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Kalamia Sweet Notes

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 KCGOL acknowledges and
 thanks all contributors.



Les Elphinstone (KCGO Manager)

DEAR GROWERS,

I have settled into my role as Manager for some 3 weeks which has required a steep learning curve in trying times. For those who do not know me a brief background:

- » have resided in the Burdekin for 19 years, married, two children and two beautiful grandchildren who constantly keep me on my toes
- » 34 years' experience in the banking industry, both CBA and ANZ
- » The last 6 years having worked for a local engineering firm.

I have had the opportunity over the last few weeks to meet a number of our members who have called into the office as well as attending some of the Burdekin Productivity Services "shed meetings", thank you for the warm welcome.

In my short time with KCGOL it is clear growers are currently facing one of their toughest battles to date in obtaining a fair and just Cane Supply Agreement (CSA) and the right to choose a marketer for

In the coming months leading up to the crush I hope to be able to visit farmers on the ground to get an understanding of farming practices currently employed within the Burdekin district and discuss ongoing issues of concern to our members.

your Grower Economic Interest Sugar. Negotiations continue, albeit slowly with On Supply Agreement (OSA) currently being drafted by Wilmar at the time of writing this article. Unfortunately avenues for arbitration with CSA via State Government Legislation under Section 33A of the Sugar Industry Act has been ruled unconstitutional which has closed the door on this process. However negotiations continue for a workable Cane Supply Agreement which is in the best interest for our member growers.

Whilst CSA/OSA issues has everyone's focus at the moment I am aware that a number of other issues currently face the Sugar Industry at present:

- » The exorbitant cost of electricity incurred to produce your crop. The Qld Government in conjunction with Ergon Energy have recently invited growers to participate in a "Agricultural Tariff Trial" in order to gain a better understanding of controlled load and seasonal demand tariffs as opposed to the current tariffs in place.
- » State government regulations to reduce nutrient and sediment run-off from agriculture in order to improve the water quality of Great Barrier Reef catchment areas. This issue has been the subject of focus by the Qld Government since "The Reef Water Quality Protection Plan 2013" introduced water quality targets. Discussion paper has been recently

released by the government as a result of report findings from Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce released in May 2016 recommending the broadening and enhancing of regulations to reduce water pollution from rural and urban sources. What could this mean for the agricultural industry in general? Regulatory Standards being considered:

1. Setting pollution load limits for 35 reef catchment areas
2. Minimum standards being expanded to commercial banana, horticulture and grain production
3. Existing standards for commercial sugarcane and grazing production to be improved.

More interesting times over the coming 12 months.

One observation that has impressed me greatly over the last 3 weeks is the resilience of farmers who have held their nerve and bonded together over a common cause for the right to choose the marketer of their GEI Sugar and to achieve a fair and just outcome for a workable Cane Supply Agreement.

Finally I would like to thank your office staff and board of directors of Kalamia Canegrowers Organisation Ltd for the warm welcome and assistance in my short time here. They are a great bunch of people whom you should be very proud of.

Cheers until next month.

Les



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QSL MARKETING CHOICE CLOSER FOR WILMAR GROWERS

By Greg Beashel, QSL Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer



Greg Beashel

Following recent mediation, QSL and Wilmar have reached high-level agreement on the three remaining threshold issues that have prevented the parties moving on to the contract negotiation and documentation phase of the On-Supply Agreement (OSA) process.

While QSL welcomes this long overdue development, there is still a lot of work to be done before a detailed contract is secured and Wilmar Growers can begin to access QSL marketing and pricing services for the 2017 Season and beyond. That final contract and its implementation is now our primary focus.

QSL will provide Wilmar Growers with regular updates on the progress of the final OSA contract and when they will finally be able to choose QSL as a GEI Sugar Marketer and start pricing with us. In the interim, those interested in QSL marketing and pricing services are urged to complete and return the QSL Direct Pre-Registration form they should have received in the mail or via email recently. Growers can also find this form on our website on the 'Wilmar Growers' page within our QSL Marketing Choice section. To access this page, just click on the blue 2017 Marketing Choice icon on our homepage or go directly to <http://www.qsl.com.au/wilmar-growers-0>.

To help growers complete this Pre-Registration form, I've included the following Frequently Asked Questions, but please remember that the QSL Grower Services Team is also on hand to provide assistance where needed. Your representatives in Wilmar milling districts are:

Herbert River

Jonathan Pavetto: 0428 664 057 | jonathan.pavetto@qsl.com.au
Carla Keith: 0409 372 305 | carla.keith@qsl.com.au

Burdekin

Rebecca Love: 0429 054 330 | rebecca.love@qsl.com.au
Carla Keith: 0409 372 305 | carla.keith@qsl.com.au

Proserpine & Plane Creek

Kathy Zanco: 0437 645 342 | kathy.zanco@qsl.com.au
Cathy Kelly: 0409 285 074 | cathy.kelly@qsl.com.au

In closing, I would like to thank the Queensland Government for coordinating the recent mediation session and the Honourable Richard Chesterman AO RFD for his services as mediator.

I'd also like to acknowledge all those who have helped us progress to this point – particularly the many Wilmar Growers who have put themselves through great stress and financial uncertainty in support of our efforts to implement QSL Marketing Choice.

While that choice is not available today, this recent progress means that for the first time, it is truly within reach. We will do all we can to make it a reality as soon as possible.

QSL DIRECT PRE-REGISTRATION FORM – FAQ

Do I need to fill out multiple forms for multiple tax entities?

Yes. Please complete separate forms for each of your tax entities (i.e. a form for each ABN).

I have more than one farm number under one ABN – do I complete production data for each farm separately or provide an average of the farms?

Once an On Supply Agreement (OSA) is in place with Wilmar, QSL will verify your production averages and forecasts with your Mill as part of the Grower Pricing Agreement (GPA) process. The GPA will be your contract with QSL for marketing and pricing services. But the more information you can provide to QSL in this preliminary stage of data collection, the better. So, if you have multiple farm numbers or lease arrangements, it would be helpful to QSL if you noted this additional information on the QSL Direct Pre-Registration paperwork.

I am in a partnership – does my partner also need to sign the Pre-Registration form?

It is not imperative that all partners sign the Pre-Registration paperwork, but all authorised persons will be required to sign any future GPAs with QSL.

Who/what is the Pricing Manager?

The Pre-Registration paperwork asks you to nominate a Pricing Manager – this is the person that makes the pricing decisions for your business. If there are multiple individuals currently acting as pricing managers for your business, please note this on your paperwork. If and when you eventually sign a GPA with QSL, you will be asked to nominate a single pricing manager for each ABN, but you will be able to have additional individuals also authorised to view your account details.

