Come On Regional Queenslanders

ARC UP if you are sick of unaffordable electricity by adding your voice to the ARCUPQld Facebook page #ARCUP

The following article appeared in the North Queensland Register

**Campaign aims to zap high electricity prices**

A united community voice is demanding an end to high electricity prices in regional Queensland, with the Arc Up campaign targeting the state government’s use of Ergon Energy and Powerlink as “cash cows”.

Arc Up is fighting for an immediate reduction of electricity prices for all Ergon consumers by a minimum 33 per cent followed by a complete review of the current pricing practices with the overall goal of returning Queensland to being the state that has the cheapest power in Australia.

The campaigns joint spokesperson Debra Burden said affordable electricity will send a clear message that Queensland is open for business.

“It will mean jobs jobs jobs for regional Queenslanders,” Ms Burden said.

Government regulator the Queensland Competition Authority (QCA) is recommending electricity price increases in July for large and small business, farmers and households, with the largest rise set to be up to 11.5pc.

The Chair of the QCA Professor Roy Green stated on radio recently that under the current pricing process “prices are not going down in the near future”.

“The Arc Up campaign is demanding immediate action from the Palaszczuk Government, which rode into victory in 2015 on the promise of keeping energy assets in public ownership,” Ms Burden said.

“The state owns 100pc of both Ergon Energy and Powerlink, which runs the electricity transmission network,” she said.

“As the 100pc owner the government has the power to drop prices by 33pc today.”

She said last financial year the Queensland government stripped $3.2 billion dollars in dividends from Ergon and Powerlink.

“The Government has used electricity as a cash cow for too long and in doing so has damaged the economy, cost jobs and negatively impacted the voters of Queensland.

“Our united group is instigating the Arc Up campaign for the benefit of all consumers in regional Queensland.”

State Member for Dalrymple Shane Knuth has thrown his support behind the campaign by sponsoring a Private Member’s Bill in State Parliament.

“But this Bill will not pass unless there is strong and loud support from the community,” Ms Burden said.

“So come on regional Queenslanders, arc up if you’re sick of unaffordable electricity by adding your voice to the ARCUPQld Facebook page #arcup
Something for everyone when it comes to sugarcane at SRA Burdekin events

Sugar Research Australia is proud to support three events for the Burdekin cane industry over the next few weeks. Growers and other industry members can learn essential information for irrigating sugarcane, get an update on SRA’s research program, and hear the latest information on harvesting best practice.

The events start with an Irrigation Essentials training course on April 18 and 19. The course is open to all cane farmers who are interested in learning about improving the efficiency and effectiveness of their irrigation management. At the course, farmers can learn more about how much irrigation water to apply at what time, the soil water relationship and water/energy budgeting. Training is presented by Steve Attard, who has specialised in irrigation within the cane industry for almost twenty years, and is designed specifically for Burdekin growers using surface irrigation. Select which date suits you best and RSVP to Andres Jaramillo on: AJaramillo@sugarresearch.com.au or call 0475 954 437.

The SRA Research Forum on April 20 is an opportunity to get an update on the latest SRA research and to get to know your industry researchers. Presenters include new head of plant breeding Dr Bert Collard, head of farming systems research Dr Barry Salter, Professor Bernard Schroeder with an update on research into optimising nitrogen use, Dr Frikkie Botha providing insights into the YCS research program, Dr Graham Stirling talking on the latest research into soil biology and Steve Attard speaking on research and implementation of automation of surface irrigation systems in the Burdekin. RSVP to Andrea Evers on aevers@sugarresearch.com.au or phone 3331 3308.

The Burdekin Harvesting Forum is on May 4. This event attracted over 100 people last year and discussed information on improving sugarcane harvesting as well as the need for all sectors of the industry to work together to enable this to happen. Come along for more information on research into EHS chopper drums and other new technologies and get involved in working together to achieve the best outcome in harvesting.

More events are scheduled in May including the SRA and Burdekin Productivity Services (BPS) Information Day on May 17, which will showcase local research and topics of interest, including a presentation on managing mung beans by Steve Yeates, a local update on potential new cane varieties, Jayson Dowie on controlled release nitrogen research, and the Burdekin Productivity Awards.

All SRA events are provided free of charge and are open to all who are interested. To keep abreast of all the action keep an eye on the Cane Calendar, where you can find all sugarcane industry events: www.canecalendar.com.au.

