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What a  
*sweet* life!



## Understanding Risk

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A person's attitude to risk is an important consideration when developing an investment strategy.

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# Kalamia Sweet Notes

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KCGOL acknowledges and  
thanks all contributors.

Another month has passed with climatic conditions conducive for the 2017 crop with little rain in sight over the coming month. Unfortunately harvesting efforts have been hampered by continued teething problems at majority of the mills with two major breakdowns season to date. On a positive note at the time of writing this article, week 6 into the season has seen more than 20 percent of the forecast crop having been processed with yields cutting close to overall estimate. Burdekin district CCS currently stands at 13.67

KCGOL held its AGM on Thursday 13th July which was well attended by members. Guest speakers on the night were Mr Greg Beashel from QSL and Mrs Alison Treston from Achmea Australia. Greg gave a presentation providing update on 2017 tonnage, marketing choice, market conditions, reduction in operating costs and 2016/2017 QSL Pool Results. Alison's presentation provided an overview of Achmea's specialist agri insurance product and extended an invitation to growers for an on-farm visit to discuss ongoing requirements. Achmea Australia is confident they can offer cane growers a much better deal, reducing both their risks and premiums.

I also mentioned at our AGM that some 6 years ago Kalamia Cane Growers Organisation Ltd offered an additional service to growers who had queries in relation to issues around CCS identified in your "Rake Deliveries" eg. Purity, Dirt and pH etc. Service at this time proved to be of a financial benefit to our members.

This service has recently been reintroduced and will be trialled over the coming months to gauge its benefits/success.

**KCGOL has appointed on a casual basis, Monica Nicholson, to assist with growers enquiries as well as to proactively scrutinise "Edit Lab" reports provided by Wilmar in an effort to also identify anomalies requiring further investigation.**

Monica has had a lengthy career within the sugar industry, having in this time completed a 4 year sugar chemistry course, holding positions of juice chemist, control chemist, lab superintendent and been employed by both mill owner and more recently BCAS.



I would like to strongly encourage all of our members to take advantage of this service. Should you have a query please do not hesitate to contact this office so that Monica can investigate.

*Cheers until next month.*  
Les

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## ARTICLE BY DOUGALL LODGE, QSL GENERAL MANAGER TRADING AND RISK

### SUGAR

ICE 11 Contract	Latest Settlement US c/lb	Monthly Change US c/lb	High US c/lb	Low US c/lb
Jul-2017	13.68	-0.06	14.34	12.55
Oct-2017	14.15	0.11	14.53	12.76
Mar-2018	14.83	0.09	15.18	13.51
May-2018	14.86	0.18	15.11	13.56
Jul-2018	14.93	0.27	15.09	13.68
Oct-2018	15.14	0.33	15.28	13.95
BRL/USD	3.2811	-1.09%	3.3427	3.2457
Ethanol Parity	12.53			

Source: Bloomberg. Current as of 10.7.17.



Dougall Lodge

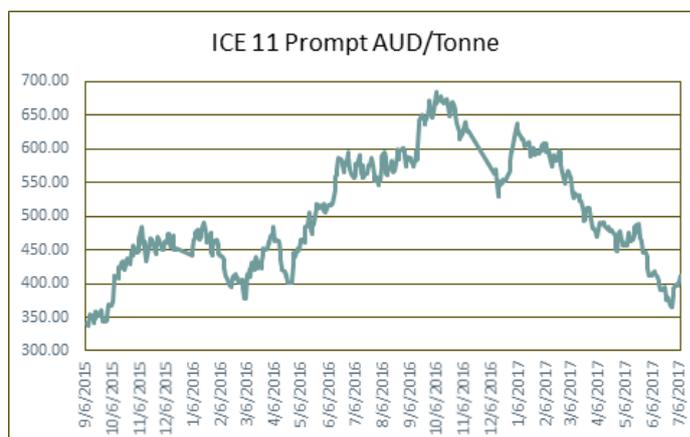
#### WHAT HAPPENED?

The July 17 ICE 11 contract expiry failed to flush out any sizeable pent up demand and during the month there were some further gasoline price reductions in Brazil which meant that sugar production continued to be maximized for this period. Brazil ethanol parity has dropped further on the back of the gasoline cuts and is now at around 12 c/lb. The Brazilian Real weakened a little during the month, also contributing to further pressure on sugar.

The speculators have continued to build their sold position by a further 2.5 million tonnes of selling in the last month. This means that their overall net position is now at 5 million tonnes sold and is approaching the record sold level for sugar by speculators.

There has been limited fresh news in other production countries, apart from good weather news for Indian and Thai producers. The dams are full and all regions are on track for a good harvest starting later this year.

As expected in our last monthly report, the only positive news was seen in the last couple of days of trading for the July 17 contract where the price moved back up towards A\$400/metric tonne on the back of speculators and the trade buying back sold positions and the AUD/USD remaining stable. This recovery was relatively mild compared to the overall move down and only occurred after most market participants had closed out their July 17 positions. The October 17 contract has continued to have a further modest consolidation above these levels.



