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19 August 2024

New SRA CEO to commence in October

Sugar Research Australia Limited (SRA) Chair Rowena McNally has announced the appointment of Mick Bartlett as its new Chief Executive Officer, effective 14 October.

Joining SRA as the outgoing CEO of the Biosecurity Authority of Fiji, Mr Bartlett was responsible for the strategic direction and reform of the Authority which facilitates \$4.1 billion (AUD) worth of international import and export trade annually.

Mr Bartlett (pictured) brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the role, having spent more than two decades in senior leadership positions within the commercial agricultural and research sectors across four continents.



Mick Bartlett

[Read more about SRA's new CEO](#)

Securing Australia's cane industry: International project underway



Australia's sugarcane industry is playing a key role in strengthening the biosecurity of the region, with promising developments underway through international collaborations.

A project trialling Australian sugarcane varieties in Indonesia is not only a significant opportunity for SRA to expand its global reach, but also a crucial component of the Board's broader strategic plan. The SRA Strategic Plan 2021-2026 outlines key actions aimed at increasing revenue to sustain and enhance its operations. This strategy is being executed through three main avenues:

1. Winning externally funded projects
2. Provision of consultancy services
3. Increasing opportunities for sale of cane varieties overseas.

The Indonesian project contributes significantly to this goal by providing a substantial and growing revenue stream. The projected net revenue from this project – with the potential to reach several million dollars per year – will be reinvested into the Australian sugarcane industry to fund research priorities that directly benefit local growers.

(Above): Damage to cane in Indonesia from the exotic moth borer. The insect is a major biosecurity risk to the sugarcane industry in Australia.

[Read more about the Indonesian project](#)

[Read SRA's R&D Research Plan](#)



ABC TV's *Landline* visits the Burdekin

SRA District Manager Burdekin Terry Granshaw described the benefits of automated irrigation systems for sugarcane farmers such as Burdekin grower, Ross Parker (above centre) to the ABC TV's *Landline* team who visited the Burdekin recently.

Landline was in the Burdekin in July to cover the sugarcane industry's current challenges and opportunities and were keen to hear more about the Burdekin Irrigation Project after a lead from the project's Chief Investigator and Environmental Sustainability Scientist Dr Simon Clarke.

Terry showed the automated equipment in action on the grower's farm and the camera team was delighted. The program presented by ABC Journalist Halina Baczkowski is expected to be broadcast later this month.

[Read more about the Burdekin Irrigation Project](#)



New projects work to overcome productivity constraints

Two new projects are underway in sugarcane growing regions of the Wet Tropics and the Burnett Mary to help growers identify and overcome constraints on their farms which are holding back productivity, profitability and sustainability.

The aim of both projects is to provide one-on-one tailored agronomic extension services to participating growers to improve cane and sugar yields while ensuring optimal inputs and environmental benefits on their farms.

The projects are part of the \$4.38 million Sugarcane Practice Change Program funded through the Queensland Government's Queensland Reef Water Quality Program.

(Photo credit: taken by Sonya Long, on a clear day at SRA Tully station.)

[Read more about the projects](#)

Bundaberg workshop shows one agronomic solution cannot fit all



SRA recently ran a three-day soils workshop at SRA Bundaberg for industry professionals. Facilitated by John Panitz, Morrisey Ag, and Prof. Bernard Schroeder, University of Southern Queensland, it focused on sugarcane agronomy and soil management.

Participants included personnel from Isis Productivity Limited, Bundaberg Sugar Services, CANEGROWERS Bundaberg and SRA staff.

(Above left): SRA Project Officer Agronomy Hector Fleury takes a soil sample.

(Above right): In the field are University of South Queensland's Prof. Bernard Schroeder and John Sutcliffe, with CANEGROWERS Bundaberg Field Officer David Dowson, SRA Project Officer Agronomy Hector Fleury and Isis Productivity Services Officer, Anthony La Rocca.

[Read more about the workshop](#)

SRA District Managers keen to lend a hand to growers



Dear grower: The sugarcane industry needs your involvement in an important scientific research project which will help control the impact and spread of weeds on cane farms.