What are GEI Sugar tonnes?

GEI Sugar stands for Grower's Economic Interest in sugar, and is the sugar that you get to make pricing decisions for (generally two-thirds of the sugar produced from your crop).

Why does QSL want to know my GEI Sugar tonnes?

This is to help us gauge the approximate tonnages that Wilmar Growers may allocate to QSL as their GEI Sugar Marketer, once all the appropriate agreements are in place.

Why does QSL want to know my intended GEI Sugar Marketer nomination?

QSL is interested in knowing how much of your total GEI Sugar (as a percentage) that you intend to allocate to QSL as your GEI Sugar Marketer. It is important to remember that your GEI Sugar Marketer also provides the pricing services for any sugar allocated to it, so if you want to price sugar with QSL, you need to nominate QSL as the GEI Sugar Marketer for that sugar. For example, if you only wanted to access QSL's marketing and pricing services and not Wilmar's, then you would write 100% as your GEI Sugar Marketer nomination to QSL.

Is my GEI Sugar the same as my Committed Sugar exposure?

No. Your GEI Sugar is the total amount of sugar you get paid for. It includes any of your sugar that you may have forward priced plus any tonnage allocated to managed pools by you or your marketer (including your automatic allocations to the QSL Harvest Pool and US Quota Pool).

What is Committed Sugar exposure?

When QSL is your marketer, your Committed Sugar exposure is the amount of GEI Sugar that you can make pricing decisions on – so that's up to 60% of your total GEI Sugar forecast, as 40% of your GEI Sugar tonnage is automatically allocated to the QSL Harvest Pool (35%) and US Quota (5%).

Your options for your Committed Sugar exposure include forward pricing (where you make the pricing decision yourself), allocating tonnes to a Committed Managed Pool (where QSL manages the tonnage on your behalf), or just putting it all in the QSL Harvest Pool (Uncommitted tonnes).

Do I put my pricing decisions on this form?

No. At this stage you cannot make any pool or pricing allocations with QSL until we have secured an On-Supply Agreement with your Mill, your Cane Supply Agreement is in place, and you have a Grower Pricing Agreement with QSL. Your Pre-Registration paperwork is just asking for an indication of how many tonnes you usually produce and how much of that you would like to market and price through QSL.

What's the difference between marketing and pricing?

Pricing is the act of using the ICE 11 raw sugar market (or the ICE 16 for US Quota) to secure a price for sugar, either through individual pricing products or managed pools. Marketing is the sale of the physical sugar and the negotiation of the premiums associated with that sale.

You can only access QSL pricing products for sugar that you have nominated to QSL to market (i.e. your GEI Sugar allocation). You cannot market sugar with one provider and then price the same sugar with another.

Can I split my GEI Sugar Marketer nomination between Wilmar and QSL?

Yes. But it's important to remember that regardless of which marketer you choose, they may require you to allocate tonnage to their production risk pool (i.e. the QSL Harvest Pool or your alternate marketer's equivalent).

I have already done pricing with an alternative marketer – can I still choose QSL?

Potentially – if your individual Cane Supply Agreement provides for Marketing Choice. To determine your available GEI Sugar tonnes you will need to talk to the alternative marketer with whom you have locked in pricing. Remember, if you have undertaken Forward Pricing, you may also have a Production Risk pool exposure with this marketer.

Can I move my pricing to QSL once relevant agreements are in place?

Possibly. While QSL will endeavour to assist growers wanting to transfer (novate) pricing from an alternative marketer to QSL, we cannot guarantee it at this stage. To move pricing will require the consent of your alternative marketer and the financial institution that is holding the pricing. It's important to note that there could also be costs involved. QSL has novated pricing for growers who have undertaken interim pricing with other Mills in other growing regions on a case-by-case basis. QSL intends to take the same approach in Wilmar milling districts and encourages anyone wanting to novate pricing to QSL once relevant Cane Supply and On-Supply agreements are in place, to contact us ASAP.

Will I be able to access QSL's Harvest Pool if I don't choose QSL as my GEI Sugar Marketer?

No. You will only be able to access QSL pricing pools and products if you nominate QSL as your GEI Sugar Marketer.

I am leasing my farm this year but I will no longer lease the farm in 2018. How do I fill my form out to reflect this situation?

Pricing and payment associated with this pricing is linked to the tax entity or ABN. If you are leasing a property for the 2017 Season and are responsible for pricing the crop produced from that property, then the Pre-Registration paperwork should reflect your business details and your marketing intentions. However, you will not be able to nominate marketing or pricing arrangements for this farm's crop beyond your lease period. It will be up to the new owner/lessor to submit their GEI Sugar marketing and pricing nomination paperwork to reflect the lease changes when they come into place.

