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A diverse range of events are coming up in February, March and April which should be of interest to all sectors of the sugar industry. Please mark your diaries!



Bus tour to view smart irrigation in the Burdekin

Reef Catchments and SRA Mackay are hosting a bus tour for Central district sugarcane growers interested in viewing new advances in irrigation practices and technology on farm in the Burdekin. Three on-farm smart irrigation demonstrations will be presented on Thursday 22 February.

Interested growers will be invited to join a peer-to-peer irrigation network following the bus trip. SRA Mackay and Reef Catchments will provide follow-up demonstrations of low-cost irrigation automation in the Mackay-Whitsunday region with workshop support to create an irrigation management plan to best apply the technology on-farm.

[Register today by email to SRA District Manager Central, Dylan Wedel](#)

[More information on Eventbrite](#)

Far North growers: learn more about your sugarcane

Sugarcane growers are invited to a practical workshop on **Friday 15 March** at El Arish and Murray Upper to better understand how leaf sampling can benefit your nutrient management program.

Come along for:

- leaf sample collection demonstrations
- a review of local leaf test results and
- an opportunity to interpret leaf tests results.

Venue 1: 8 am - 9.30 am, El Arish Hall and Museum, Chauvel Street, El Arish

Venue 2: 4 pm - 5 pm, Murray Rural Fire Brigade Shed, Upper Murray Road, Murray Upper.

If you have attended previous soil sampling or soil test interpretation workshops, please bring your green folder.



RSVP: Graduate Agronomist, Erin Headon
[E: ehendon@sugarresearch.com.au](mailto:ehendon@sugarresearch.com.au) M: 0447 109 376

The workshop is delivered by SRA through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program and the Cassowary Coast Reef Smart Farming project funded by the partnership between the Australian Government's Reef Trust and the Great Barrier Reef Foundation.

SRA seeks tenders to develop a sugarcane industry sustainability data framework

SRA is seeking to adopt a digital data framework to meet future and existing sustainability reporting requirements for the Australian sugarcane industry in 2024.

SRA has called for expressions of interest (EOIs) and tenders from suitably qualified and experienced organisations to develop a structured sustainability data framework, incorporating digital solutions for future industry benchmarking.

SRA's Interim CEO Shaun Coffey said the data framework sought would deliver a systematic and streamlined approach to collecting farming and sustainability data, meeting the industry's current and future sustainability reporting requirements.

The tender period opened on 25 January and closes next week. All EOIs and tenders should be sent to sraresearchinvestments@sugarresearch.com.au by 5pm on Friday 23 February.

[Request for tender](#)



WEBINAR

Let's discuss SAF for the Australian sugar industry

Professor Ian O'Hara and Madeline Smith



SAF Webinar: next Wednesday 21 February

New speaker on the program for the Australian Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) webinar next week is ASMC Director Economics Policy and Trade, David Rynne.

Don't miss this opportunity to hear from the leaders shaping the Australian SAF market:

- Ed Mason, Jet Zero
- Victoria Sherwood, Licella,
- Hywel Cook, SRA
- David Rynne, ASMC.

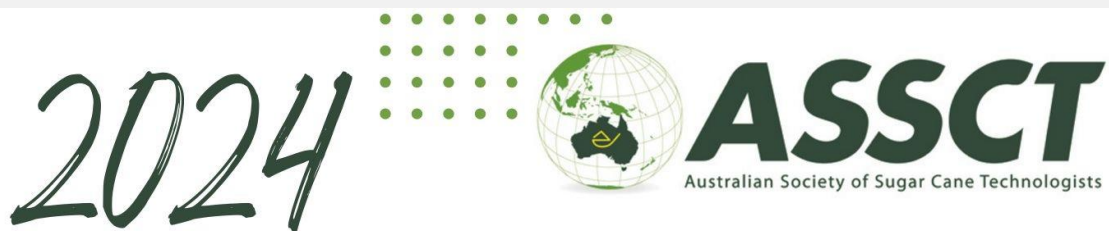
Here's your opportunity to discuss with them how the sugar industry can get involved and to build your SAF network for future opportunities.

Please join us for the first webinar in a series planned as part of a project aiming to build engagement for a diversified and adaptable Australian Sugarcane Industry.

Managed by Madi Smith, Innovation Coordinator for Sugar Research Australia (SRA) at QUT (*above*), each webinar will be jointly chaired by Madi and Professor Ian O'Hara, Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Engineering (*above*) and a leading expert in policies, technologies and systems for developing the bioeconomy. Ian represents the Queensland Government as the Biofutures Industry Envoy and acts as an ambassador for Queensland's Biofutures industry.

[Read about the speakers](#)

[Click here to register for the webinar by COB Tuesday 20 February](#)



45th Annual Conference

PROFITABILITY, SUSTAINABILITY, ADAPTABILITY

Townsville Entertainment & Convention
Centre

16-19 APRIL 2024

[Check out the 2024 ASSCT Conference events](#)



Disease identification course at Woodford: bookings close 15/2

Hurry! Only a few places are left for SRA's two-day course in sugarcane pathology on 27-28 February.

Designed to give you a thorough understanding of diseases of Australian sugarcane this practical and hands-on course is on site at SRA's Woodford pathology research station, where you will have the chance to see diseases in the field and learn from SRA's pathology team.

The course will also provide an opportunity to update you on the latest disease research, and will cover issues such as identification, diagnosis and management of important endemic and exotic diseases of sugarcane.

Guest speaker at this year's Sugarcane Disease Identification Course will be Christine Horlock, Principal Scientist (Plant Health) at the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (Qld).

To book: [Trybooking](#)

SRA staff bookings/more information: [Manager, Biosecurity and Disease Screening, Dr Shamsul Bhuiyan](#)

(Above): participants at the 2022 Sugarcane Disease Identification Course at Woodford.

