

SMARTCANE BMP RECOGNITION

By Kate Gowdie, Smartcane BMP Manager

There is now, more than ever, good reason to participate in the Smartcane BMP program and achieve accreditation.

The Smartcane BMP program is currently the only program to have a 'Recognised' status from the Queensland Government. This means that growers who are accredited in Smartcane BMP are deemed to be meeting their legal obligations for sediment and nutrients and will not be the focus of compliance activities while they remain accredited.

This formalises the arrangement we have had with the Queensland Government for several years. As before, accredited growers can avoid compliance visits by letting the compliance officer know their status and sending a copy of their accreditation certificate.

Further, accredited growers now have the option to avoid any contact from compliance staff by voluntarily registering their Smartcane BMP status with the Environment Department. If your accreditation is on the register, the compliance officers will know

not to contact you in relation to reef regulations.

To take advantage of this new option, accredited growers will need to provide the Smartcane BMP Program with permission to share their details on the government's reef compliance register. These details include their name, ABN and contact details, the address of the farm and the term of the accreditation (date of expiry).

All accredited growers in the Smartcane BMP database have been sent an email asking them to opt in, or opt out, of having their details on the reef compliance register. It is the grower's choice.

If you are an accredited grower and have yet to receive your email, please contact the Smartcane BMP Office on 07 3864 6444.

This process differs from the short-term arrangement that the Queensland Government is offering growers who are involved in certain water quality projects, wherein the grower is considered a low priority for compliance visits for the time they are involved in the project. These projects are referred to as being 'Acknowledged'.

This short-term arrangement will be available to growers who have benchmarked in Smartcane BMP and have committed to undertaking an accreditation audit within 12 months. If you meet these criteria and want to be added to the low priority register, please contact your local Smartcane BMP facilitator to discuss.

In relation to meeting regulations, being a supplier of sustainable sugar and securing our industry's reputation, accreditation in Smartcane BMP remains the gold standard. ■

PATHWAYS TO LOW PRIORITY FOR SMARTCANE BMP GROWERS