Advances and payments by pricing category



2016 SEASON: HERBERT, BURDEKIN & PLANE CREEK

10 March 2017

		US Quota	Wilmar Managed Pool	FSP 2 - 2 Season Forward Pool	FSP 3 - 3 Season Forward Pool	Actively Managed Pool	Guaranteed Floor Price Pool	Harvest Pool	Totals & Averages
POOL PRICES									
Previous Net Pool Price Estimates	A/t IPS								
25 Mar 2016		\$683.12	\$461.45	\$467.72	\$482.58	\$466.35	\$430.06	\$450.12	
29 Apr 2016		\$690.61	\$440.38	\$469.34	\$485.51	\$477.02	\$434.61	\$456.50	
27 May 2016		\$678.06	\$472.58	\$478.59	\$494.70	\$523.84	\$455.59	\$501.29	
30 Jun 2016		\$668.04	\$470.14	\$477.97	\$497.80	\$556.89	\$466.45	\$525.41	
29 Jul 2016		\$669.99	\$470.40	\$475.44	\$493.92	\$541.85	\$456.79	\$508.86	
26 Aug 2016		\$664.97	\$471.00	\$476.47	\$498.09	\$558.88	\$464.76	\$527.68	
30 Sep 2016		\$662.94	\$475.33	\$477.92	\$502.37	\$579.97	\$470.25	\$551.07	
28 Oct 2016		\$663.86	\$478.16	\$478.20	\$501.03	\$575.51	\$469.46	\$545.03	
25 Nov 2016		\$670.75	\$479.19	\$479.66	\$497.30	\$561.70	\$465.58	\$522.10	
30 Dec 2016		\$684.77	\$484.48	\$480.70	\$497.15	\$559.89	\$465.79	\$525.93	
27 Jan 2017		\$672.42	\$481.62	\$479.38	\$498.58	\$560.69	\$466.13	\$526.82	
Current Gross Pool Estimate	A/t IPS	\$771.90	\$479.84	\$479.11	\$497.85	\$560.76	\$465.96	\$521.63	
Shared Pool Premiums	A/t IPS	-\$69.90	\$34.85	\$34.85	\$34.85	\$34.85	\$34.85	\$34.85	
Shared Pool Charges	A/t IPS	-\$34.34	-\$34.32	-\$34.32	-\$34.32	-\$34.32	-\$34.32	-\$34.32	
Net Pool Price Estimate 24 February 2017 Pool Reports	A/t IPS	\$667.67	\$480.37	\$479.64	\$498.38	\$561.29	\$466.49	\$522.16	
ADVANCE RATES									
	A\$/t IPS	% Advance	Status						
In-Season \$ Rates									
Initial	\$267.00	Paid	\$267.00	\$267.00	\$267.00	\$267.00	\$267.00	\$267.00	\$267.00
18 Aug 2016	\$326.00	Paid	\$326.00	\$326.00	\$326.00	\$326.00	\$326.00	\$326.00	\$326.00
20 Oct 2016	\$368.00	Paid	\$368.00	\$368.00	\$368.00	\$368.00	\$368.00	\$368.00	\$368.00
15 Dec 2016	\$383.00	Paid	\$383.00	\$383.00	\$383.00	\$383.00	\$419.02	\$383.00	\$383.00
Post-Season Differential Rates									
26 Jan 2017	80.00%	Paid	\$547.82	\$387.58	\$384.56	\$397.72	\$447.91	\$419.21	\$420.74
23 Feb 2017	82.50%	Paid	\$554.75	\$397.34	\$395.49	\$411.33	\$462.57	\$419.52	\$434.63
23 Mar 2017	87.50%	Scheduled	\$584.21	\$420.32	\$419.68	\$436.08	\$491.13	\$419.84	\$456.89
20 Apr 2017	90.00%	Scheduled	\$600.90	\$432.33	\$431.68	\$448.54	\$505.16	\$419.84	\$469.94
18 May 2017	92.50%	Scheduled	\$617.59	\$444.34	\$443.67	\$461.00	\$519.19	\$431.50	\$483.00
22 Jun 2017	95.00%	Scheduled	\$634.28	\$456.35	\$455.66	\$473.46	\$533.22	\$443.16	\$496.05
Final	100.00%	Scheduled	\$667.67	\$480.37	\$479.64	\$498.38	\$561.29	\$466.49	\$522.16
FORECAST RETURN FOR A 'DEFAULT GROWER' (i.e. A grower with no Forward Pricing or QSL Fixed Tonnage Pools)									
% Allocation to US Quota and Harvest Pools			2.54%					97.46%	100.00%
Advances to be Paid as from 23 March 2017	A/t IPS		\$584.21					\$456.89	\$460.12
Final Forecast Advances to be Paid	A/t IPS		\$667.67					\$522.16	\$525.85
% Paid Season-to-Date			87.50%					87.50%	87.50%

Notes to Advances Program

Forward Pricing pools

In addition to the above pools, many growers have undertaken pricing via Wilmar's Forward Pricing program, namely under the Target Pricing and Call Pricing mechanisms. The final returns from these pools are subject to the same Shared Pool adjustment as for the ICE No.11 pools referred to above.

Shared Pool Element

The 'Shared Pool Premiums' and the 'Shared Pool Charges', as shown above, together comprise the 'Shared Pool Element' as defined in the Forward Price and Pooling Agreement (FPPA).

General information

Advances are quoted EXCLUSIVE of GST. All advances are subject to QSL Board approvals, final returns for each price category, Wilmar's final sugar production for the season and tonnage allocations to various pricing methods. All growers who have used any form of Forward Pricing will have different advances depending on their price outcomes and tonnages fixed.



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KCGO meets QSL's South Korean Buyers

Representatives from Kalamia Cane Growers Organisation Ltd on 13 March 2017 were invited by Qld Sugar Limited to meet with their three South Korean buyers.

The occasion represented QSL reaching an important milestone for one of its key markets celebrating 25 million tonnes of raw sugar sales and signing of a new Long Term Contract (LTC) extension with their three key South Korean customers. Whilst in Queensland QSL's Korean customers also toured the Townsville Bulk Sugar Terminal including loading of one of their ships with raw sugar bound for their refineries.

SOME KEY FACTS:

- » South Korea is one of Asia's largest importers of raw sugar (between 1.3-1.5 million tonnes annually).
- » Three local sugar refiners – CJ, Samyang and TS Corporation- account for 99 percent of the Korean sugar market. CJ is the largest refiner accounting for nearly half of the refined sugar market in Korea, followed by Samyang and TS.
- » QSL relationship with these customers started back in the early 1970s, with initial sales of around 300,000 tonne
- » Since then QSL has doubled and then tripled those initial sales volumes.
- » QSL set a new seasonal record with these customers last year with sales of almost 1.3 million tonnes.
- » The three South Korean refiners collectively represent QSL's largest market.

CJ (CHEILJEDANG) CORPORATION

- » CJ Corporation is the oldest and largest refinery with 48% market share.
- » Incheon refinery built in 1970 to complement original 1953 built Pusan refinery (closed in 1982).
- » CJ once part of the giant Samsung Group which played an important role in building post-war Korea and thrived during Korea's industrialisation in the 1960's.
- » CJ Corp is involved in several other businesses including processed foods,



beverages, pharmaceuticals, personal care & household products, construction, food service and telecommunications.

- » CJ has opened a trading office in Singapore to secure Brazilian sugar for Korea as well as PT CSI, their lysine factory in Indonesia.

SAMYANG CORPORATION

- » Hold 32% of the domestic market and has a refinery at Ulsan, at the southern end of the Korean peninsula, with a capacity of over 490,000 tonnes.
- » One of Samyang Corporation's subsidiaries (Samsung Genex) produces high fructose corn syrup, dextrose and starch.
- » Samyang purchased Heinz's Korean edible oils business in 2006.
- » Samyang began diversifying in 1965 and now also operates a chemical and plastics business as well as bio-technology and pharmaceuticals businesses.
- » Still operated by the founding Kim family.

TS CORPORATION

- » TS operate their refinery at Incheon with a capacity of about 440,000 tonnes, nearby CJ's refinery.
- » They hold 20% of the domestic market and are somewhat dependent on re-export business.

