

# SMARTCANE BMP

Congratulations to the more than 500 enterprises now accredited in Smartcane BMP!

Smartcane BMP Accredited Grower keychains have been posted out to all accredited enterprises in recognition of your contribution to improved productivity, profitability and sustainability for the Queensland sugarcane industry. We are proud of the achievements of our industry and hope you will display your keychain with pride.



# 500 CLUB



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When this magazine hit the printers' rollers, there were 521 Smartcane BMP accredited enterprises in Queensland, representing more than 119,324 hectares of accredited land. To put this in perspective, more than 30% of all Queensland cane-growing land is now certified as producing the crop profitably and sustainably.

## WHAT IS SMARTCANE BMP?

Smartcane Best Management Practice (BMP) is an industry owned, voluntary and internationally recognised management program open to all Queensland sugarcane growers.

Smartcane BMP commenced in 2014 in response to the State Government's Reef Regulations as a way for the cane industry to demonstrate that farming practices are productive, profitable and sustainable.

Smartcane BMP is set around a baseline of industry standards that meet and/or exceed regulations.

For growers to obtain Smartcane BMP accreditation, they must demonstrate that they are operating at or above industry standards for the three core modules of Soil Health and Nutrient Management; Irrigation and Drainage Management and Weed, Pest and Disease Management.

Smartcane BMP is about achieving good agronomic, economic and environmental outcomes for individual growers and the cane industry as a whole.

## WHAT SMARTCANE BMP ACCREDITATION GIVES TO GROWERS?

- Recognition for operating at/or above industry standards (Smartcane BMP is the only formal recognition program that is accepted by government, end users and industry).
- Through the self-assessment and accreditation process, business and operating practices are reviewed providing an opportunity to identify areas for improvement and/or modifications.
- Compliance with Reef Regulations - (Smartcane BMP accredited growers are a low priority for Reef Compliance Officers).
- Financial Incentives - for some milling districts, there is a financial incentive, paid by the mill to accredited growers. Other Smartcane BMP growers have made monetary savings through improved efficiencies with fuel, water, chemicals, energy and fertiliser use.
- Market access where there is a demand for sustainably produced products.
- Social licence to operate. Having a recognised program whereby participants are independently audited against standards, gives consumers and the general public confidence that the industry is operating as good corporate citizens who uphold standards that are acceptable to all.
- There is no cost to participate in the Smartcane BMP program, access the support of facilitators or undertake a third-party audit.

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## WHO ELSE BENEFITS FROM SMARTCANE BMP?

- Government
- Mills
- Industry
- Chemical companies/re-sellers
- End users – manufacturers and consumers
- SRA
- CANEGROWERS
- Productivity Services
- Marketers/traders
- The general public

Six years ago if someone asked what Smartcane BMP meant for growers the answer would inevitably be; "It helps to meet compliance with reef regulations,". But Smartcane BMP has always been about much more than just meeting regulatory requirements.

Recently there has been a concerted shift in people's attitudes towards Smartcane BMP and the motivations behind grower involvement in the program. The desire to be recognised as having sustainable practices, a social licence to operate and access to markets (current or potential) has driven growers to Smartcane BMP participation.

The Rocky Point cane growing district is a prime example of this.

Situated on the coastal plains between Brisbane and the Gold Coast, the district does not fall within any of the reef catchments captured under legislation so meeting 'reef compliance' isn't a motivator for growers in this region. In early March, the first Rocky Point grower was accredited

followed by another six local enterprises in quick succession.

The Rocky Point district's interest in Smartcane BMP is driven by recognition for their best management practices in an area where urban encroachment is continuing, along with a desire to maintain and expand market access into the future.

The Smartcane BMP program has cemented itself as a foundation for the ongoing success of our industry. There are now accredited growers in every cane growing district in Queensland.

Growers who engaged in the program at its inception are now undertaking reaccreditation after successfully upholding the program standards for five consecutive years.

Smartcane BMP is a strong foundation for demonstrating sustainable sugar and the program has now been benchmarked and has excellent alignment to Bonsucro, ProTerra and the Vive sustainability frameworks, all of which have international recognition.

End-users and Fast-Moving Consumer Goods companies such as Coca Cola and Nestle have also recognised that Smartcane BMP can offer the production and environmental requirements to meet their needs for sourcing sustainable sugar.

CANEGROWERS, through an initiative called The Sustainable Sugar Project, is investigating how to use blockchain technology to show sugar buyers the provenance of sugarcane, and to test the possibility of premium payment for fully traceable sugar.

The Smartcane BMP program has funding from the Queensland Government until 2022. Anyone thinking of participating should take advantage of the support that is on offer as soon as possible. ■