YOUR FARM, YOUR WAY Smartcane BMP is a program for you to document and celebrate the way you farm.

What is this about?

Land used to farm sugarcane is typically fully cleared.

However, many farms have wetlands, waterways and associated riparian zones which, as you well know, are critical to surface drainage. Some farms also have patches of native vegetation. No matter the size of these aquatic or vegetated areas, they can make important contributions to conserving native species.

Sam and Santo's story

Sam and Santo Lamari went on a mission to improve the condition of the wetland on their farm in the Herbert River district. The family has long protected a 40-hectare wetland area on the farm but part of it was becoming choked with Para grass and Hymenachne.

With help from Terrain NRM and the Queensland Government, they transformed the weed-infested area into a healthy ecosystem with an abundance of native wildlife and plants.

There are many other examples of growers improving natural areas and features, often through making relatively small improvements. Your BMP facilitator can discuss examples from your district.

What's next?

REVIEW AND DISCUSS

If you'd like to docuent or review your natural systems practices, you can access Module 7 at ✈ smartcane.com.au.. The module records your current practices, and the simple checklist format helps to identify options for further improvement.

Your district facilitator or productivity officer can help you to follow-up on any additional information, training or expert advice.

GET INVOLVED IN SMARTCANE BMP

Smartcane BMP has modules that cover all aspects of the cane farming business. It includes the option to become accredited in the farming practice modules. (Modules 1, 2 and 3) Participation is entirely voluntary, and your facilitator can talk with you about what's involved and put you in touch with local growers who are also part of the program.

Contact your district facilitator to get involved.

SMARTCANE BMP

What's in the module?

INDUSTRY STANDARD	ABOVE INDUSTRY STANDARD
MAPPING AND RECOGNISING NATURAL FEATURES	
Recording natural features like wetlands, waterways, riparian areas and patches of native vegetation on suitable maps, and identifying areas classified as high conservation value	Identifying areas that can benefit from rehabilitation
LEVEES, BUNDS AND CROSSINGS	
Ensuring free flow of water and passage of fish by crossings, bund walls, floodgates and levee banks	Constructing crossings, levees and bunds as bridges or open culverts across the full width of the wetland or waterway
RETAINING AND CONNECTING NATIVE VEGETATION	
Retaining patches of native vegetation	Establishing corridors of vegetation to link patches of vegetation
ENHANCING HABITAT VALUE OF NATURAL FEATURES	
Where practical, leaving fallen branches, trees, vegetation debris and rocks in place, and controlling pesticide use, weeds, pests, and fire around natural features	Coordinating weed, pest, and fire management with neighbours; establishing nesting boxes; and restoring wetlands and vegetation