- » TS Corporation also produces livestock feeds and has a research facility concerned with foodstuffs, chemicals, biotech, livestock breeding and importing, and pharmacology.

QSL South Korean Refinery customers SJ Cho Deputy General Manager TS Corporation, Robert Malaponte Chairman KCGOL, Alex Lee General Manager CJ Corporation, Les Elphinstone Manager KCGOL and CK Park General Manager Samyang Corporation.

Speaking on behalf of the Korean contingent, Mr Park thanked QSL and Queensland cane growers for their strong support.

"We don't think the sugar we receive from Australia is just a commercial commodity, but believe it is the blood, sweat and tears of all Australian cane growers," he said.

Mr Park said that despite approaches from other sugar providers, they were keen to maintain their relationship with QSL and the quality sugar that had helped power their business for many decades.

"So please be assured that we Korean Refiners will stand still, as we did for more than 40 years, and stand with you, QSL and the Australian cane growers."

MEMBERS INFORMATION

NOTICE BOARD

MANAGER'S WELCOME

A warm welcome to our new KCGO manager, Mr Les Elphinstone who has joined us on Monday, 6th March 2017.

KCGO FACELIFT

The Kalamia Cane Grower's office has been newly renovated. Work to the structure was vital to maintain our old building and the finished product is a welcome fresh new look to the KCGO Collective.

Please come and visit us to check out our new look.



GROUPING APPROVAL CHANGES - AVAILABLE ON WILMAR PORTAL

Grouping Applications Approvals are on the Wilmar Website for members that have made a change with their harvesting groups.

QSL CORRESPONDENCE - REMINDER

QSL are asking KCGO to remind our members that the preferred marketing and crop nomination forms are required as soon as possible if growers intend to use QSL as their marketer. QSL do not have grower information so it is essential these forms are completed and returned as soon as possible

These forms were posted to all members on Friday, 17th February 2017.

KCGO office have copies of these forms if required.

Completed forms can be dropped into the QSL office beside the TAB building or to the KCGO office to be forwarded on.

KCGO Members Information

FLEXIBLE FINANCIAL HARDSHIP FUND

The Burdekin Community Association Inc. (BCA) has been contracted by the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services to deliver a Flexible Financial Hardship Fund to residents in drought declared areas of Burdekin Shire.

Funding of up to \$500 is available to assist with household and property costs to ease the burden on drought affected residents. We recognise that the amount available to households is relatively small; however, we hope the contribution is of some support in easing the financial hardship to families and businesses as a result of the drought.

Applications will be considered from drought affected residents to assist with freight costs for reducing/restocking of stock numbers and fodder for stock, utilities (power, phone, fuel, etc), school fees, rates and other costs.

The maximum amount available per resident is \$500 per application, supported by an invoice/receipt of expense.

To be eligible you must reside in the Burdekin Shire (proof of residency must be provided e.g. rates notice, electricity bill).

In the application you will be asked some questions to help us understand the full impact of the drought on community resilience and if we can include you in future communications in relation the future Community Drought Resilience activities.



For queries please contact
Rebecca Grogan on
Ph: 07 4783 3744

If you wish to apply please complete and submit your Application Form before 30/11/2017 via:

Email: bca@bcaburdekin.org.au

Fax: 07 4783 3990

Post: PO Box 815, AYR Q 4807

or deliver to:

Support Centre, 130 Queen St, AYR



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APPLICATION FORM

Name: _____

Affected Address/Property: _____

Amount Requested: _____

Postal Address: _____

Post Code: _____

No. Dependents: _____ Phone: _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

Banking details are required to facilitate payments if successful.

BSB: _____ Account: _____

Account Name: _____

Has your property been drought declared? Yes No

What is your primary source of income? _____

Do you receive a government allowance? Yes No

If yes what type: _____

Please briefly describe your circumstances, and the impact the drought has had on your primary source of income:

Applications will be considered from drought affected residents to assist with eligible bills/accounts power, phone, communications, school fees, grocery bills, fuel bills, insurances, vehicle registration, and rates but is not limited to these expenses.

A copy of invoices/receipts for current expenses from the applicant are required for the assessment process and will be subject to approval by Burdekin Community Association Inc.

Please check claimed expense:

FUEL POWER PHONE SCHOOL FEES RATES

OTHER (details required) _____

Would you like to receive future communications in relation to Community Drought resilience activities? Yes No

Assistance of up to \$500 excluding GST per application can be claimed. More than one application per individual can be lodged in a separate application, however funds will be prioritised to reach the largest number of applicants.

I declare the information in this form to be true and correct.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

BCA OFFICE USE ONLY	
DATE RECEIVED:	DATE ASSESSED:
ASSESSMENT OUTCOME: SUCCESSFUL / UNSUCCESSFUL	
NOTIFICATION DATE:	PAYMENT DATE:

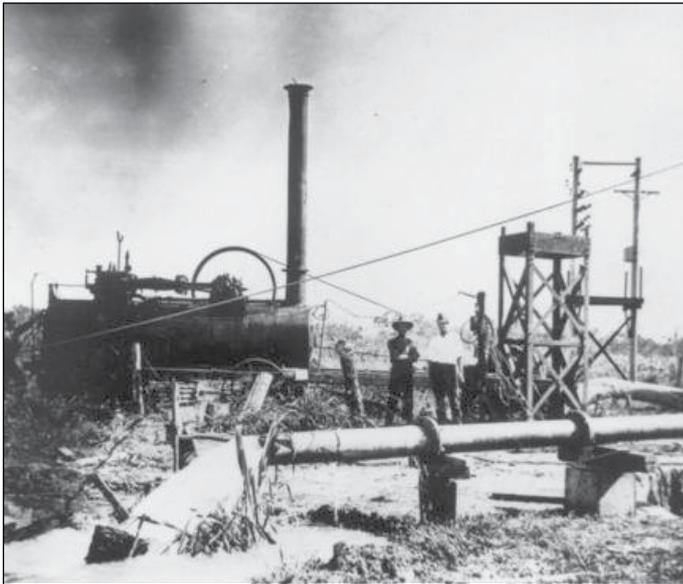
Sweet Memories



Brandon Railway Station



Brandon Service Station



Irrigation works - Inkerman Sugar Mill - 1922



Kelly Hotel - Invicta, opposite Railway Station GIRU 1934



Burdekin River in flood, 1875 (70 ft over old bridge)



Old railway bridge

Cyclone Debbie - It's destructive effects

www.abc.net.au/rural

Damage from Cyclone Debbie to the north Queensland towns of Bowen, Airlie Beach and Proserpine.