#### GOING FORWARD

With such a large speculator-sold position in play, we are very much back in their hands again. If there are any signals that prompt them to close out and buy back their sold positions, this will potentially have a positive impact on the sugar price. However, if they foresee that the pending global sugar supply surplus and stagnant import demand from India and China will be the main headline, we could see even more pressure on prices to move down.

The Brazil sugar production mix is likely to continue at a high level,



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so we could wind up on the higher range of production estimates if there are no significant weather or logistics events. Apart from any major negative macro or geopolitical news, it would look like we can expect a 12-15 c/lb range for the short term until a clearer picture emerges.

### WHAT COULD CHANGE?

There is a saying that the best thing for low prices is low prices. The current low market prices are below the cost of production for almost all sugar producers. It would not be too surprising for large consumers to start to load up at these relatively low levels. Such buying activity could prompt some follow-through buying by speculators and other participants.

### QSL MARKET COST DRIVERS

Please note that we have updated the following table to focus on the new prompt futures contract (Oct 18) and the 2018 Season average price.

MARKET COST DRIVERS	PROMPT (Oct 17) A\$/mt as at 10.7.17	2018 Season A\$/mt as at 10.7.17
Current Market	\$406.14	\$440.40
Sugar Fundamentals - Global exc. Brazil	●	●
Sugar Fundamentals - Brazil	●	●
Macro Issues/ Specs	●	●
AUD/USD	●	●

### CURRENCY

	Settlement	Range	High	Low
AUD/USD	0.7601	315 pts	0.7689	0.7374

Current as of 10.7.17.

### WHAT HAPPENED?

After starting the month at around 0.7370, the AUD/USD continued to strengthen. A recovery in commodity prices helped support buying demand, with the AUD/USD being a commodity proxy for many investors.

The US Federal Reserve increased rates by 0.25% as expected and has indicated there is likely to be one more hike this calendar year and three more in 2018. This increase was largely priced in by the market so there was limited impact. Economic data from the US was less impressive, with payroll data and CPI both contributing to some weakness of the USD and the corresponding strength of the AUD/USD. The Reserve Bank of Australia agreed to hold rates in early June and also again in early July.

### GOING FORWARD

With interest rates largely priced in by the market for the USA and Australia and in the absence of any surprises here, the AUD/USD will be driven by these differentials and we continue to maintain our expectation for a longer-term strengthening of the USD. In the shorter term, there is some risk for the AUD/USD to remain well supported on the back of relatively strong commodity prices and economic data in Australia.

### WHAT COULD CHANGE?

Any macro or geo-political events could lead to a stronger USD environment.

### MORE INFORMATION

For the latest raw sugar market information, please read QSL's Daily Market Snapshot, available at: [www.qsl.com.au/sugar-prices/market-snapshot](http://www.qsl.com.au/sugar-prices/market-snapshot).

PLEASE NOTE: This report contains information of a general or summary nature. While all care is taken in the preparation of this report, the reliability, accuracy or completeness of the information provided in the document is not guaranteed. Information about past performance is not an indication of future performance. The report does not constitute financial, investment or product advice, a risk management strategy, a recommendation to invest in any of the pools described in this report, or an offer or invitation or recommendation with respect to any of the pools. You should read the Pricing Pool Terms, which will be available on the QSL website, and seek your own financial advice before making any decisions in relation to the Pricing Pool Terms and selecting pools.



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# Wilmar Crushing Update



## DEAR GROWER

We're now in the second month of the season for most of our milling regions and I'm pleased to report that our factories have generally settled in well to the crush.

Victoria and Macknade mills in the Herbert and Kalamia Mill in the Burdekin were the first to start up on Tuesday 14 June. Proserpine Mill was the last to commence on 4 July because of Cyclone Debbie's impact on the district's crop and mill infrastructure.

The Burdekin mills are now in week six of the season and, as at 8am today, had crushed a total of 1.68 million tonnes of cane. This represents 20 per cent of the district's 8.4 million tonne crop.

At this stage, the crop is cutting right on estimate but

average weekly CCS levels are below expectations at around 13.62 units. We expect to see an improvement in CCS levels over the coming weeks as the cane crop dries out.

Our Herbert mills have been performing well and have almost hit the first million tonnes crushed milestone. As at 8am we had crushed 966,000 tonnes of cane – just over 20 per cent of the total crop.

Average CCS levels this week are tracking at 12.5 units, which is about half a unit below budget. This is largely due to the persistent showers and mild winter weather experienced since the start of the season.

Early indications are that this year's Herbert crop will be larger than the pre-season estimate of 4.7 million tonnes.

Plane Creek Mill has also hit the 20 per cent mark, with about 240,000 tonnes of cane crushed as at 8am today.

Average CCS levels are tracking at 13.4 units for the week. This represents a rise of almost one unit on last week's average and is the first time the figure has risen above 13.

The mill's crushing rates have been steady, but good availabil-

ity means we are achieving budgeted weekly throughputs. Proserpine Mill is only in week three of its crushing season and the mill has settled down very well, achieving better than budgeted throughput for the past two weeks.

This year's crop is estimated at 1.37 million tonnes – well down on last year's 2 mil-

lion tonnes. However early figures suggest the crop is trending above estimate, despite the impact of Cyclone Debbie.

