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Sugar Research
Australia

eNewsletter

Friday 20 July 2023

In this eNewsletter, we bring you news from our final field day for the year and information on our events designed to enhance productivity and drive profitability.



Bundaberg field day - what you came to hear and tell us!

An atmosphere of focused interest and discussion pervaded the presentations at the Bundaberg Field Day yesterday (20 July) when more than 50 growers and stakeholders heard and debated the latest research breakthroughs from our scientists.

Head of Research Investments Jane Trindall was welcomed at her first visit to Bundaberg Station bringing news of SRA projects targeting disease and pest control using new technologies and thought leadership, and the continuation of the development of online mill training modules.

Feedback was positive for Dr Shamsul Bhuiyan's work on smut; Dr Seona Casonato and Dr Rob Magarey's discussion of follow-on work from the results of Ratoon Stunting Disease (RSD) surveys in South Johnstone, and Terry Granshaw's summary of the key learnings for growers from the Burdekin Irrigation Project.

Dr Kevin Powell's work on finding an alternative for imidacloprid for canegrubs, funded by Queensland's Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, was of great interest to the Bundaberg crowd as it was in Tully earlier this week.

Our thanks, too, to DAF Coastal Farming Systems Team Leader, Neil Halpin who gave the findings of recent soybean, peanut and sugarcane trials.

[Current Research Projects](#)

A message from the SRA Chair

Earlier this month Roslyn Baker resigned from Sugar Research Australia (SRA). The Board would like to thank Roslyn for her services and her contribution to the industry and wish her well in her future endeavours.

Shaun Coffey has stood down as a Director of the SRA Board and been appointed as the Interim Chief Executive Officer. Shaun will remain focussed on engaging with industry to keep the Australian sugarcane industry productive, profitable, and sustainable.

The Board will now progress with recruiting a permanent replacement for the CEO position to continue the implementation of our Strategic Plan.

Rowena McNally, Chairperson

[OUR TEAM on SRA's website](#)

Advance pre-emergent workshops for Wardell and Tully with Emilie Fillols

In these customised practical workshops for NSW and FNQ cane growers, SRA's Weed Scientist Emilie Fillols will use relatable farming scenarios and share how to take control of weeds before they take control of your farm.



[Wardell - 9 August DETAILS](#)

[Tully - 11 August DETAILS](#)



A series of soil workshops to increase understanding and build capacity on farm

SRA Principal Agronomist, Dr Danielle Skocaj (pictured presenting to growers in Meringa) lives and breathes soil and is driven to share her knowledge with cane growers, farm managers and advisors to deliver improved productivity on farm.

Danielle recently hosted workshops in Meringa and Babinda to translate extensively published industry research and share personal experience, on how mill-by products may be used more effectively.

"Mill mud is high in organic carbon with large quantities of most essential nutrients required for sugarcane growth. Mill ash is also high in organic carbon with large quantities of potassium and silicon, and a useful ameliorant of sodic soils," Danielle told the group.

"By applying either mill mud or mill ash, or a mud/ash mix, you can improve sugarcane yields, soil physical properties, manage soil acidity, sodicity and nutrient deficiency; reduce fertiliser inputs and also the need for different fertiliser blends. I hope to support growers understand when and where to apply these products for the best benefit," she said.

Danielle delivered the mill by-products workshop as part of a series of workshops planned under the project *Soil specific management for sugarcane production in the Wet Tropics*. The project is supported by SRA and the University of Southern Queensland, through funding from the Australian Government's Landcare Program.

[Read more about the project and download the mill by-products presentation](#)



Healthy Rivers to Reef Report Card

SRA District Manager Central Dylan Wedel (back row, centre) represented SRA at the launch of the 2022 Report Card for the Mackay-Whitsunday-Issac region. SRA is a partner of Healthy Rivers to Reef. This Report Card assesses the condition of waterways in the Mackay-Whitsunday-Issac (MWI) region based on data collected between July 2021 and June 2022.

[Read the Report Card](#)



The latest Sugarcane Rainfall Outlook briefing from the Bureau of Meteorology is now available for your region: **Issued 20 July 2023**

1. Far North & North: a. [Video click here](#) b. [PDF click here](#) c. [Audio file only](#)
2. Burdekin: a. [Video click here](#) b. [PDF click here](#) c. [Audio file only](#)
3. Central: a. [Video click here](#) b. [PDF click here](#) c. [Audio file only](#)
4. South (QLD): a. [Video click here](#) b. [PDF click here](#) c. [Audio file only](#)
5. South (GC & NSW): a. [Video click here](#) b. [PDF click here](#) c. [Audio file only](#)

Agri-Climate Outlooks: Prepared by the Australian Bureau of Meteorology on behalf of Agricultural Innovation Australia (AIA). SRA is an investor in this project via a collaboration of 10 Rural Research and Development Corporations.

Contact: agriculture@bom.gov.au



Work has begun on the new Queensland Biosecurity Strategy

A working draft of the next Queensland Biosecurity Partnership strategy is underway. SRA's Dr Stephen Mudge has joined the multi-sector writing group now hard at work developing the strategy. Alongside members of the Biosecurity Queensland Ministerial Advisory Committee, the working group includes representatives of:

- Local Government Association of Queensland
- Ausvet
- Ausveg
- Animal Health Australia
- Sugar Research Australia
- Darling Downs Moreton Rabbit Board
- Organics Australia

The group is currently developing a schema for the strategy to ensure the scope of the work is clear. Substantive elements of the strategy will be developed through a logic mapping exercise planned for late August. A facilitator will be engaged to ensure outcomes are future-focussed and strategic, rather than maintaining a business-as-usual approach. We anticipate that partners will be invited to comment on a draft strategy later this year.

This year's Partners Forum [summary report](#) is now available for download on the Partners Network.



National Farm Safety Week, 16-23 July 2023

Agriculture continues to be one of the most dangerous industries to work in. In 2022, 55

farmers lost their lives on farm. We're asking you to stay safe this crushing season, and every day.

[FarmSafe Australia Resources](#)

We are recruiting in Mackay, the Burdekin and Broadwater

Visit our website to read more about roles in the lab and the field that we're currently looking to fill.

[Current vacancies here](#)



Events

[Advanced Pre-Emergent Herbicide Workshop Wardell, NSW](#) - Wednesday 9 August, 8.30am - 12.30pm

[Advanced Pre-Emergent Herbicide Workshop Tully, FNQ](#) - Friday 11 August, 1.00pm - 5.00pm

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