Police will use boats to reach Airlie Beach later today. (ABC News: Jonathan Hair)



The eye of the storm passed over Shute Harbour, near Airlie Beach. (Twitter: NQ Flood Update)



Solar panels on a roof segment torn from a house in Bowen. (AAP: Sarah Motherwell)



Power lines down and roofs damaged in Airlie Beach. (ABC News: Jonathan Hair)



Shute Harbour, near Airlie Beach, is littered with debris after Cyclone Debbie. (AAP: Dan Peled)



Boats are seen smashed against a bank at Shute Harbour. (AAP: Dan Peled)



Council crews removing fallen trees from power lines in Mackay this morning. (ABC News: Leonie Mellor)



Trees were toppled along the Bowen foreshore. (ABC News: Josh Bavas)

Sweet Industry News

BANKS UNABLE TO FORECLOSE ON FARMERS WITHOUT DEBT MEDIATION UNDER NEW QUEENSLAND LAWS

By Gail Burke

www.abc.net.au/rural

Banks will not be allowed to foreclose on struggling Queensland farmers without first offering them debt mediation under new laws passed in State Parliament.

Labor and the LNP supported the Farm Business Debt Mediation Bill, which would require financial institutions to offer mediation to farmers who were in arrears before starting enforcement action.

Queensland Agriculture Minister Bill Byrne said it was an alternative to expensive and drawn-out legal battles.

"We want to ensure farming families experiencing financial difficulty are treated fairly by financial institutions when they are faced with the daunting prospect of selling property assets to repay loans," Mr Byrne said.

"We know that mediation is a vastly preferable mechanism and effectively done, people can come out of that with a good outcome and it's the best chance of people succeeding, moving on with their lives both from the mortgagee, the bank's side of the house,

but also more importantly for the farmer."

The LNP supported the bill and helped the State Government oppose a Katter's Australian Party (KAP) bid to establish a rural development bank.

Opposition agriculture spokesman Dale Last said the KAP bill would not have helped farmers.

"The last thing we need in Queensland is something to add to red-tape bureaucracy," he said.

KAP leader Rob Katter has pushed for years to establish the bank, which he argued would offer struggling farmers alternatives to the current commercial lending arrangements.

He said the major parties had passively watched farmers fail for years and Parliament's rejection of his bill failed them again.

"We had a great opportunity here tonight to do something really meaningful, it would have had a legacy, everyone could have had a win," Mr Katter said.

"That opportunity wasn't taken. I would put that down to politics and I think that's a

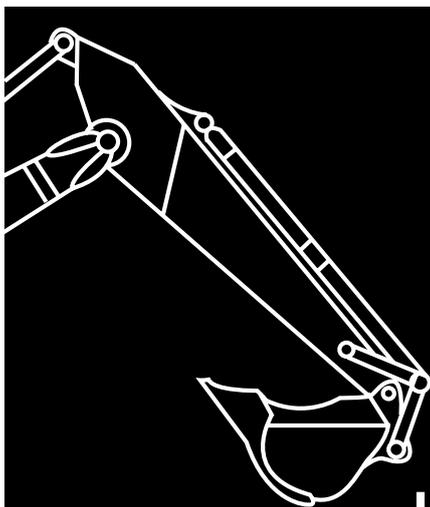
really sad night.

"We're happy to build sports stadiums or traffic tunnels or bridges in town, but we can't provide debt [relief] to productive industries that generate economic activity, and these are typically standalone industries that just need a bit of a reset and a leg-up."

The new laws will take effect from July 1 and will be overseen by the Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority.



Photo: The laws require financial institutions to offer mediation to farmers before starting enforcement action. (ABC: Candice Marshall)



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Sweet Industry News



QUEENSLAND FARMERS LOSE CONFIDENCE AS TOUGH SEASON AND EASING PRICES BITE

QLD Country Hour – www.abc.net.au/rural By Kallee Buchanan and Marty McCarthy

Poor seasonal conditions and easing commodity prices have been credited with causing a sharp decline in the confidence of Queensland farmers



Photo: Farmers in south-east Queensland are dealing with the aftermath of a dry summer. (ABC Wide Bay: Brad Marsellos)

CONFIDENCE SURVEY

- » Conditions to improve down from 41 per cent to 23 per cent
- » Conditions to worsen up from 12 per cent to 19 per cent

Regional confidence:

- » Darling Downs down from 23 per cent to -8 per cent
- » Central Highlands and Coast down from 23 per cent to -1 per cent
- » North Queensland down from 40 per cent to 10 per cent

Sectors:

- » Grain steady at 12 per cent
- » Cotton down from 55 per cent to 10 per cent
- » Beef down from 28 per cent to 7 per cent

- » Sugar down from 34 per cent to 4 per cent

After two consecutive quarters of strong sentiment, the latest Rabobank Rural Confidence Survey reported those expecting the agricultural economy to improve in the next 12 months dropped from 41 per cent of people surveyed to 23 per cent.

The number expecting the situation to worsen rose from 12 to 19 per cent for the same period.

Southern Queensland and northern New South Wales regional manager Brad James said while more of the state's farmers were optimistic than pessimistic, it was clear tough conditions were taking a toll.

"The season across the state has been

varied, but particularly in the southern part of the state it has been generally dry," he said.

"However, even in the north, where for the most part it's fairly green at the moment, they haven't had the wet season they were hoping for."

PREVIOUS HIGHS CORRECTED

Mr James said the slide in sentiment could be considered a correction.

"I think it's a cocktail of factors. I think it's commodity price, it's certainly season and I think a lot of it has got to do with what's happening in the sector as well," he said.

"When we look broadly across agriculture at the present time it's pretty good, there's a general alignment of planets.

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"There are those that have missed out on rain, there are those that seem to get a good run and then have a bad run, there's never a constant among all sectors."

Mr James said that diversity meant as some sectors did poorly, others held steady, with commodity prices the likely common denominator.

"Wheat is back a little, cotton's not too bad, sugar's not too bad, beef's very good," he said.

"Of the major commodities, the grains are generally pretty good except wheat ... but across the entire sector I think it's a better news story than a bad news story."

Photo: Mark Ward stands in his dry dam on his farm near Maryborough, which has had its worst annual rainfall on record. (ABC Wide Bay: Brad Marsellos)

Despite the fall in sentiment, the willingness of farmers to maintain or increase their investment in their businesses held relatively steady at 92 per cent.

"What we need to remember is anecdotally 90 per cent of people in agriculture are generational investors," Mr James said.

