



REACCREDITATIONS SHOW BEST PRACTICE HAS BECOME A WAY OF LIFE

By Kate Gowdie
Smartcane BMP Manager

With 20% of all accredited growers successfully undertaking third party reaccreditation in the past 12 months, Queensland sugarcane farmers are proving that their sustainable, profitable and productive practices are not a one-off.

The vast number of successful reaccreditations, coupled with the extremely high retention rate for accredited growers is testament to the flexibility of the program that ensures participants are operating at or above industry best practice while at the same time farming their way.

Smartcane BMP has a retention rate for accredited growers of over 98%. The majority of growers who didn't renew their accreditation had sold their property or changed what they farmed.

CANEGROWERS Chairman Paul Schembri, who grows sugarcane at Farleigh near Mackay with his brother Joe, *pictured right*, was one of the many growers who was reaccredited in 2021 after initially becoming accredited in 2016.

"Farming on the Queensland coast is one of the most environmentally challenging roles, but this shows we are up for the challenge," Paul said.

Paul believes that while initially there may be some new concepts to get your head around when working towards



accreditation, once you have the right systems in place it's only a matter of documenting the work that you are already doing.

After being BMP accredited for the past five years, Neil Maitland, *pictured left*, from the Mulgrave district found the reaccreditation process straight forward.

"Once you work out a record keeping system or the templates that are easy for you to maintain, it makes it easy when it comes time for the reaccreditation."

"Once you work out a record keeping system or the templates that are easy for you to maintain, it makes it easy when it comes time for the reaccreditation."

Neil Maitland



Smartcane BMP facilitator **John Barbetti** assisted several growers from the Tablelands district with their re-accreditation in 2021.

"There is a growing realisation that Smartcane BMP is providing growers with a farm management system that allows them to compare and measure sustainability in farm management for a range of practices from environmental, cultural, financial, safety and forward pricing," John said.

In 2022, more than 80 enterprises will undertake reaccreditation, moving towards 30% of all accredited growers maintaining the Smartcane BMP standards for five years or more.

We wish to congratulate all accredited growers on their commitment to their industry. We recognise the work they do each and every day to ensure Australian sugarcane farming is both valuable and sustainable. ■

Pictured: (top left) Neil Maitland proudly displays his Smartcane BMP Accredited Grower sign amongst a Sun Hemp fallow crop on his Aloomba cane farm; (left) Joe and Paul Schembri's Mackay cane farming business was just one of many farms reaccredited in 2021; (above) Smartcane BMP facilitator John Barbetti assisted Tableland growers with their accreditation.

"There is a growing realisation that Smartcane BMP is providing growers with a farm management system that allows them to compare and measure sustainability in farm management for a range of practices from environmental, cultural, financial, safety and forward pricing."

John Barbetti

Not yet accredited in Smartcane BMP?

Contact your local facilitator or visit www.smartcane.com.au