Burdekin growers successfully bid for $2.84 million to improve reef water quality

Burdekin sugar cane farmers have secured $2.84 million in Australian Government funding to reduce their surplus nitrogen levels and help improve water quality on the Great Barrier Reef.

NQ Dry Tropics supported Burdekin sugar cane farmers to take part in a competitive tender process that was part of the Australian Government’s $140 million Reef Trust initiative to provide innovative, targeted investments that improve the health and resilience of the Great Barrier Reef.

Seventeen successful bids offer a range of cost-effective investments that will make progress towards the pollutant reduction targets set out in the Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan.

NQ Dry Tropics CEO, Dr Scott Crawford, said he was pleased with the outcome of the tender process, and he believes that the success of the current Burdekin tender will provide an excellent foundation for future nutrient tenders in the region.

"NQ Dry Tropics worked closely with the growers to guide them through the bidding process," Dr Crawford said.

"Through the actions of the contracted growers, the nitrogen losses to the reef will be reduced by nearly 500 tonnes. This is a win for both the reef and the successful growers," he said.

Dr Crawford praised the growers who submitted tenders. "Such was the high quality of tenders submitted by growers, that Minister Hunt topped up the available funding to ensure all cost-effective offers where supported," he added.

The Reef Trust Tender-Burdekin provided the opportunity for growers to design a nitrogen surplus reduction project tailored to their farming system, and bid for funding to implement it.

NQ Dry Tropics worked closely with its project partner organisations, Burdekin Productivity Services, Farmacist Burdekin, Agritech Solutions and the Burdekin Bowen Integrated Floodplain Management Advisory Committee (BBIFMAC) to support sugar cane farmers through the bidding process.

The projects are expected to provide important flow-on benefits that extend beyond their three-year duration, such as demonstrating the effectiveness of improved fertiliser management practices.
Getting back on the horse is not always that simple

By Royal Flying Doctors Service Queensland

When discussing mental health in rural areas, there is often a focus on mental illness and suicides coupled with alarming statistics. RFDS (Queensland Section) in no way wants to ignore these figures, however it is important to remember that mental health and wellbeing is about so much more.

Resilience and determination are traits we all carry on some level and rural life presents endless reasons for tapping into these traits. Expressions such as ‘if you fall off your horse, you get back on it again’ and ‘just get on with it’ are heard frequently as a response to tackling the challenges of rural life and for the most part, it’s a philosophy that works.

Challenges vary in size and impact and it is important to acknowledge that there may be times when ongoing hurdles make it that bit harder to ‘get back on the horse’. Stress can manifest itself in many physical and psychological ways from breathing and sleeping troubles through to depressive thoughts. How we deal with stress can impact not only our current and future health, but the wellbeing of those around us. Often by talking through our experience we can explore different and more helpful solutions and strategies, which may reduce the impact of challenging times on our health, and on the people around us.

Since April 2015, RFDS (Queensland Section) has been leading the Drought Wellbeing Service across Queensland. This program offers counselling and support to people living and working in areas impacted by drought. Through the Drought Wellbeing Service, qualified counsellors work alongside existing RFDS clinicians and attend established RFDS primary health care clinics. Counsellors are also available via telehealth and outreach sessions providing strategies that can help in tough times or an ear to listen to wellbeing concerns.

If you, a friend or loved one, would like to speak with one of the RFDS drought Wellbeing Service counsellors please call 07 3852 7544 or email: apower@rfdsqld.com.au

Can using less give you more? - Burdekin nitrogen trials

How much nitrogen do I need to grow a profitable crop of cane? This is the question that the Burdekin Nitrogen Trials is answering. Being conducted on the four major soil types within the Burdekin region and funded by the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, the trials began in 2011 with trial results being communicated to industry each year.

To read the full story click here.

If you would like a copy of the trial results and associated case studies, contact Andrea Evers on 3331 3308 or at aevers@sugarresearch.com.au.

Click here to watch the trial collaborators speak about how their views have changed and what this has meant for their business.

An introduction to SIX EASY STEPS™

SIX EASY STEPS™ is a science-based nutrient management tool that enables the adoption of best practice nutrient management on-farm. It is acknowledged as industry best-practice for nutrient management to optimise productivity and profitability without adversely influencing soil fertility or causing off-farm effects.

In this CaneClip, we talk to consultant and agronomist, Alan Hurney, about SIX EASY STEPS™ workshops held for farmers in the Australian sugarcane industry. We also speak to several participants at a recent workshop about why they attended and what they learnt from the day.

See the CaneClip here.

