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New investments to delivery exciting sugarcane research and development outcomes

Sugar Research Australia has announced the investment in multiple new research projects that will drive productivity, profitability and sustainability in the Australian sugarcane industry.

These new investments have targeted specific areas and issues that require solutions for growers and millers, with the new investments having been selected following a rigorous assessment process over the last few months.

SRA CEO Roslyn Baker said the new investments were aligned to the five Research Missions within SRA's [new Strategic Plan](#) and involved extensive collaboration with investment and delivery partners.

“A key element of SRA’s new strategy is that SRA will collaborate more strongly than ever before – and we can see that clearly through these new project investments,” she said.

New and recent project investments include:

Project name	Lead delivery agencies	Summary	Investment agencies
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E-network for rail-based cane transport systems	Advisian Pty Ltd (lead); The University of NSW; Mobility Thinking Pty Ltd	The development of a monitoring and communication system, operating across the sugar cane rolling stock and rail network, will seek to increase efficiency, improve safety, and reduce costs.	SRA
Environmental DNA Technologies and Predictive Modelling for Rapid Detection and Identification of Sugarcane Priority Pests and Diseases	Enviro DNA Pty Ltd; SRA	This project builds on pest surveillance and in-field testing techniques to improve the ability of those undertaking Northern Australian sugar pest surveillance activities to identify pest incursion threats quickly and accurately.	SRA and DAF Queensland
Transformational crop protection – Innovative RNAi biopesticides for management of sugarcane root feeding pests	University of Queensland; SRA	This project aims to deliver a proof-of-concept demonstration for the BioClay/BenPol platform targeting root feeding pests of sugarcane including cane grubs and soldier flies.	SRA and DAF Queensland
Sugar Industry Diversification Opportunities Investigation Support	Procom Consultants Pty Ltd	This project will investigate the potential application of two sugarcane biorefinery opportunities (hydrogen production from bagasse and compostable bioplastic production from cane juice) and identify any investment barriers to their application.	SRA and DAF Queensland
A Common Approach to Sector-Level GHG	CSIRO	This project will develop a common approach for greenhouse gas	SRA + 9 other RDCS; DAWE,

Accounting for Australian Agriculture		accounting that is shared by agricultural commodity sectors, via a collective action process.	West Australia DPIRD & CRSPI (via Agriculture Innovation Australia)
Environmental Risk Assessment & Life Cycle Assessment of the Raw Sugar Manufacturing	Integrity Ag & Environment Pty Ltd	Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) is a standardised method for quantifying the environmental and potentially human health impacts of the inputs, outputs, and emissions across all relevant phases of a product life cycle. The purpose of this LCA project is to help the industry better understand, benchmark, and improve its environmental contribution to human health, environment, ecosystem quality and resource use, including waste management.	SRA and DAF Queensland
Beyond Imidacloprid - Chemical and Biorational Alternatives for Managing Canegrubs	SRA	With the only canegrub control compound (imidacloprid) at the risk of being withdrawn from the market, this project will (if successful) generate efficacy and runoff data that is required to support the registration of alternative compounds for the canegrub control.	SRA and DAF Queensland
Engineering bacterial enzyme secretion for cellulose utilisation	Queensland University of Technology	This project aims to develop microbial technology to reduce the cost of extracting fermentable sugars, which could lead to the creation of a	SRA

		bacterium that can directly extract sugars from lignocellulosic biomass and convert them into biochemicals.	
Maximising cane recovery through the development of a harvesting decision-support tool	SRA and DAF Queensland	This project will provide an online platform that helps growers and contractors look at the potential gains associated with improved harvesting practices, and costs, and then examine the costs of harvesting.	SRA and DAF Queensland

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