As at 8am, Proserpine Mill had crushed a total of 186,000 tonnes of cane, or about 14 per cent of the total crop.

Average CCS levels are tracking at 12.79 for the week, which is 1.5 units above budget.

The pre-season estimates for our four milling regions put this year's total crop at 15.65 million tonnes. We are currently in the process of reviewing the crop forecast and will update you once this is finalised.

*Best regards, Paul Giordani*

*General Manager – Cane Supply and Grower Relations*



# Advances and payments by pricing category



## 2016 SEASON: HERBERT, BURDEKIN & PLANE CREEK

1 August 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	
<b>POOL PRICES</b>										
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		
24 Feb 2017		\$667.67	\$480.37	\$479.64	\$498.38	\$561.29	\$466.49	\$522.16		
31 Mar 2017		\$672.41	\$481.71	\$480.22	\$498.00	\$560.18	\$466.31	\$512.67		
28 Apr 2017		\$673.34	\$482.94	\$481.00	\$498.29	\$561.16	\$466.57	\$513.75		
26 May 2017		\$674.23	\$484.38	\$482.48	\$499.73	\$562.88	\$468.01	\$515.64		
Current Gross Pool Estimate	A/t IPS	\$777.67	\$480.84	\$479.74	\$497.21	\$560.25	\$465.40	\$512.01		
Shared Pool Premiums	A/t IPS	-\$61.11	\$37.39	\$37.39	\$37.39	\$37.39	\$37.39	\$37.39		
Shared Pool Charges	A/t IPS	-\$33.51	-\$33.49	-\$33.49	-\$33.49	-\$33.49	-\$33.49	-\$33.49		
Net Pool Price Estimate 30 June 2017 Pool Reports	A/t IPS	\$683.05	\$484.73	\$483.63	\$501.10	\$564.14	\$469.29	\$515.90		
<b>ADVANCE RATES</b>	<b>A\$/t IPS</b>	<b>% Advance</b>	<b>Status</b>							
<b>In-Season \$ Rates</b>										
Initial	\$267.00		Paid	\$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	
20 Oct 2016	\$368.00		Paid	\$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	
<b>Post-Season Differential Rates</b>										
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%	Paid	\$584.21	\$420.32	\$419.68	\$436.08	\$491.13	\$419.84	\$456.89
20 Apr 2017		90.00%	Paid	\$605.17	\$433.54	\$432.20	\$448.20	\$504.16	\$419.68	\$461.40
18 May 2017		95.00%	Paid	\$639.67	\$458.79	\$456.95	\$473.38	\$533.10	\$443.24	\$488.06
22 Jun 2017		97.50%	Paid	\$657.38	\$472.27	\$470.42	\$487.24	\$548.81	\$456.31	\$502.75
Final		100.00%	Scheduled	\$683.05	\$484.73	\$483.63	\$501.10	\$564.14	\$469.29	\$515.90
<b>FORECAST RETURN FOR A 'DEFAULT GROWER' (i.e. A grower with no Forward Pricing or QSL Fixed Tonnage Pools)</b>										
% Allocation to US Quota and Harvest Pools		2.54%							97.46%	100.00%
Advances to be Paid as from 22 June 2017	A/t IPS	\$683.05							\$515.90	\$520.14
Final Forecast Advances to be Paid	A/t IPS	\$683.05							\$515.90	\$520.14
% Paid Season-to-Date		100.00%							100.00%	100.00%

## 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.

# MEMBERS INFORMATION

## NOTICE BOARD

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### Reminder to KCGO Members

The daily loadings, sugar price and fuel price are emailed to all members each day for your benefit to keep in touch with the crushing season and Kalagro fuel savings.

Kalagro Fuel Prices have been giving great savings to our current customers.

Throughout the Crushing season, Puma (Kalagro's Supplier) will be delivering daily on week days - Monday to Friday.

A reminder that to place orders, please ring:  
Kalamia Cane Growers office - ph 07 47831312.

Kalagro customer's cannot ring direct to Puma and receive the Kalagro discounted rate.

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### SMARTCANE ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

Smart Cane Accreditation can be completed at Burdekin Productivity Services with local representative, Terry Granshaw - mobile 0437 553 149, email tgranshaw@bps.net.au.

Terry regularly holds fortnightly Smartcane BMP self-assessment workshops as an initial introduction as well as small group workshops for the three required modules to achieve Smartcane BMP accreditation.

Smartcane BMP is funded by the QLD Government with no cost to growers to undertake the course. Bonsucro accreditation requires one further module to be completed in addition to that for Smartcane.

**Please Note:** As an incentive for Growers to undertake Smartcane BMP adoption and Bonsucro accreditation, Willmar makes available a per tonne incentive payment (capped at 25,000 tonne).

Please refer to Collective CSA (Cane Supply Agreement)  
- Page 77 - 78 for additional information.



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- Hear the latest developments from leading Australian researchers and advisors from across Australia using and studying PA technology, showing how PA can be used to improve the management of across many agricultural industries.
- Hear examples from growers of how PA technologies improve their management in a number of crops including grain, livestock, sugar, and horticulture and MORE!