"So I'm not surprised at all to see the investment sentiment remaining fairly strong whilst confidence might be back a little, because they're long-term views."

CANE CROP HALVED BY DROUGHT

Confidence in the sugar industry crashed from 34 per cent to 4 per cent, a situation that was likely exacerbated by the deteriorating season, especially in the south.

DROUGHT DECLARED IN MORE SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND REGIONS

Maryborough Canegrowers chairman Jeff Atkinson said the region was likely to lose half its crop – about 400,000 tonnes – to the dry.

"Some of it will be stood over to the next year, but I've been talking to growers and they say they've lost stool and some of that's plant cane, some of that's first ratoon, so there's a huge cost in replanting," he said.

"Some growers have forward priced as well and they're going to be battling to fill their commitments, so there's that issue as well.

"A little bit of dry, people live with that, but when you get it extreme, [we've had] 32mm [of rain] since January. You can't grow a cane crop on that.

"There's no morale, [growers] are down, they got through the last one [dry year] and



More than 87 per cent of Queensland is officially in drought, bringing the total drought-affected area in the state to the highest level ever recorded.

thought that's over now. To get another one within three years, that's what really knocked the wind out of their sails."

BREEDER CATTLE SOLD OFF AS DROUGHT SPREADS

Drought-affected graziers in south-east Queensland are having to sell off breeder cattle, which is expected to make the industry's eventual recovery from the drought more difficult.

The Sunshine Coast and Gympie region has had its driest and warmest summer on record, receiving just over a quarter of its average rainfall in the past three months.

Beef producer Ivan Naggs, from Wolvi east of Gympie, said graziers were selling cattle because they did not have enough grass to feed them.

"Experienced graziers know their carrying capacity and know they can't carry them through," he said.

Mr Naggs, who also represents his region as a councillor for AgForce, said farmers were getting so desperate they were also selling their core breeder cattle.

"That is the stock they know has a history of fertility and productivity, and that is what is being offloaded now," Mr Naggs said.

"I'm hearing that all over the south-east corner of the region I cover for AgForce, so it's not a good picture out there.

"Whenever this drought breaks we are going to find young, good quality breeding stock very scarce and expensive to source."

SERIOUS SITUATION IN SOUTH-EAST

Mr Naggs said the situation was dire for many south-east Queensland graziers.

"It is quite very sad to see dams empty through the South Burnett and hardly any grass in paddocks," he said.

"It's quite serious, particularly in that western part of the Gympie region."

As farmers try to offload cattle, the price they get for them in the saleyards is also dropping, further compounding the problem.

Mr Naggs said prices had dropped by hundreds of dollars per animal as excess cattle flooded the market.

"Compared to two and a half years ago the price is still pretty good, but compared to prices in the August-October period last year, we're down \$250 on a fat cow," he said.



Photo: Southern graziers are selling their breeding stock in a bid to survive the drought. (Facebook: Alison Ahern)

Sweet Industry News

TRADE IN TRUMPWORLD: WILL US PRESIDENT KEEP HIS PROMISES, AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR AUSTRALIA IF HE DOES?

Australia's agriculture sector is in a purple patch.

For the first time in a decade, farming (together with fisheries and forestry) has overtaken mining as the biggest single contributor to national economic growth. In dollar terms, at \$63.8 billion dollars, farm production has never been worth more. While plenty of agricultural industries hoped that free trade agreements would deliver more than they have so far, growing international trade has been a major contributor to the sector's growth. The value of Australian farm exports is tipped to hit a new record in 2017 – \$48.7 billion.

But the global trade winds are shifting: rising protectionist sentiment in the United States and Europe means rising uncertainty for Australia, a trading nation that relies on international markets to sell about 60 per cent of its agricultural produce each year. In Chile this week, Australia, Japan and other members of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) group will meet for the first time since US President Donald Trump torpedoed that controversial agreement by pulling his country out of it. They will try to work out what to do next, and whether any part of the deal can be salvaged. The US will send a representative, as will China and Korea.

However, the future rules for Pacific trade are just one set of unanswered questions. The biggest wildcard remains Mr Trump himself.

Will he follow through on promises to renegotiate America's existing agreements and crack down on China? Will he change taxation rules for imports to America? How will



Photo: The biggest wildcard in the future of Pacific trade remains President Trump. (AP: Gerry Broome)

it all affect Australia?
BILATERAL TRADE DOES NOT MEAN NO TRADE

Rural areas strongly favoured Mr Trump in last year's election, and the now-President made his commitment to pull out of the TPP and renegotiate trade deals a centrepiece of his campaign.

But US Department of Agriculture deputy chief economist Warren Preston told ABC Rural that American farmers valued the opportunity to trade their goods overseas. In Canberra for the annual ABARES Outlook conference, Mr Preston said about 20 per cent of American farm income was attributable to exports.

That is significantly higher for industries such as tree nuts, where income is about 80 per cent dependent on international markets.

"Everybody would like to be able to export and not have to worry about imports, but we know that's not the way the world

works," Mr Preston said. "Obviously there have been public statements made that we are moving away from multilateral agreements and looking at bilateral trade, but that doesn't mean no trade.

"I think what the President has made clear is that he would like to see fair trade, and we'll just have to see how that plays out in terms of what changes might occur."

POLITICS IS NOT ECONOMICS – UNLESS IT IS

Economist Chris Richardson from Deloitte Access Economics is optimistic that despite Mr Trump's campaign rhetoric, the US will not significantly scale back its engagement with global trade.

"Politics isn't economics," he said. "It is absolutely true that populist politics and 'trade is awful' is marvellously seductive, but it is also commercially silly. "Living standards get affected by that sort of thing.

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"If the US tries to pull back too much, you would get a higher US dollar, you would lose even more jobs in the US rust belt in manufacturing, you would actually have most probably a worse US trade deficit rather than a better one.

"Those risks are absolutely there, but I don't think they will be long-lasting risks. Those big mistakes would come with big costs and I think that they would unravel fast."

Hong Kong-based Rabobank analyst Michael Every sees things differently.

"Economics is deeply political and politics is deeply economic, and unfortunately, from a big picture perspective, we really do have some things to be worried about," he told the ABARES gathering.

TRUMPISM: BLIP OR FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE TO US TRADE POSTURE

As a candidate, Mr Trump tapped into a rich vein of fear and concern that free trade agreements such as NAFTA (the US's agreement with Canada and Mexico) had robbed manufacturing communities of millions of jobs and allowed other countries to take advantage of the US.

Mr Trump promised to pull out of the TPP, and he did. He also pledged to renegotiate NAFTA, and impose a new 40 per cent tariff on all Chinese imports.

