

NSW

One can never count the tons until they have been milled, although at this stage it looks like the tonnage for NSW will be in excess of two million tonnes for the 2015 season – a far cry from the 900,000 tonnes we cut a few years ago.

The rain in late December was excellent for most but some of the lower lying areas of the Tweed did suffer some scalding, in particular the variety Q240. The rainfall continued upstream holding the river above drainage levels for about four days. This has now recovered but will be at a reduced tonnage for the coming harvest or will be stood over for 2016.

Soybeans are a hardy crop, with some being under very hot water for the four days and still look like they will make a part crop. Some growers were not so lucky, having just managed to plant a few days before the rain each time and are now on their second or third planting of their beans.

It never ceases to amaze me how one sugarcane variety can be so affected by flooding one year and be the standout variety the next. I guess after 50 year plus of growing sugar cane, I still have a lot to learn.

The Clarence is looking at a crop in excess of 700,000 tonnes. The soybeans are looking like giving the growers there a much needed cash injection and a whole lot of nitrogen in the soil.

The Richmond River growers have a preliminary estimate of in excess of 800,000 tons with once again an excellent crop of soybeans.

During the 2014 season cane was transferred from Condong to the Richmond for crushing and while arrangements are still being made, this could well be reversed this year. This is one of the benefits of a cooperative milling system of being able to transfer cane between the mills, depending on the crop size and milling conditions at each mill.

If we can emulate the growing season that we had last year and the forecast looks good for that, then there will be a lot of smiling growers in NSW.

Robert Quirk
NSW Director