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Mon 14<sup>th</sup> August: starting 12 noon til  
Tues 13<sup>th</sup> conclude at 2.30pm

PA Connections Mon 14<sup>th</sup> Aug:  
5.30pm til 7pm

Dinner Mon 14<sup>th</sup> Aug: 7pm til 10pm

Tues 15<sup>th</sup> Aug: 3pm til 5pm  
At the Aust Centre Field Robotics

Wed 14<sup>th</sup> Sept: All day tours (future dairy and precision horticulture)

Register your RSVP with SPAA by the 9<sup>th</sup> August 2017

Send your form to Nicole via email [info@spaa.com.au](mailto:info@spaa.com.au) or fax 1300 422 279

This symposium has been made possible by the generous support of our corporate and funding partners:



JOHN DEERE



## Our key note speaker: Professor Ian Yule

*Ian Yule is a Professor of Precision Agriculture at Massey University heads up the New Zealand Centre for Precision Agriculture which operates in the area of applied research. He fills a number of prestigious roles including President Elect of the International Society of Precision Agriculture and the Precision Agriculture Association of New Zealand.*



Over the last 20 years Ian's work has looked at a number of facets of technology integration, including; farm mapping, electronic soil mapping, variable rate application of fertiliser from both plane and vehicle, variable rate irrigation, animal tracking, the use of ground based and remote sensing, and more recently hyperspectral imagery and dealing with big data.

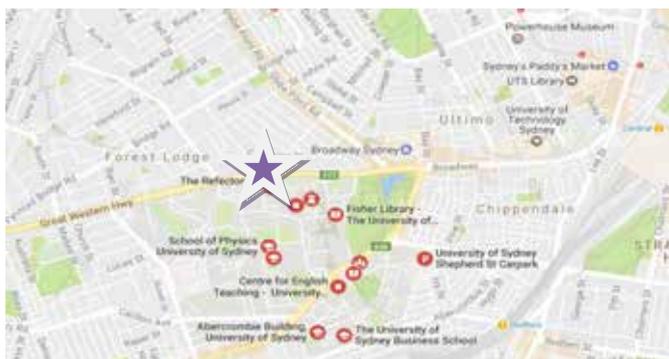
With his prestigious position, we are lucky to bring him here to Australia to talk **Data Intensive Agriculture: Recent trends and developments.**

## Our program includes;

- Autonomous agriculture, robotic weed control, proximal sensor, NDVI and more
- Telecommunications and Data law and governance
- Research updates from CSIRO, University of Sydney's Precision Ag Lab, University of New England's Precision Ag Research Group, University of Queensland, James Cook University and University of Southern Queensland NCEA

## Event features

- Optional tour to see PA in Practice
- **Australian Centre for Field Robotics** research facilities tour
- PA Connections networking mixer
- **Conference dinner** entertainment including a panel of SPAA presidents sharing their history using PA



**The Venue: The Refectory, University of Sydney, NSW**

**Parramatta Road, Sydney Camperdown**

## Accommodation

There is a range of accommodation options (and price points) in Sydney, all within easy walking distance or bus fare of the conference venue.

This symposium has been made possible by the generous support of our corporate and funding partners:



*Sweet Memories*



*Opening of the Burdekin River June 15, 1957*



*Inkerman Mill*



*Burdekin Bridge Foundation Workers*



*Main Street Home Hill 1940 Flood*



*Sugarcane Planting*



*Burdekin Bridge*

# Sweet Industry Media Releases

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## SRA WELCOMES DR KEVIN POWELL TO INSECT RESEARCH TEAM

Sugar Research Australia (SRA) has appointed a new senior research scientist to boost its capacity in entomology, with the appointment of Dr Kevin Powell.

Dr Powell is based at Meringa near Cairns and will be leading and working on important projects that relate to insects (entomology) for sugarcane growers and millers, in the role of Leader, Entomology.

This includes work on insect pests that are already impacting the Australian sugarcane industry, as well work that will help protect Australia against potential insect pests that could pose a biosecurity risk in the future.

SRA Key Focus Area Leader for Pest, Disease, and Weed Management, Dr Andrew Ward, said that Dr Powell came to the role with extensive experience as a principal research scientist, project leader, and manager, working most recently for the Victorian Government in invertebrate sciences.

“Dr Powell has strong theoretical and practical skills and is internationally recognised for his ability to innovate novel and practical approaches to plant biosecurity pest and insects that may be vectors that spread diseases and viruses,” Dr Ward said.

“The Far North sugarcane industry is a possible front line for future pest incursions, so it is positive news for our industry to have a scientist of Dr Powell’s experience based at Meringa.

“He will be working with our investors and our researchers across SRA to deliver better outcomes for the industry, and in particular Dr Karel Lindsay, our Mackay-based entomologist working on soldier fly and cane grub research.”

Dr Powell said that he looked forward to participating in SRA’s existing research projects and collaborations with a range of other stakeholders.

“Managing insect pests is a vital foundation



of crop protection in any industry, and I hope that my insights from other industries will benefit Australian cane growers and millers,” he said.

