

TIME TO GET OFF THE BENCH

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Benchmarking is the process of completing a self-assessment to evaluate your practices against the industry standards that underpin the Smartcane Best Management Practice program.

Very soon, growers who are registered with Smartcane BMP but have not yet benchmarked their enterprise will receive an email inviting them to do so.

Growers who benchmark their farming business are not required to complete Smartcane BMP accreditation. However, as frequently occurs following self-assessment, growers may find that their practices already meet or exceed the requirements and so decide to proceed to audit.

Benchmarking can also help growers identify practice changes that will benefit their business and bottom line.

Growers with multiple cane farming businesses can use the benchmarking process to compare practices between enterprises, while others may use the self-assessment tool to share information with external stakeholders like banks or insurers.

HOW DO I BECOME BENCHMARKED?

- The first step is to register. You can do this yourself online or contact your local facilitator for assistance.

- Once registered, you can then complete the self-assessment or benchmarking process. This is where you assess your current management practices against the industry standards (BMP Standards) by completing a survey. You can complete this survey yourself or with a facilitator.
- You can also use the results of your self-assessment to determine your level of compliance with reef regulations (speak to your local facilitator to find out more).
- After benchmarking, you can then determine if there are any areas where you require more information or would like to implement something new or different, for example additional record keeping.

Data is stored securely in the Smartcane BMP database and cannot be accessed by any external party. Your data will never be shared without your consent.

For growers wishing to proceed to accreditation, there are some next steps.

MOVING TO ACCREDITATION

- When you are satisfied that your practices meet the standards, you can undertake the pre-audit process. This involves a Smartcane BMP facilitator coming on-farm to assess your practices and records.
- Your pre-audit is submitted to the Smartcane Audit Office (Brisbane) and assessed for readiness for audit. If approved, you progress to a Smartcane BMP accreditation audit by a third party.

There is no cost to access any of these services or to undertake an audit. The Smartcane BMP program is supported by the Queensland Government until June 2022.

Speak to your local facilitator, contact the Smartcane BMP office or visit www.smartcane.com.au for further information. ■

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Pictured right: The images show results of self-assessments in each of the three core modules of BMP – Soil Health and Nutrient Management, Irrigation and Drainage Management and Weeds, Pest and Disease Management. The percentages are the benchmark compared with industry standard or above industry standard.

Module Summary

Date: 21/06/21
Grower: John Citizen

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Soil Health and Nutrient Management	% Agreement		Actions
	Industry Standard	Above Industry Standard	
1.1.1. Managing compaction	67%	17%	
1.2.1. Trash Management	100%	100%	
1.3.1. Use of Fallow	0%	0%	
1.3.2. Fallow Cover	100%	-	
1.3.3. Planting the Fallow	0%	0%	
1.3.4. Residue Management	0%	0%	
1.4.1. Prepared land for planting	100%	0%	
1.5.1. Tillage management in-crop	100%	0%	
1.6.1. Managing Chemical Soil Constraints	34%	0%	
1.6.2. Acidity and Acid Sulphate Soils	0%	-	
1.7.1. Soil Sampling and Analysis	100%	34%	
1.8.1. Calculating optimum nutrient rate	100%	0%	
1.9.1. Placement of fertiliser	100%	0%	
1.9.2. Timing of application	60%	-	
1.10.1. Calibration	100%	0%	
1.11.1. Record Keeping	86%	50%	

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Irrigation and Drainage Management	% Agreement		Actions
	Industry Standard	Above Industry Standard	
2.1.1. Calculating application rates	40%	0%	
2.1.2. Calculating how often to apply water	50%	0%	
2.1.3. Seasonal allocation	20%	0%	
2.2.1. Run-off and drainage mgt	50%	0%	
2.3.1. Irrigation water quality testing	34%	-	
2.3.2. Using effluent water	0%	0%	
2.4.1. Furrow irrigation	100%	0%	
2.4.2. Overhead high pressure	0%	0%	
2.4.3. Overhead low pressure	67%	0%	
2.4.4. Drip system	0%	-	
2.5.1. Surface drainage	100%	100%	
2.5.2. Subsurface drainage	100%	-	
2.6.1. Erosion	100%	100%	

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Weed, Pest and Disease Management	% Agreement		Actions
	Industry Standard	Above Industry Standard	
3.1.1. Canegrub management	0%	0%	
3.1.2. Rat management	100%	0%	
3.1.3. Other pests	100%	0%	
3.1.4. Disease management	50%	0%	
3.1.5. Product selection	75%	0%	
3.1.6. Weed management	88%	0%	
3.1.7. Chemical Training	100%	100%	
3.1.8. Chemical Application	100%	0%	
3.1.9. Chemical Storage and Disposal	25%	-	
3.1.10. Chemical Record Keeping	0%	0%	

