

Herbert River Region

Having received late rains over the whole district with varying amounts of rainfall, the weather has now taken a turn for the better with a cold snap and drier conditions, let us hope it will last.

On Friday June 3rd June a farm fest was held in Ingham put on by Ingham Farm Centre. There was information for cattle producers, horses, canefarmers, gardeners, tools, boots, fencing needs, drones, as well as catering for the children. It was very well attended.

I had occasion to travel from Ingham to Rockhampton recently week and looking at the cane along the road it seems that we all have a mixed-bag of paddocks. Yellow Canopy Syndrome seems to be in certain varieties more than others with some particularly bad spots in the Mackay area. Some of the cane is turning in on itself and it looks in rather poor shape.

Rain stopped the crushing in the Burdekin and Mackay areas, and the Sarina and surrounding areas seems to have been the recipient of very strong winds as the cane looked like fiddlesticks, every which way. Planting has also stopped.

HCPSL has completed a district wide Pachymetra survey and this survey will identify areas where Pachymetra is a limiting factor in cane yield. There has been an increased uptake of approved seed cane plots for the last 2 years

There has been delivery of specific training on nutrients and pesticide management through the Wet Tropics Sugar Industry Partnerships programme. To date a number of growers have completed plans and are implementing changes on farm.

Macknade glasshouse has been repaired for use by researchers to undertake specific research activities. HCPSL continues to work with SRA & University of Western Sydney researchers on the issue of YCS. HCPSL has a YCS farm management trial to investigate farm management options that may assist growers' management of YCS. This is a collaborative project with SRA.

HCPSL has partnered with SRA , CSIRO, Queensland Government agencies (DNRM,DSIT,DEHP) and private companies ICL and Incitec Pivot, developing knowledge through R&D activities in assessing new fertiliser products. There has also been a soil mapping project with UNSW to allow industry to better manage nutrient inputs.

As the crushing gets underway after the rains, I hope that everyone has a bumper crop and excellent CCS to boost our viability and bring some life back into our small towns, lifting everyone's spirits.

Carol Mackee
Herbert Director