*Dr Kevin Powell*



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## QFF WELCOME LNP COMMITMENT TO FORM AGRICULTURE ENERGY AND WATER COUNCIL



QUEENSLAND FARMERS' FEDERATION

The Liberal National Party (LNP) has today announced that it is re-establishing an Agriculture Energy and Water Council to improve collaboration between industry, government and government-owned corporations (GOCs) in considering energy-related issues that impact agriculture.

The Council will consist of representatives from the Queensland Farmers' Federation (QFF), QFF industry member CANEGROWERS, AgForce and relevant LNP shadow ministers; and Energy Queensland if the LNP is elected.

QFF President Stuart Armitage welcomed the LNP's announcement and commended it for willingness to work alongside industry to address unsustainable and unjustifiable electricity prices.

“QFF and industry members have been very vocal on the need for government to address spiraling electricity prices and have

been providing considered options that could improve the situation.”

“We have also been strongly advocating for the need to properly consider the synergy to water efficiency – the energy/water nexus. This forum has the potential to address both these issues.”

**“It is a good initiative and we look forward to being involved, but the Council must deliver real outcomes in the form of lower electricity costs for all regional businesses. The worst outcome would be for this to become yet another talkfest that provides no relief for Queensland farmers.”**

The purpose of the LNP's Agriculture Energy and Water Council will be to:

Develop further collaboration between

Queensland Farmers' Federation, AgForce, CANEGROWERS and the LNP to consider energy-related issues of the agriculture industry

Provide strategic oversight to existing Government assistance packages for the agriculture industry, which is facing substantial change and uncertainty in relation to electricity, and

Coordinate management of electricity and water as key agricultural inputs

“The time for talk, excuses and inaction on electricity is over. The upcoming election provides an opportunity for both sides of politics to clearly put forward their position for Queensland's electricity system.”

*Details on the LNP's Agriculture Energy and Water Council can be found at: <http://www.betterqueensland.org.au/agcouncil>*

# Sweet Industry Media Releases

## NEW STRATEGIC PLAN TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF SUGARCANE RESEARCH INVESTMENT

12 July, 2017

Posted by [brad.pfeffer](#)

Sugar Research Australia (SRA) has released its new five-year Strategic Plan, following an extensive development and consultation process with growers, millers, government investors, and other stakeholders.

SRA CEO Mr Neil Fisher said SRA has listened to its investors and is responding to their call for SRA to deliver research that has a real impact on-farm, at-mill and in the communities and environment in which the sugarcane industry operates. This brand new Strategic Plan allows SRA to address the challenges and opportunities facing the Australian sugarcane industry with a focus on research where SRA can have the most impact. In short, SRA aims to deliver research that has a transformational impact on the profitability, sustainability, and resilience of the industry.

"Through our consultations, our investors were clear that they need SRA to be delivering tangible outputs and outcomes for sugarcane growers and millers," Mr Fisher said. "Our investors, through the Strategic Plan, have identified particular areas of attention and investment for SRA in coming years, which includes improving the efficiency of the sugarcane breeding program, improving adoption and communication, enhancing soil health while minimising nutrient runoff, and continuing to work on the yellow

canopy syndrome dilemma.

"The bottom line is that SRA exists to help put more dollars in the back pocket of growers and millers, who underpin regional jobs and economies in large areas of Queensland and NSW.

"SRA is committed to being accountable for our investment, and we do that through measuring and reporting on our performance. Our Strategic Plan has clear measures of success, and we are accountable to these measures through an annual Performance Report, and an Independent Performance Review every three years.

"SRA has also consulted widely with our Commonwealth and State Government investors, and our Strategic Plan aligns with the National Sugarcane Industry Research, Development and Extension (RD&E) Strategy, the Commonwealth Government's Science and Research Priorities and Rural Research, Development and Extension Priorities, and the Queensland Government's Strategic Objectives for investment in the sugarcane industry.

"What sets this Strategic Plan apart from our previous plan is the establishment of four goals that underpin our research investment. These are: drive profitability, improve sustainability, enhance capability, and strengthen organisational excellence."

The Plan also has nine specific Key Focus Areas (KFAs) for SRA's investment: optimally adapted varieties, plant breeding and release; soil health, nutrient management and sustainability; pest disease and weed management; farming systems and harvesting; milling efficiency and technology;



Yellow Canopy Syndrome

product diversification and value addition; knowledge and technology transfer and adoption; collaboration and capability development; and organisational effectiveness.

"Each year, our Strategic Plan is enacted through an Annual Operational Plan, which has also now been released for 2017/18," Mr Fisher said.

"These plans ensure SRA is positioned to lead, partner and invest in research, development and adoption activities that will enable growers and millers to remain profitable and our industry resilient over the long-term."

The Strategic Plan and the 2017/18 Annual Operational Plan have been approved by the SRA Board and the Commonwealth Government. They are available on the SRA website.

