



11 January 2024

SRA demonstrates Robotic Farm Vehicle at Brandon

Where: SRA Burdekin, 30962 Bruce Highway, Brandon Qld 4808

When: 8am-11am, Wednesday 17 January

Who: Sugarcane growers and anyone interested in innovative autonomous farm machinery

Wear: The demonstration will take place in a cane paddock. Please wear enclosed shoes and hat

Media are invited to attend the event.

Sugar Research Australia Burdekin will give local canegrowers an insight into future farming during a field demonstration of an autonomous farming vehicle at Brandon on Wednesday, 17 January.

Growers, and anyone interested in innovative farming technology, have been invited to attend the demonstration of the multipurpose Robotti machine from 8am-11am.

Designed and manufactured in Denmark, the Robotti has been imported by Bundaberg company, Farm Concepts. It is designed for precision operations such as seeding, weeding and spraying and can operate 24 hours a day without a driver, solely guided by GPS and cameras.

SRA District Manager Burdekin Terry Granshaw said the machine was the most practical autonomous vehicle he had seen thus far, and it challenged a number of ideas growers might have about what these types of machines can offer.

“I saw the Robboti in action last year at a demonstration day in Bowen, where we saw how it works in a commercial environment. I also got to witness it at the AgTech Showcase last November,” Mr Granshaw said.

“After seeing what it can do, I arranged for the machine to come north to give local growers the opportunity to see it in action.”

Farm Concepts Director Braden Hellmuth will demonstrate the vehicle and show the capabilities of both its hardware and software.

“Farmers will be interested in its overall design. It uses a standard type 2 linkage, is powered by a small diesel engine and has similar hydraulic capabilities to a standard tractor of its size,” Terry said.

“It also has a hydraulic pump to utilise PTO driven implements, the same as a tractor,” he said.

“Farmers will see that they can service or fix some of the components on this machine themselves.

“The Robotti is light weight and turns in a tight circle, requiring very little space to turn around at the end of a row.

“It records and maps applications whilst performing the activity it is set up to do. So, record keeping becomes autonomous, similar to guidance systems in most tractors.”

Mr Granshaw said current thinking amongst most farmers to improve efficiencies is to use larger implements, bigger swaths. But, he said, the negative impact of this is weight, and how that impacts on soil compaction. The Robotti challenges this idea by being relatively small, with less weight so less soil compaction. The machine can run day or night, without stopping, apart from refuelling.

“Its efficiency in sugarcane operations will need to be tested, of course, but I’m excited about the role for machinery like this in the sugarcane industry where labour is becoming an increasing issue,” Mr Granshaw said.



The demonstration is part of activities included in the 2024 Burdekin District Plan and will be held in a paddock at the SRA Station at Brandon from 8am to 11am.

“The district plan is developed with input from multiple stakeholders within the district and has a focus on automation and technology in agriculture which will improve the productivity and profitability of our canegrowing communities.”

Following the Robotti display there will also be a demonstration of a dual tank spot sprayer that has evolved over the past two years. Light refreshments will be provided for morning tea.

To RSVP please phone Terry Granshaw by COB next Monday 15 January on 0457 650 181 or email tgranshaw@sugarresearch.com.au

ENDS

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