In the early days of his presidency, the Trump administration alluded to possible changes to the way imports were taxed at the border.

With Mr Trump's choices for agriculture secretary and trade representative (chief trade negotiator) still awaiting confirmation from the US senate, and reports of a turf war within the White House over trade policy, it remains to be seen whether the President will follow through on all his promises.

For Mr Every, it would be a mistake not to

take Mr Trump seriously.

He noted that the new President had surrounded himself with a team of advisors who shared his concerns about trade, and he argued that the political shift underway in the US would outlast Mr Trump himself.

"Unpopular as he may be in many circles, is there really a constituency in the US that, in an election coming up soon, could say 'let's go back to completely free trade, let's ignore everything that Trump just said,'" Mr Every asked.

"I would argue – no; I don't think that's a realistic political position within the US at the moment.

"After him, however long he lasts, there will be 'Trumpism' and that will continue to make the same arguments.

"The global system is going to have to deal with the US wanting to step back, and no other giant economy stepping forward and saying, 'we'll buy whatever you have to sell'. No other economy is offering to do that."

WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN FOR AUSTRALIA?

The US is a major market for Australian services and resources, as well as for agricultural exports such as beef.

Both Foreign Minister Julie Bishop and Trade Minister Steve Ciobo have previously said that because the US runs a trade surplus with Australia, it is unlikely the 12-year-old agreement between the two countries would be an early target for renegotiation.

However, Australia would be not be able to escape the impact of any broader destabilisation of the global trade system.

FACT FILE: THE TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

If President Trump does deliver on his promise to impose steep new tariffs on China, that could spark retaliatory measures and a trade war between two of Australia's most

important export destinations.

The Trump administration has some support in Congress for a border adjustment tax – where American companies importing goods for sale would be taxed on those imports, while American companies that exported goods for sale overseas would be exempt.

Asked whether such a tax would violate Australia's free trade deal with the US, a spokeswoman for Mr Ciobo said it was too early to say.

"It is possible to introduce new taxes in a way that is consistent with international trade obligations, including obligations under the [Australia-US free trade agreement]," the spokeswoman continued.

"[But] it depends on how the taxes are legislated.

"It is impossible to say whether border taxes are consistent with international trade obligations until we've seen the legislation."

LITTLE AUSTRALIA CAN DO RIGHT NOW BUT WAIT AND SEE

If Australia considered that any new import taxes breached its US agreements, it could take action under the bilateral agreement, or through the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

If the WTO Dispute Settlement Body found that new taxes were inconsistent with its rules, the US would have a chance to bring its taxes into line, pay compensation, or face WTO-sanctioned tariffs on its own exports in retaliation.

For now, there is little Australian exporters can do but wait to see whether Mr Trump is serious after all.

With its economic growth dependent on maintaining and growing its export markets, a major shift in the global trade order would certainly leave Australia highly exposed.

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BOARD MEMBERS SACKED FROM EMBATTLED QUEENSLAND SUGAR LIMITED IN FIGHT WITH COMPETITOR

ABC Rural – www.abc.net.au/rural
By Marty McCarthy and Lara Webster

Embattled sugar marketer Queensland Sugar Limited (QSL) has been forced to sack its board of industry directors, as its dispute with Australia's largest sugar miller drags on.

The announcement came within hours of QSL and Wilmar reaching an in principle agreement over a long-running dispute about sugar marketing.

QSL's Board will no longer feature six directors appointed to represent growers and sugar millers, following an appeal judgement by the Federal Court in Brisbane on Thursday.

"Although our industry directors have only been in place for the last three board meetings, their involvement has brought added industry experience and perspective to the board," QSL chairman Guy Cowan said.

In 2016, QSL made changes to its constitution to allow the appointment of industry directors, including representatives from Queensland sugar millers Bundaberg Sugar, Isis Central Sugar Mill, and Mackay Sugar.

The changes prevented a director being appointed by foreign-owned miller Wilmar, which wants to withdraw from QSL's marketing pool arrangement.

Wilmar challenged the decision, but was initially unsuccessful, with the Federal Court in October ruling in favour of QSL, declaring the constitutional change was "not oppressive to, unfairly prejudicial to, or unfairly discriminatory against [Wilmar]".

However, Wilmar successfully appealed that decision on Thursday, forcing QSL to sack its industry directors and revert to the old board structure of three independent directors and managing director.

Lobby group Canegrowers is scathing of the decision, arguing Wilmar's legal challenge is proof the company wants control of the Queensland sugar industry.

"Wilmar is interfering in a company it sees as a threat to its plans. This is about control and not performance," Canegrowers CEO Dan Galligan said.

"To go to court to challenge an industry-backed board restructure under these circumstances was another tactic in a



Photo: Queensland Sugar Limited is unhappy at having to sack its board of industry directors in its dispute with Wilmar. (ABC Rural: Marty McCarthy)

campaign for control by Wilmar and the court ruling in Wilmar's favour is regrettable. "The grower directors are collateral damage in Wilmar's big picture objective to remove other Queensland milling company directors from QSL's Board."

SUGAR DISPUTE EXPLAINED

Shane Rutherford, executive general manager from Wilmar, rejected claims his company was seeking dominance over the state's sugar industry.

"This is nothing about control; it is about following the rule of law," he said.

"The Federal Court [judges] were unanimous in determining the changes made were in breach of the Corporations Act and [the changes] were oppressive, unfairly prejudicial and unfairly discriminatory.

"We as a company act ethically and abide by the law ... and in the same way it's important that QSL as an industry organisation operated lawfully as well."

Wilmar said, despite wanting to market its own sugar, the company was still a member of QSL and therefore had an interest in its governance.

Canegrowers said QSL's decision to appoint industry directors was an attempt to get more professional knowledge from growers and millers on the board, rather than to exclude Wilmar.

"There is opportunity to re-look at the issue

and try and do it again, so it's about the future and putting QSL in a position as a marketing company to have input from directors and growers," Mr Galligan said.

SUGAR MARKETING DISPUTE NEARING RESOLUTION

Mediation between Wilmar and QSL that began yesterday morning ran into the late hours of last night.

The Palaszczuk Government supplied the services of former supreme Court judge Richard Chesterman to mediate negotiations between the parties.

Wilmar said it was now satisfied that the three issues that were obstacles to finalising an agreement with QSL have been agreed to in principle, although a contract is yet to be signed.

The miller said both parties had committed to concluding a formal agreement as soon as possible.

