and Condong (*above*) mills spinning up on 15 and 20 June respectively and the Broadwater mill beginning operation in early August.



## Supporting young growers

SRA Central region continues to support young farmers and encourage their networking to increase their knowledge of new farming practices and technology.

The latest event saw 50 growers and sugar industry personnel get together in Proserpine for an informative Precision Agriculture Workshop, organised by the Proserpine Young Farmers in conjunction with SRA and SSP. Thanks to the hard work of organisers, *(above, left to right)* Bessie Orr (Proserpine Young Growers), Molly O'Dea (PhD student) and Stephanie Duncan (SRA), participants were able to hear from a wide range of speakers.

Presenters included SRA Weed Scientist Emilie Fillols who discussed the research collaboration between James Cook University, AutoWeed and SRA which has seen a robotic spot spraying tool identify and treat nutgrass in three trials. (The project was funded by the Australian Government's Reef Trust and the Great Barrier Reef Foundation.)



## Search on for two new SRA Board Members

Sugar Research Australia is seeking to appoint two Non-Executive Directors to join its board. The board is required to have a balance of skills across a number of key selection criteria.

See the full expression of interest advertisement for more information about the required skills and experience (button below). Expressions of interest close at 5pm on Friday 24 June 2022.

[EOI Board Positions SRA](#)



### Applications for Nuffield Scholarship closing soon

Nuffield Australia is once again sending farmers and fishers overseas to bring innovative ideas home through a Nuffield Scholarship. Each scholarship is valued at \$30,000 and Nuffield Australia will award up to 20 scholarships this year.

The bursaries are open to farmers, fishers and those in associated industries aged between 28-45. They enable scholars to spend 14 weeks of travel over two years to study a topic important to their industry.

*(Above): 2022 Nuffield Scholar and Australian agricultural consultant Munro Hardy was in London earlier this year as part of Nuffield's Contemporary Scholars Conference.*

[Applications close on 17 June 2022. Apply now.](#)



*Left: Chris Tom, SRA Variety Officer Central (second from the right) will be part of the judging team for the sugarcane competition at the Mackay Show again this year. (File photo from 2019 Show.)*

## Visit SRA at the Shows!

Please come and chat with SRA Central staff who will be out and about at the Shows - Pioneer Valley Show, this Sunday 12 June; Mackay Show, Tuesday 14 June - Thursday 16 June; and Proserpine Show, Friday 17 June - Saturday 18 June. It's your chance to:

- Pick up the latest SRA Central Variety Guide.
- Hear project updates on YCS, alternative cane grub control, crop ripeners and control of balsam pear and navua sedge.
- See pachymetra root rot up close.
- Inspect the maturity testing (juice) trailer and SRA plant breeding seedlings.
- Chat with Dylan Wedel or Stephanie Duncan about your farming concerns.

Please come and say hello!



## Coastal Sugar/Soybean Farming Systems in focus

Join leading NSW soybean/sugarcane farmers and the NSW DPI Technical Team to discuss coastal soybean/sugarcane farming systems - next Tuesday 14 June from 2:30 pm at Willy Lucas' shed, Osbourne.

**RSVP TO DAF**



## SRA Upcoming Events

See SRA at upcoming regional shows and events:

[Pioneer Valley Show 12 June](#)

[Mackay Show 14-16 June](#)

[Proserpine Show 17-18 June](#)

[Ingham Show 23-24 June](#)

[Six Easy Steps Nutrient Management Workshop - Tully](#)

Tuesday 14 June, Tully Sugar Mill Rec Room, Writ Lane, Tully

*This is a Mobilising the Murray Project event and is funded by The Australian Government's Reef Trust*

[RSD on the agenda at Rocky Point Productivity Workshop](#)

Tuesday 14 June, 8.00 am - 12.00 noon, Woongoolba Hall, 1226 Stapylton Jacobs Well Road, Woongoolba

[See details of all SRA events](#)

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