



Standardised carbon footprint solution for sugarcane industry

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Knowing the level of carbon emissions from your sugarcane farming business is becoming more important in modern markets said Sugar Research Australia (SRA) Interim CEO Shaun Coffey.

“The last thing sugarcane growers want to hear is that they will be required to keep complicated and time-consuming records,” Mr Coffey said.

“The good news is that SRA has joined eight other Australian rural Research and Development Corporations (RDCs) to simplify carbon accounting through the development of a standardised carbon calculation engine.”

The AIA Environmental Accounting Platform (AIA EAP) is a definitive carbon calculation engine for Australian agriculture, fisheries and forestry. It enables the calculation of a carbon footprint at a commodity, enterprise and whole of business level. This means it is suitable for both sugarcane farms and mixed farming enterprises which run livestock or horticultural crops as part of their income stream.

It is supported by an expert Technical Advisory Panel, which ensures that calculation models align with the latest science and are consistent with the relevant Australian standards and protocols.

“The AIA EAP will enable growers to fully understand the carbon footprint of their business, which can aid their decision-making to reduce emissions and capture new business opportunities,” Mr Coffey said.

“The fact is that major parts of the sugar industry have already geared up to provide their carbon footprint as a routine business requirement. Australian sugar milling refineries, for example, have been asked for these records from by their customers, suppliers and financiers as part of these organisations’ commitments to zero emissions by 2030.

“Farms are a fundamental part of the Australian sugar industry’s supply chain and will no doubt be required to provide these records formally in the years ahead, too, to prove their sustainability bona fide - if they haven’t already by the banking sector.

“Carbon accounting has in the past consisted of spreadsheets which take time and expertise to complete. But thanks to this cross-sectoral project, growers will be able to easily calculate their business’s carbon footprint.”

Peak body, Queensland CANEGROWERS has welcomed the announcement of the carbon calculator.

“Our enthusiasm for the AIA EAP is based on its scientific backing and its standardised methodology for emission calculations from Australian farms. The latter is already recognised by all our stakeholders, both within the supply chain and in other sectors such as finance and government. It is our solution of choice,” said Senior Manager, Environment and Sustainability, Mick Quirk.

“Through the Smartcane Best Management Practice (BMP) program, we want to provide a ready means of calculating a farm’s emissions intensity so that growers can fully demonstrate their sustainability credentials to the supply chain and the finance sector, amongst others.”

AIA will be launching the platform this month. Calculations will be available for cotton, grains, beef, sheep, goats, feedlot, sugar, and pork on launch, with dairy, eggs, poultry, horticulture, rice, fisheries, aquaculture, wine, and other commodities to follow.

Once launched, growers will be able to access the AIA EAP directly via the SRA website and through participation in the Smartcane BMP program.

Website link: <https://www.aiaeap.com/>

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