SIX EASY STEPS™ Workshops will be held in the Burdekin on 24th and 25th May 2016. More information will be coming soon.

Driven by growers. Used by growers. Owned by growers.

Sign up here today. Let's take back industry control over how we farm.
Trade

The Australian Sugar Industry Alliance (ASA) Trade Committee held a strategy review and planning session. The main priorities identified include resolving market access issues to Japan and Indonesia, negotiation of the European Union Free Trade Agreement (EU FTA), implementation of Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP), sustainability and the delivery of consistent messages to government.

Electricity

CANEGROWERS participated in a QCA information session on its retail electricity price determination for 2016-17.

CANEGROWERS made a presentation to Ergon’s Agricultural Energy Forum in relation to a proactive electricity policy to combat El Niño and a network tariff design for Ergon to support irrigated agriculture.

Reef Regulations

CANEGROWERS met with the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (EHP) to discuss the reef regulations that are currently being rolled out. EHP is placing advertising in media publications advising growers of what is required. Dot points from EHP are as follows:

- The regulations apply to graziers with properties over 2000 hectares and all cane farmers in the Wet Tropics, Burdekin and Mackay-Whitsunday regions.
- EHP’s priority is to assist cane farmers to increase the adoption of soil testing practices, and to ensure they follow the regulated standards for nitrogen and phosphorus fertiliser application in the Wet Tropics and Burdekin.
- EHP recognises the good performance of cane farmers and graziers who have already adopted and are using best practice through initiatives such as the Smartcane Best Management Practice (BMP) program and Grazing BMP program.
- If farmers and graziers are accredited under a BMP or equivalent program, and continue to apply those standards, they will not be the focus of this compliance program.
- This compliance program will focus and help those cane farmers and graziers who are yet to make improvements in their performance, particularly in areas where there are high fertiliser, sediment and pesticide losses.
- EHP is not trying to catch people out. The initial aim is to communicate and educate, not to penalise.
- EHP will continue to support industry to increase the number of accredited BMP farmers and graziers, and the wider adoption of regulated standards.
- While not an immediate compliance priority, EHP will also continue to work with cane farmers in the Mackay-Whitsundays, and graziers and other regulated activities within the three reef catchments as part of our overarching compliance program.
- Becoming an accredited producer under an industry BMP program can increase a farm’s profitability and minimise impacts on the Great Barrier Reef.

Vegetation Management

The Vegetation Management (Reinstatement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 was introduced to the Queensland Parliament as a First Reading on 17 March 2016. The Bill was referred to the Agriculture and Environment Parliamentary Committee and public submissions are due 25 April 2016.

Existing Property Maps of Assessable Vegetation (PMAVs) remain valid. Clearing can occur for any purpose.

The Bill proposes new ‘Category C’ (high value regrowth) areas across Queensland freehold, leasehold and indigenous land tenures, based on Landsat 2011 satellite imagery.

All six reef catchments now have ‘Category R’, 50 metre buffers along regrowth watercourses, wetlands and drainage features.

Growers need to check their new “Proposed Regulated Vegetation Management Maps” available from the Department of Natural Resources and Mines (DNRM) website or Queensland Globe. The maps depict proposed Category C area as light orange in colour and Category R as pink. Category X remains white in colour.

Outside of PMAV areas, any clearing of proposed Category C and proposed Category R areas, after 17 March 2016, must be done according to the Self Assessable Codes (available from the DNRM website).

Unlawful clearing during the interim period: Clearing Category C and Category R outside the scope of the Self Assessable Codes and clearing for undecided development applications for high value agriculture and irrigated high value agriculture is considered unlawful clearing.
Vegetation Management

- High value agriculture and irrigated high value agriculture are omitted as a purpose for native vegetation clearing: New Development Applications can no longer be made for high value agriculture (HVA) or irrigated high value agriculture (IHVA), as these are no longer considered a purpose for clearing.
- Approved Development Applications prior to 17 March 2016 are not affected by this Bill.
- Properly made and undecided Development Applications lodged before 17 March 2016 will be assessed and finalised under the previous Vegetation Management Act 1999.
- No decisions will be made on any Development Application for High Value Agriculture, Irrigated High Value Agriculture or associated Material Change of Use, lodged during the interim period.

Water Use

- CANEGROWERS attended a National Water Use in Agriculture RD&E Strategy workshop in Townsville. The objective was to assess national options for projects across industries. There was no specific funding and it was still focusing on relatively high-level concepts.