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# Sweet Industry News

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## TEQUILA PLANT TO FIRE UP CLEAN ENERGY INDUSTRY AS SUGAR COMPANY BUILDS BIOMASS REFINERY

By Renee Cluff, [www.abc.net.au/rural](http://www.abc.net.au/rural)

Far north Queensland could soon be home to the world's largest crop of the plant used to make tequila, but rather than putting fire in bellies, it will be used to help fuel a green energy initiative.

Agave is currently grown on a commercial scale in Mexico, but Queensland's MSF Sugar is aiming to become a world industry leader, with plans to plant 4,000 hectares of the succulent on the Atherton Tablelands. "Agave produces a huge amount of biomass with very little water, and the climate up here is very similar to Tequila, Mexico, so we thought maybe we can use it," business development manager Hywel Cook said. The agave plantations will form part of the



MSF Sugar's goal is to plant 3.2 million agave plants each year on the Atherton Tablelands.



Construction has begun on MSF Sugar's green energy power plant.



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milling company's \$60 million biomass refinery project, which will operate alongside a green energy power station and a distillery at its Walkamin sugar mill.

Agave and sugar cane fibre will be used to fuel the power station, which is scheduled for completion next year.

It will provide 200,000 megawatts of electricity annually, which will be fed into the Ergon Energy grid.

Mr Cook said the juice from the crushed agave would also be converted into clean fuel.

"During the crushing season we'll take in the cane and then in the other half of the year we'll bring in the agave," he said.

"We'll crush it and we'll separate the fibre from the juice, and the juice will make ethanol and the fibre will burn in our power station to make green power.

"Initially the ethanol will be used for fuel across Queensland, but really I see the ethanol as a raw material, so we can turn ethanol into plastics, we can turn it into other products."



*The Atherton Tableland's dry tropics have a similar climate to Tequila in Mexico, where the largest commercial crops are currently grown.*

## WATER EFFICIENCY MAKES AGAVE APPEALING

The first 10,000 agave plants will go into the ground next month as part of a feasibility study.

*The Atherton Tableland's dry tropics have a similar climate to Tequila in Mexico, where the largest commercial crops are currently grown.*

Some will be grown by the milling company, but MSF Sugar also is enlisting local farmers to act as suppliers.

Howe Farming Enterprises is the first to become involved.

Managing director Dennis Howe said the water-efficient plant was the perfect addition to his multi-cropping business, because a current lack of water in the Mareeba-Dimbulah irrigation supply had

seen his allocation slashed to 50 per cent.

"We can turn some of our unproductive land into productive land," he said.

"The crop's beauty is that it can survive from wet season to wet season without any irrigation."

The Queensland Government provided \$250,000 in funding for the feasibility study, and the first commercial crop is scheduled to be planted in 2020.









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# Sweet Industry News

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## RECORD HIGHS AND LOWS FOR START OF QUEENSLAND'S ANNUAL SUGAR CRUSH

ABC Rural – [www.abc.net.au/rural](http://www.abc.net.au/rural)

The annual Queensland sugar crush is underway following a rough start to 2017 for many cane growers due to extreme weather, including Tropical Cyclone Debbie, as well as sugar marketing deals that were not signed off on until the 11th hour.

The Australian Sugar Milling Council predicts 34 million tonnes of cane will be crushed in Queensland by season's end, which is about the same as last year. To date, just over 12 per cent of that total has gone through the mills.

The northernmost districts are faring better than their southern counterparts.

### **FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND MILL RECORDS BEST START IN 25 YEARS**

The state's sugar crush began in the far north in late May, and although some patchy dry season rain and a few minor mechanical issues have led to brief

stoppages, the region's mills are on schedule.

However, the standout is Cofco Group's Tully Mill.

After an extended crushing season last year, which led to delays planting this year's crop, it has sent 200,000 tonnes more cane through the mill than at the same time in 2016.

Growers including Tom Harney hope to finish the harvest early this year.

"Those of us who have been in the industry long enough can't recall when we've had a start this good," he said

"You'd probably have to go back 25 years when we've had an early start like this because we actually started on the first of June, which is almost unheard of in Tully."

### **LARGEST SUGAR-MILLING REGION REPORTS RECORD-BREAKING WEEK**

Further south in the Herbert and Burdekin, last-minute cane supply agreements between growers and miller Wilmar Sugar led to a frantic opening to the harvest.

Since then, mills in both districts have



*Herbert Canegrowers chairman Michael Pisano says problems with local mills' harvest management system has frustrated growers.*

surpassed budgets, and Australia's biggest cane growing region, the Burdekin, last week crushed a season record 389,000 tonnes.

In the Herbert district, growers including Michael Pisano have been frustrated by IT problems with a new harvest management system.



*Fine weather has returned to the Herbert region after some rain interruptions early in the crush.*

# Sweet Industry News



Mills in the far north, such as the South Johnstone mill, are on schedule to finish the crush on time.

“When you don’t have access to reliable figures or the mapping tools that we have been able to use in the past, it makes us all a little bit nervous and we get the feeling that we’re flying a little blind,” he said.

## **MACKAY STILL RECOVERING**

The Mackay region’s harvesters have been battling with cyclone debris.

Proserpine’s cane paddocks were some of the worst hit by Cyclone Debbie in March, and the crop is expected to be down by about 25 per cent.

