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**Friday 18 August**

**Dear Annmaree**

In National Science Week our scientists have been talking to younger audiences about all things science in the sugarcane industry.



## Getting up close and personal with canegrubs at the Ekka

SRA Entomologist Kevin Powell was a hit with the public at the Brisbane Ekka, displaying live sugarcane grubs and discussing the work being done to control them.

Children were able to place the grubs on their palms and those who were brave enough to do this (without getting nipped!) received a free tattoo of a canegrub, cane beetle or soldier fly.

Also popular were the Virtual Reality (VR) headsets which enabled the children to see how sugarcane is grown and harvested and the juice processed into sugar.

The sugar industry stand was staffed by volunteers from CANEGROWERS, Sunshine Sugar and SRA.





## Thanks to our scientists

In National Science Week SRA acknowledges the work of our scientists and their contribution to the solutions to sugarcane industry challenges and the development of new tools to benefit growers and millers.

Held each year in August since 1997, National Science Week is a program from Inspiring Australia, a national strategy for getting Australians engaged with the sciences, which is an initiative of the federal Department of Industry Science and Resources.

The festival is supported by the Australian Government; partners CSIRO, the Australian Science Teachers Association and ABC Science. It runs until this Sunday.



## Mixing it up with the next generation for National Science Week

As part of National Science Week staff from SRA Tully and Meringa stations were excited to join local industry partners CANEGROWERS Tully, Terrain NRM and Tully Sugar Limited at St John's school, Silkwood and at St Clare's school, Tully for two full days of immersive science activities, including a virtual reality tour of the sugarcane industry and current 'hands on' canegrub research. Thank you also to Cassowary Coast Regional Council. This National Science Week SRA is supporting the next generation in the sugarcane industry. (Above): Agronomist Nancy Rincon from SRA Tully talks science to the children from St John's school.



## Growers can refine their fertiliser nitrogen rates with EEF

Growers may be interested in an SRA case study which presents findings from an Aloomba trial site in the Wet Tropics where a grower explored applying Enhanced

Efficiency Fertiliser (EEF) at low nitrogen rates to the cane variety Q253A. The Alooomba trial site was one of 74 trials undertaken in the EEF60 project, which evaluated the production and profitability implications for commercial farms applying EEFs in place of conventional urea fertiliser. EEFs are reported to reduce nitrogen (N) losses by temporarily stabilising N in the ammonium form and better matching N supply to crop demand. In this project EEF's were generally tested at N rates 20 per cent below the SIX EASY STEPS® guidelines.

[Read the full case study](#)

[Read more about the EEF project](#)



### **Demo shows growers low-cost irrigation scheduling**

An irrigation scheduling demonstration on local grower, Ian Harris' farm at Gargett attracted interested farmers who wanted to investigate ways to increase their productivity and profitability through better use of water on their crops.

SRA District Manager Central Dylan Wedel and District Delivery Officer Stephanie Duncan have compiled and successfully tested a suite of low-cost tools for different irrigation challenges, with tools all easily sourced.

The project is a part of the 2023 Central District Productivity Plan. More demonstrations are planned.

[Read the Central District Productivity Plan](#)



## Good turnout for advanced weed management workshops

There was a good turnout of 19 growers and advisors for the Tully Advanced Weed Management Workshop with Weed Scientist Emilie Fillols last week.

Despite the fact that Tully growers are busy with their planting and harvesting operations after delays caused by rain, and it was temptingly good weather on the day, there were few cancellations.

The Tully workshop followed the Wardell NSW workshop where about 30 growers and advisors were present.



## **Learn how to get the best out of soybean headers**

Mackay growers who harvest their own fallow crops will find value in attending a free full-day workshop on Dean Pastega's farm at Marian, 10.30am-4.30pm, Thursday 31 August.

The event is about how to get the best out of headers, including soybean headers. Topics will range from minimising weed seed to measuring and reducing harvest losses.

Growers will hear from industry experts and local growers on the integration of harvest weed seed control (HWSC) options, harvester fire prevention and accurate measurement/management of harvest losses.

The workshop has been organised by GRDC, Primary Sales Australia and FarmLink. On registering, further information will be provided by email.

[Register today](#)





8:00am — 1:30pm, Friday 15 September, 2023

**RSVP by 8 September by contacting NQ Dry Tropics Project Officer Michael Hobbs on 0436 282 405.**

[Soil health workshop in the Burdekin](#)

## Soil health workshop

A free half-day event in September for growers in Ayr with Agroecologist and Rural Extension Specialist at Soil Land Food, David Hardwick (*left*) will explore how to manage nutrients.

The workshop includes:

- understanding nutrients and how to manage them
- nutrient cycling capacity of soil
- assessing soil biology and how to improve soil health on the farm, and
- why biology matters.

## AgTech Hub launched for Central district growers

The Greater Whitsunday Agtech Hub is a collaboration between key regional stakeholders to grow the value of agriculture in the region using agtech.

An online portal has now been launched to bridge the geographical divide and create connections between producers and agribusiness across the region.

The aim is to support producers and business to better understand agtech



AgTech Hub  
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solutions and connect them with service providers and investors.

The portal encourages and supports adoption of agtech and improved practices that will deliver real benefit to producers and supply chain partners.

The AgTech Hub is hosted by Greater Whitsunday Alliance (GW3).

[Check out the AgTech Hub](#)

## Events

[Optimising Soil Health Workshop](#) - Friday, 15 September, 8.00am - 1.30pm

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