BMP

- An independent evaluation of the Smartcane program during 2016 is a requirement of our contract with EHP. This will evaluate how well the program is meeting its objectives and provide ideas for further improving the program’s effectiveness and efficiency.
- 56% of the cane production area has now been benchmarked in the core modules through self-assessment. Accreditation numbers continue to grow (5% of cane area accredited), with several hundred additional growers now working towards certification. Many of these latter growers have much of the evidence required, but are waiting to acquire additional records of certain practices.

QFF Things to know

⇒ CSIRO research has found that there is enough water and suitable soils to support 1.5 million hectares of irrigated agriculture in northern Australia. That is 25 times more land, than the amount suggested in the 2010 report by the Northern Land & Water Taskforce.
⇒ The Australian Livestock and Rural Transporters Association (ALRTA) has applauded Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull’s commitment that a re-elected Coalition Government will abolish the Road Safety Remuneration System.
⇒ Read QFF President Stuart Armitages’ QCL column on the Federal Government’s new Managing Farm Risk Programme HERE.
⇒ SEE QFF’s Disasters Policy Officer Ross Henry article ‘What the Managing Farm Risk Programme means for your farm’ in latest edition of Rural Weekly.
⇒ The Griffith University Asia Institute is hosting the ‘Brisbane to Beijing: Understanding Agribusiness in Asia’ luncheon panel in Brisbane on 22 April. The panel will focus on the growing food exportation market in Asia and how Australian agriculture industry can be ready.
Pricing information

2015 Season Advances & Payments
as at 4 April 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>$/tonne IPS</th>
<th>% estimated return</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial *</td>
<td>$227</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 August 15*</td>
<td>$243</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 October 15*</td>
<td>$266</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 December 15*</td>
<td>$304</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 January 16*</td>
<td>$314</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 February 16*</td>
<td>$316</td>
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<tr>
<td>17 March 16*</td>
<td>$328</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 April 16</td>
<td>$350</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 May 16</td>
<td>$369</td>
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<tr>
<td>23 June 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Payment</td>
<td>$389</td>
<td>100%</td>
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* paid

The Advance Program is a guide only. CANEGROWERS Burdekin takes no responsibility for its accuracy. It only applies to growers who did not forward price for 2015 (the default method). Growers who have forward priced for 2015 will be paid the same percentage of their final expected proceeds. For individual advance rates check your grower forecast on the Wilmar website.

Estimated QSL 2015 Pool Prices
As at 25 March 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>$/Tonne IPS GROSS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QSL Harvest Pool</td>
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<tr>
<td>QSL Actively Managed Pool</td>
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<tr>
<td>QSL Guaranteed Floor Pool</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>QSL US Quota Pool</td>
<td>$695</td>
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<tr>
<td>QSL 2-season Forward Pool 2015</td>
<td>$437</td>
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<tr>
<td>QSL 3-season Forward Pool 2015</td>
<td>$441</td>
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<tr>
<td>QSL 2-season Forward Pool 2016</td>
<td>$467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QSL 3-season Forward Pool 2016</td>
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Growers can monitor QSL pool performance via the Price Pool Matrices published on the QSL website (www.qsl.com.au). This information is updated regularly and provides a sense of how the QSL-managed pools are performing over the current season.

Waterfind Burdekin
Haughton WSS Water Market Summary

As at 11 April 2016

<table>
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<th>Region</th>
<th>Latest</th>
<th>Same period last year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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The above information is provided by Waterfind. The information provided is of a general nature only and must not be relied upon in substitution for professional advice. Waterfind accepts no responsibility for the accuracy, completeness or timeliness of any information provided. For more information click here.

Dam Storage

The dam decreased by 1.2%

100.4%
13 April 2016

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100.4%
13 April 2016
EXCLUSIVE MEMBER OFFERS
Discounted online training

Members of CANEGROWERS Burdekin can access the online courses for a discounted price.

Courses Available

“Safe working near electrical assets in the rural industry”
Participate in OHS Processes
Farm Safety for Farm Managers

Members receive the discounted price of $50 with non-members paying $100.

To register phone Tiffany on 47903600
canenews is read by the majority of Burdekin cane farmers and their families in the Burdekin. Copies are also circulated to all CANEGROWERS Offices, businesses, industry, politicians, Government Agencies and members of the community.

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Please direct all advertising enquiries and materials to the above.

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Phone Tiffany today for a quote 4790 3600

* Two employees paid fortnightly with membership discount applied.