

## **Mossman/Tableland**

Happy New Year and welcome to 2015.

The 2014 crush finally concluded for Mossman and Tableland farmers on the 14<sup>th</sup> of January 2015.

A total of 1,141,154.4 tonnes of cane was crushed for the season at a mill average CCS of 13.2. Coastal CCS was recorded at 12.6 with the Tablelands CCS recorded at 13.9. The Mossman Mill crush lasted 36 weeks and is the longest crush on record and the second biggest crop ever to go through the rollers. Rain and factory reliability also interrupted harvesting operations during the last few weeks which unfortunately resulted in around 33,000 tonnes of cane remaining as standover.

To date, 2015 is shaping to be a good year and through January most of the northern region had ideal weather with good growing conditions. Most of the rain received was at night with hot and humid days. These favourable conditions also enabled farmers to continue with their weed management programs.

In mid January a shed meeting was held at Mossman Agricultural Services where the 2014 Productivity reports were handed out, along with MAS' work plan of for the 2015 season.

Also on the 17<sup>th</sup> of January, Mossman and Tableland Farmers had the opportunity to meet and discuss sugar related issues with the Hon Minister John McVeigh the QLD Minister for Agriculture at two events. The first was at Mossman Agricultural Services and the second opportunity was at the official opening of Sweet Farm Tours, Australia's first Cocoa and Sugarcane Experience. The Minister was met with a very hot and humid day, but he still made the time to talk to as many people as he could.

At the end of 2014, I had the opportunity to attend The Case IH International Sugarcane Forum at Sanctuary Cove from the 14-16 December; where over 100 farmers and key industry representatives discussed the health and sustainable future of the industry. At the conference I was given the chance to represent Next Gen on a panel session, focused on the future of the industry, which was hosted by prominent rural woman, **Robbie Sefton**. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Case IH for continuing their commitment to support the Next Gen program.

All through February and March I will be on the road in the 'Cane Captiva', with my role as Next Gen Officer for the industry. This year I will be starting my journey from Northern NSW and working my way North to Mossman. So please check the Next Gen web site for when I will be in a mill region near you. I am always happy to meet any young farmers and also the young at heart.

Also as the Next Gen Officer for the industry I would like to invite the young (and young at heart!) to 'Step UP!' and join in the conversation about innovation, sustainability and profitability in the Australian sugar industry, at the **Case IH Step UP!** Conference in March 2015.

Held over 2 days at one of Queensland's premier beach resorts, the Case IH Step UP! Conference content will be exciting and progressive; with the speakers and field trips addressing topics such as best farming practice; precision farming; sugar marketing; R&D; agricultural engineering & technology; and financial products and planning.

**Where:** Hotel Grand Chancellor Palm Cove, Queensland

**When:** Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2015 (Welcome Function to be held on the evening of Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March)

For more information regarding accommodation, bookings, tickets etc, please contact;

***Amanda Sheppard***

**Phone:** 3839 1900 or visit [nextgenstepup.com](http://nextgenstepup.com)

To find out more about the Next Gen program, please visit [nextgenfarmer.com](http://nextgenfarmer.com).

I look forward to seeing members at this year's Cash IH Step Up conference.

Gerard Puglisi

Northern Director