The district’s mill only began crushing two weeks ago and despite the challenges, Wilmar Sugar Mackay region operations manager Craig Muddle said cane quality and sugar content was higher than first estimated.

“We expected to see a lot of mud come in with the harvest and also with a lot of cane that was snapped, we expected to see

some deterioration, which makes it difficult to crystallise the sugar,” he said.

“We’ve seen a few little patches of that but once it hits the factory and it’s mixed in, we don’t tend to notice it on the back end.”

## **DROUGHT DELAYS CRUSHING SEASON IN MARYBOROUGH**

Disastrous drought conditions in the Maryborough region last year had growers fearing they would lose half their crop, especially when water in the irrigation schemes ran out in February.

Rain from Cyclone Debbie helped them reach a predicted 600,000 tonnes.

However, MSF Sugar’s Maryborough general manager Stewart Norton said that was still down on last year.

“We had enough cane in the ground this year to probably be up around 900,000 tonnes easily with reasonable weather conditions, but unfortunately they didn’t

eventuate,” he said.

“We had a really bad year in 2014 all due to drought, and that was like a 1 in 100-year drought, so you wouldn’t think that you’d get two of those in four years but guess what, we did.”

## **STATE’S SOUTHERNMOST MILL AT A CROSSROADS**

Rocky Point Sugar Mill, between Brisbane and the Gold Coast, is playing catch-up after a fire in the main control panel in November brought an abrupt end to last year’s harvest.

Managing director David Heck said it was now full steam ahead.

“It’s been quite an exercise just to get all of the electrical installation back and running and commissioned,” he said.

“Last year we only got a portion of our crop off, so we’ve got a huge crop to get off this year.”

It may be among the last harvests in the region, with growers in talks with Chinese investors about having their rural land rezoned for urban development.



The Rocky Point region is moving full steam ahead, with a larger than average crop to be crushed.

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# Sweet Industry News

## TOP JOBS SLASHED AS QUEENSLAND SUGAR LIMITED LOOKS TO COMPETE IN WORLD OF MARKETING 'CHOICE'

ABC Rural – [www.abc.net.au/rural](http://www.abc.net.au/rural)  
By Charlie McKillop  
5th July 2017

### The war may be over but the battle to control Australia's \$1.7 billion export sugar continues.

After three long, bitter years, the sugar industry's marketer Queensland Sugar Limited (QSL) has emerged with the control of the lion's share of Australia's \$1.7 billion export raw sugar.

In the new era of marketing choice, sparked by an exodus of three giant multinational sugar millers from the longstanding industry pool, QSL has secured 1.9 million of a total 3.5 million tonnes.

But it was not enough to save the jobs of two key marketing managers and three other employees whose roles were made redundant this week.

QSL boss Greg Beashel said redundancies were a "sad thing to do", but the company was delighted to retain its status as Australia's largest sugar marketer.

"[A total] 1.9 million tonnes is a big footprint,

particularly out of Australia," he said.

"QSL has a long track record, good reputation with customers and good results, particularly in the past two years, our prices have been quite outstanding so that's what we're going to focus on.

"But the reality is we're no longer marketing all of the crop, so we have to make sure we're cost competitive."

In particular, Mr Beashel pointed to the outcome in the key battleground of north Queensland, where negotiations between QSL and Wilmar had threatened to fall over on numerous occasions, before being signed off only days before the harvest season began.

"We got about 1 million tonnes there out of about 1.3 million tonnes of contestable grower economic interest sugar, so that was somewhere just north of 75 per cent which, given the lateness of when this all happened, we were elated with that result," he said.

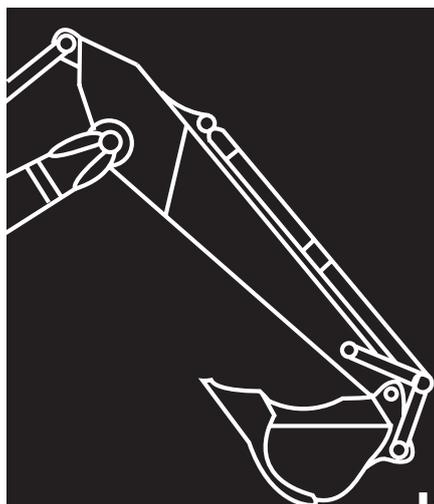
The long and protracted battle between growers and millers over the way sugar was marketed caused fractures from which

some believe the industry might not fully recover.

But in some ways the battle has only just begun for QSL, as it forges a future for itself without access to the economic share of the sugar produced by three major millers Wilmar, MSF and COFCO's Tully Sugar.

"I want to get more than the 1.9 million tonnes. I want to do more marketing work for the industry, achieve good prices," Mr Beashel said.

"If we do that, we'll be employing more people rather than having to have more redundancies."



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# Sweet Recipe

## JOKE OF THE MONTH

Q: Why did the boy go out with a prune?

A: Because he couldn't find a date.

Q: Why is a river rich?

A: It has banks on both sides.

Q: Why couldn't Dracula's wife get to sleep?

A: Because of his coffin.