The resolution came following threats of political intervention from the State Parliament and Federal Agriculture Minister, Barnaby Joyce.

Mr Rutherford said a formal contractual agreement was "a few weeks away", but rejected it was a result of political pressure. There are still calls for a national code of conduct to be developed to ensure similar disputes can be resolved more quickly in future.

Sweet Info



'I walk slowly, but I never walk backward.'

ABRAHAM LINCOLN



DID YOU KNOW...?

- » Did you know the Hawaiian alphabet has 12 letters
- » Did you know Germany borders 9 other countries
- » Did you know emus can't walk backwards
- » Did you know Einstein slept 10 hours a night



EASTER CHEESECAKE

INGREDIENTS

- » 250g packet plain chocolate biscuits (see note)
- » 150g butter, melted
- » 500g cream cheese, softened
- » 2/3 cup caster sugar
- » 2 teaspoons vanilla essence
- » 3 eggs
- » 3/4 cup thickened cream
- » Whipped cream, Easter eggs and caramel sauce, to serve

FUDGE

- » 200g block milk chocolate, chopped
- » 1/2 x 395g can sweetened condensed milk
- » 25g butter, chopped

WORD OF THE MONTH

meritorious

adjective [mer-i-tawr-ee-uh s, -tohr-]

deserving praise, reward, esteem, etc.: praiseworthy.

JOKE OF THE MONTH

Q: What did the pony say when he had a sore throat?
A: Sorry, I'm a little horse.

Q: Why is a river rich?
A: It has banks on both sides.

Q: What do you call a cow that eats your grass?
A: A lawn moo-er.

METHOD

Step 1: Preheat oven to 160C/14C fan-forced. Using a food processor, process biscuits until fine crumbs. Add butter. Process until combined. Press over base and side of a 21cm round (base) springform cake pan. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Step 2: Make Fudge: Place chocolate, condensed milk and butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Cook, stirring constantly, for 4 to 5 minutes or until smooth and combined. Remove from heat. Stand for 2 minutes.

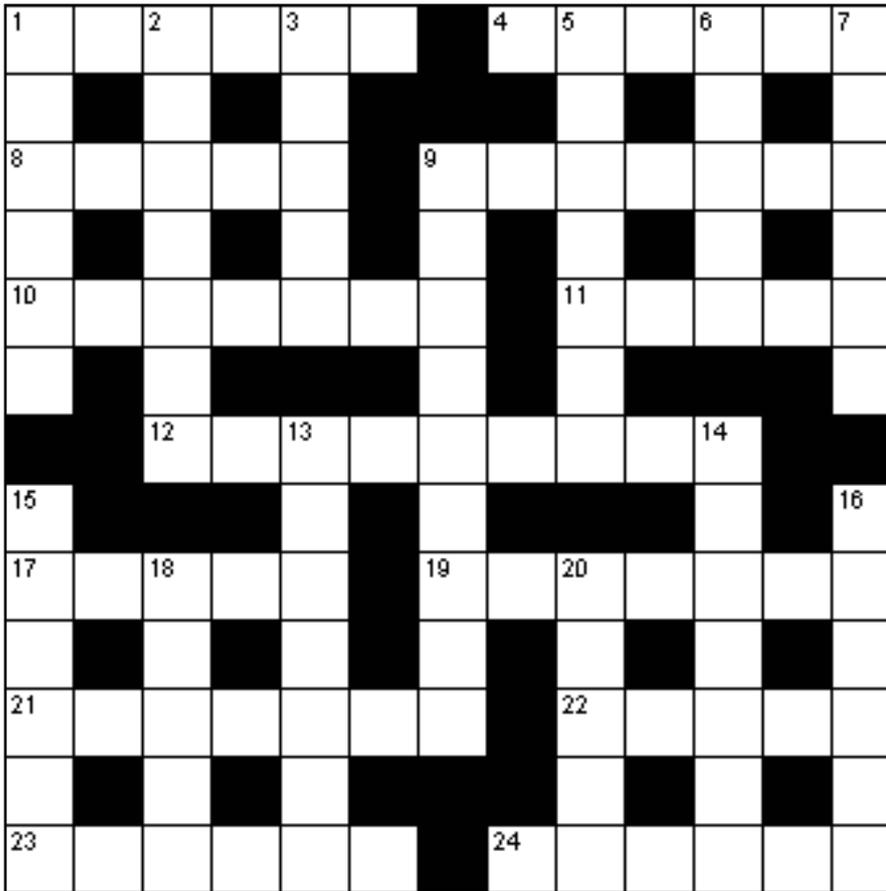
Step 3: Pour fudge over prepared base, gently spreading to cover. Set aside.

Step 4: Using an electric mixer, beat cream cheese, sugar and vanilla until light and fluffy. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating until well combined after each addition. Add cream. Beat for 3 minutes or until combined and mixture thickens slightly. Pour over fudge layer. Place pan on a baking tray.

Step 5: Bake for 50 minutes or until cheesecake is just set (cheesecake will wobble slightly in centre). Turn oven off. Cool cheesecake in oven with door ajar. Refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight. Serve cheesecake topped with whipped cream, Easter eggs and drizzled with caramel sauce.



Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Fight, strive against (6)
- 4 Solution (6)
- 8 Tropical fruit (5)
- 9 Generous (7)
- 10 Not prepared (7)
- 11 Notions (5)
- 12 Crude, poorly planned (4-5)
- 17 Swagger (5)
- 19 Without weapons (7)
- 21 Put into words (7)
- 22 Interior (5)
- 23 Fashionable (6)
- 24 Fought with swords (6)

DOWN

- 1 University grounds (6)
- 2 Ruler (7)
- 3 Pleasant characteristic odour (5)
- 5 Golf club (7)
- 6 Inferior (5)
- 7 Zestful enjoyment (6)
- 9 Idlers (9)
- 13 Correspondence (7)
- 14 Devilish (7)
- 15 High regard (6)
- 16 Worshipped (6)
- 18 Swift (5)
- 20 Lithe (5)

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Across: 1 – Combat, 4 – Answer, 8 – Mango, 9 – Liberal, 10 – Unready, 11 – Ideas, 12 – Halfbaked, 17 – Strut, 19 – Unarmed, 21 – Express, 22 – Inner, 23 – Modish, 24 – Fenced. Down: 1 – Campus, 2 – Monarch, 3 – Aroma, 5 – Niblick, 6 – Morse, 7 – Reilish, 9 – Layabouts, 13 – Letters, 14 – Demon, 15 – Esteem, 16 – Adored, 18 – Rapid, 20 – Agile.



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