SRA's District Managers would like to assist you to complete our online weed survey one-on-one at a time and date convenient to you. It can be quicker and easier to complete with someone beside you who is more familiar with the technology.

The online survey aims to establish for the first time, the prevalence and range of major weeds across the sugarcane industry. Please get in touch with your District Manager to arrange a date and time when they can come and see you to help you complete the survey.

(Above back, left to right): SRA District Managers, Gavin Rodman, Dylan Wedell and Terry Granshaw with (front, left to right) Lisa Devereaux and Phil Patane with Industry Services Manager, Hywel Cook.

[Read more about the help available](#)

Burdekin growers - you're invited to learn more about weeds



Burdekin cane growers and advisors are invited to join SRA's Weed Scientist, Emilie Fillols (*above*) for an advanced pre-emergent herbicide workshop this Thursday from 9am at the PCYC.

Emilie has focused on optimising weed management strategies in sugarcane for more than a decade. Recent project work includes identifying alternatives for effective weed and pest management options that are less costly and have less impact on water quality.

In this customised practical workshop for Burdekin cane growers, Emilie will share how to take control of weeds before they take control of your farm.

[More about the advanced pre-emergent herbicides workshop](#)

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SRA Webinar: Save the date - 2pm-3:15pm Friday 13 September



Professor Godwin's 30-year career in plant biotechnology research has led to a focus on sustainable production and crop improvement for food, feed and bio-industrial end-uses, including bio-fuels and bio-materials. He has led field experimentation with transgenic sorghum plants with larger grain, higher protein content and digestibility, including a number of private and public partnerships, and projects funded by aid and development agencies in Ethiopia, India and Pacific Island countries.

Find out about sorghum's relationship to sugarcane and much more at an upcoming webinar with Professor Godwin on Friday 13 September. Learn how biotechnological research in sorghum can lead to sustainable production and crop improvement for sugarcane.

[Register today](#)

SRA researchers at the 2024 ASSCT Conference

If you missed the ASSCT Conference in Townsville this year but would like to read the papers and posters presented by SRA researchers they are now available on the SRA website.

Papers range from disease, pest and weed control, nutrient management, plant growth regulation and agronomy.

Mark your diary: Next year's ASSCT Conference will be held in Brisbane at the Royal International Convention Centre, Brisbane Showgrounds, as part of the inaugural Sugar Week (27 April - 1 May).

[Read the SRA research papers/posters](#)

National Science Week: Learning about sugarcane's amazing complexity



Dr Nathalie Piperidis

To celebrate National Science Week, SRA Cytogeneticist, Dr Nathalie Piperidis was at the Brisbane Ekka to talk about her role on the research committee responsible for breaking a variety of sugarcane's genetic code this year and what the discovery could mean for the world.



[Read about our current research projects](#)



Calling all levy-paying growers and millers: Have a say at the SRA AGM

The Annual General Meeting is coming up on Tuesday 26 November in Brisbane, where members can have their say on SRA Board leadership roles and the rules that govern the sugarcane industry's research and development corporation.

Existing Members will be sent information over the coming months about the AGM and the process of how to vote.

This will be sent by email from membership@sugarresearch.com.au.

Not sure if you are a registered member? It is not too late!

Visit www.sugarresearch.com.au/membership to register and discover the membership benefits rolling out this year, the criteria for membership, and the easy process for securing your voting right.

Get in touch with us at membership@sugarresearch.com.au if you have any questions or for more information.

Research awards & scholarship funding rounds closing soon

Applications for SRA's research awards and postgraduate scholarships will close on 31 August.

[Research Awards 2024/2025](#)

[Postgraduate Research Scholarship funding round](#)

Current vacancies

We are recruiting for the following positions:

- [District Delivery Officer - Gordonvale \(Cairns\)](#)
- [Supporting Research and Adoption - Mackay](#)
- [Business Support Officer - Bundaberg](#)



[SRA Careers](#)

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