## DID YOU KNOW...?

- » Did you know Koalas sleep around 18 hours a day
- » Did you know the Australian aircraft carrier QANTAS stands for Queensland And Northern Territories Aerial Service
- » Did you know there is no butter in buttermilk
- » Did you know the past tense for the English word 'dare' is 'durst'

## WORD OF THE MONTH

*divagate*

verb [dahy-vuh-geyt]

to wander; stray

*'Your time is limited,  
so don't waste it living  
someone else's life.'*

STEVE JOBS



# CRANBERRY & ORANGE NO-COOK SLICE

## INGREDIENTS

- » 454g packet medjool dates, pitted
- » 1/2 cup orange juice
- » 2 teaspoons finely grated orange rind
- » 2 tablespoons honey
- » 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- » 1 tablespoon cacao powder
- » 1 1/4 cups pepita and sunflower seed mix
- » 4 cups traditional rolled oats
- » 1 cup coconut flakes
- » 1/2 cup dried cranberries

## METHOD

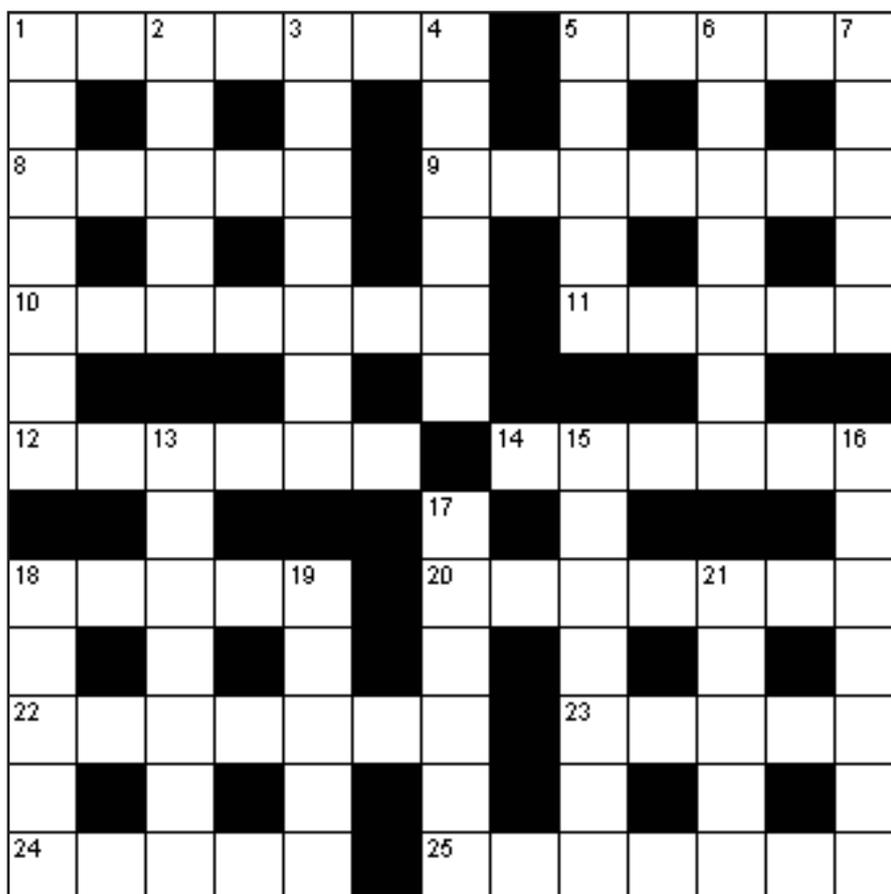
Step 1 - Grease a 20cm x 30cm lamington pan. Line base and sides with baking paper, extending paper 2cm above edges of pan.

Step 2 - Place dates, orange juice and rind, honey, cinnamon and cacao in a food processor. Add 1 cup seed mix, 2 cups oats and 3/4 cup coconut. Process until mixture is finely chopped and comes together. Transfer to a bowl. Reserve 1 tablespoon cranberries. Add remaining cranberries and oats to date mixture. Stir until well combined.

Step 3 - Press mixture evenly into prepared pan. Sprinkle with remaining seed mix, coconut and reserved cranberries, pressing firmly to secure. Refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight until firm.

Step 4 - Remove slice from pan and transfer to a board. Cut into 20 slices. Serve.

# Crossword



## ACROSS

1. Large-billed bird (7)
5. Principal (5)
8. Ball game (5)
9. Card game (7)
10. Aerial (7)
11. Roughly-built hut (5)
12. Unhappier (6)
14. Roofing material (6)
18. Managed (5)
20. Foul (7)
22. Let go (7)
23. Wrath (5)
24. Evade (5)
25. Fortunate (7)

## DOWN

1. Possibly (7)
2. Visible radiation (5)
3. Pungent red pepper (7)
4. The drink of the gods (6)
5. Walking sticks (5)
6. Immediate (7)
7. Container for liquids (5)
13. Marked with spots (7)
15. Measure of area (7)
16. Century (7)
17. Excellent (6)
18. Felt concern (5)
19. Male duck (5)
21. Margins (5)

# Classifieds

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