[DOWNLOAD THE PROGRAM](#)



Bundaberg & Maryborough Farm visits - March 11 - 12

Next month, Bundaberg and Maryborough growers will have an opportunity to participate in SRA's new *Researcher in Residence* program, featuring Dr. Barry Salter, Senior Agronomist at SRA (*pictured*).

Dates: Monday 11 March and Tuesday 12 March 2024

Location: On your own farm

[Here's what to expect & how to book](#)



Regional sugar milling research seminars in March

SRA supports milling research on behalf of the entire milling sector of the sugar industry. Each year in partnership with QUT, SRA presents a series of regional sugar milling research seminars to present the highlights of research.

Milling companies and their staff are invited to join us in their mill area to hear first-hand from the researchers.

[Regional Sugar Milling Seminars: locations, dates and topics](#)

[Download the seminar topics](#)



Weather meetings planned

At a series of locations, including this year's Meringa Field Day on 30 April, the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) will present a packed schedule of talks for all weather watchers in the sugar industry. A dedicated meteorologist will be on hand to provide:

- an overview of recent weather and demonstration of weather and climate products produced by the Bureau
- how sugarcane growers and agronomists could use the Bureau's products to benefit their specific locations and seasonal timeframes
- a review of forecasts compared with actual results for the past 12 months of weather
- an explanation of climate drivers, anomalies and models
- a Q&A session.

Participants are encouraged to bring their laptops or tablets to try out some of the website links and processes during the meetings.

(Above): Photo of a storm on the way taken by Renae Ligasacchi in the Meringa area.

[RSVP for dates in Mackay, Ballina, Isis and Meringa](#)



Date claimer: Meringa Field Day

Mark the date on your calendar! SRA will host its popular annual Field Day at Meringa on 30 April. Sugarcane growers are invited to attend to see and hear the latest research findings and innovative technologies.

The event will give growers and other industry stakeholders the chance to meet with SRA researchers working across a broad scope of projects, designed to support growers' businesses and industry sustainability.

SRA District Manager, Far North, Gavin Rodman said the day would include site tours, an exhibition area and an exciting line-up of presentations. Research activities on show will include the latest varieties, weed management including balsam pear trials, nutrient management, and pest and disease control.

The 2024 Field Day will be held on 30 April at SRA's Meringa Station, 34 Hall Road, Gordonvale. Anyone interested in attending is asked to RSVP by Friday 20 April. For further information contact Gavin Rodman at grodman@sugarresearch.com.au



SRA recently held an Autonomous Vehicle Demonstration Day in the Burdekin. Hear from growers and industry experts on the advantages of using autonomous vehicles for growing sugarcane. [WATCH THE VIDEO](#)

Catch up on Professor Ben Hayes' genomics presentation

More than 80 participants heard University of Queensland researcher Professor Ben Hayes discuss the acceleration of the development of new sugarcane varieties with genomics at an SRA webinar held on 2 February.

The webinar was the first of a new series featuring SRA research project updates during the year.

For those who missed it but who would like to watch the video of the webinar please click below.

[SRA Webinar video link](#)



Graham Leonard (1935 - 2024)

Vale Dr Graham Leonard

SRA sends condolences to the family, colleagues and friends of Dr Graham Leonard who is remembered as being an outstanding researcher at the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations (BSES) and the Sugar Research Institute (SRI).

Read the tribute written about him by SRA Organic Chemist, Peimaneh Lee-Steere and Queensland Alliance for Agriculture and Food Innovations Director, Dr Michael O'Shea.*

*Michael started work at BSES in November 1997 as Graham's successor, leaving in March 2021.

[Read Graham's story](#)

Learn the no-spray window for 2,4-D products

Do you know about the no-spray window for 2,4-D?

Usage restrictions, commonly referred to as 'no-spray' windows, affect the use of several agricultural chemical products used in sugarcane production.

No-spray windows are often in place to prevent certain agricultural chemicals being applied during times of greater risk, such as adverse weather conditions or when waterways have low dilution capacity.

Details of no-spray windows can be found on product labels, usually under 'directions for use'.

Some of the agricultural products commonly used in sugarcane production that have no-spray windows include those containing:

- Diuron (e.g. Diurex 900)
- 2,4-D (e.g. amine 625, or 75D)

- Amicarbazone (e.g. Amitron)
- Imidacloprid (e.g. Confidor).

Always check your product label.

The timing of the no-spray window may change with application rates, application method, location, or product type.

Information provided by the Managing Pesticides in Great Barrier Reef catchment areas project. Contact: Jessica Turchet, Senior Project Officer (Reef), Biosecurity Queensland E: jessica.turchet@daf.qld.gov.au

Events

Sugarcane Disease Identification Workshops

- 27th February – 28th February 2024

SRA Woodford, 90 Old Cove Rd, Woodford Qld 4514

* **Bookings now open on [TryBooking](#)** *

Bioeconomy in focus webinars: [Let's discuss SAF for the Australian sugarcane industry](#) - 11am - 12pm, Wednesday 21 February 2024

Far North growers: learn more about your sugarcane through leaf sampling - Friday 15 March

Venue 1: 8 am - 9.30 am, El Arish Hall and Museum, Chauvel Street, El Arish

Venue 2: 4 pm - 5 pm, Murray Rural Fire Brigade Shed, Upper Murray Road

RSVP: Erin Headon E: eheadon@sugarresearch.com.au

[Australian Society of Sugar Cane Technologists \(ASSCT\) Conference](#) 15-19 April 2024, Townsville Entertainment Centre. Registrations for next year's ASSCT 2024 conference in Townsville are open.

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