

# HCPSL

Herbert Cane Productivity Services Ltd.

## **Annual General Meeting- 2020.**

# AGM business

- ▶ Welcome
- ▶ Apologies
- ▶ Minutes of the previous meeting
- ▶ Business arising out of the minutes
- ▶ Annual Report and Financial Statements
- ▶ Board chairman's report
- ▶ Business managers report
- ▶ Guest speaker- Dr. Rob Magarey

Topic-“The spreading of RSD in a district”

# Board chairman's report

### **HCPSL mission**

To facilitate an increase in productivity, profitability and sustainability within the Herbert sugarcane industry by providing agronomic and technical services.

### **HCPSL vision**

To be recognized throughout the Herbert district as the primary independent resource for agronomic advice, extension and support in regard to the whole of sugarcane value chain.

## Our Goals

1. Achieve an annual production of **85 tonnes cane/ha**, through the activities under the **Target 85** program.
2. Achieve a sustainable and environmentally sound sugarcane production system.

# The HCPSL Board members

Elections were held earlier this year and the following were elected to the HCPSL Board:

- ▶ Michael Waring- Grower member and Chair
- ▶ Ian Davies- Miller member and Deputy Chair
- ▶ Gino Zatta- Grower member
- ▶ Nicole Butler- Mill member
- ▶ Greg Erkill- Grower member
- ▶ Peter Larsen- Mill member



# Board highlights for 2019

- ▶ Board elections with a number of candidates seeking election
- ▶ Implementation of a new financial system to better track expenses
- ▶ Holding 2019-20 expenses within budget
- ▶ 2020-2021 budget approval
- ▶ Working through office housing issues with a 12-month lease being signed with SRA in September
- ▶ Review of company policies and direction
- ▶ Leasing of the Pietrobon farm for Clean Seed production

# Administration



- ▶ The 2019/2020 financials were duly audited and a copy is available for viewing.
- ▶ Grower membership covers over 99% of area harvested- the largest grower membership of any voluntary Herbert industry support agency.
- ▶ Wilmar continues to be a member, matching dollar for dollar grower funding in the core service program.



# Administration

- ▶ The 2020/2021 budget has been approved by the HCPSL company directors.
- ▶ The total budget was set at \$8.46/ha for each the grower and miller to pay. Total of \$16.92/ha. There is no change in the service fee for the past 6 years.

This has been extremely challenging with the Board undertaking some cost cutting measures to hold the budget amount.

- ▶ The external funded component of the HCPSL business is significant, with external funding coming from Government projects, NRM groups, private companies (agri-chemical and fertiliser companies) and universities.



# Staffing



## Core funded staff:

- ▶ Lawrence Di Bella (Manager)
- ▶ Sue Becarris (Administration Officer- 4 days a week)
- ▶ Sandra Coco (Resource Officer)
- ▶ Graeme Holzberger (Field Agronomist)
- ▶ Adam Royle (Extension Agronomist)
- ▶ Sam Sellick (Field Agronomist- Variety Development)
- ▶ Tony Mc Clintock (Field Agronomists)
- ▶ Mike Sefton (Geospatial and Data Systems Officer)
- ▶ Fieldworkers who assist with seed cane production and trials

## Externally funded staff:

- ▶ Richard Hobbs (Extension Agronomist)
- ▶ Jarrod Sartor (Extension Agronomist)
- ▶ Leanne Carr (Extension Agronomist)
- ▶ Shannon O'Brien (Extension Agronomist)
- ▶ Megan Zamhel (Extension Agronomist)
- ▶ Ellie McVeigh (Extension Agronomist)
- ▶ Melissa Royle (WTSIP and RP161 Extension Support Officer)
- ▶ Rod Nielson (GIS Officer)
- ▶ Minka Ibanez (Field technician)



# TARGET 85



A HCPSL productivity initiative to get the Herbert industry to an 85tch district average, in a sustainable manner.

The HCPSL Board plans to review its Strategic direction in early 2021- we will be seeking industry feedback.

# HCPSL Strategic Plan Summary 2018-2020



## Why we exist

### Our mission

To facilitate an increase in productivity, profitability and sustainability within the Herbert sugarcane industry by providing agronomic and technical services.

## Where we want to be in the future

### Our vision

To be recognized throughout the Herbert district as the primary independent resource for agronomic advice, extension and support in regard to the whole of sugarcane value chain.

## What's important to our industry

### Our Goals



1. Achieve an annual production of **85 tonnes cane/ha**, through the activities under the **Target 85** program.
2. Achieve a sustainable and environmentally sound sugarcane production system.

## KEY TARGET AREAS (KTA)

### KTA1: Clean seed and variety development

1. Approved (clean) seed provision
2. Cane variety development

### KTA2: Agronomic and industry services

1. Crop agronomy advice
2. Cane harvest systems and advice
3. Crop pest and disease advice
4. Crop nutrition advice
5. Farm drainage design
6. Precision Agricultural Services (ie. GPS basestation network, drone imagery, soil and yield mapping)
7. Rotational crop management and advice
8. Specific soil health advice

### KTA3: Sustainability & Environmental Stewardship

1. Support environmental monitoring specific to cane production in the Herbert
2. Support and/or deliver activities associated with Smartcane BMP
3. Development of industry Best Practice techniques relevant to the Herbert and Australian sugarcane industry
4. Biosecurity

### KTA4: Industry capacity, knowledge and technology transfer, extension and adoption

- Knowledge and technology transfer, extension and adoption to the Herbert in the areas of:-
- Crop agronomy
  - Crop harvesting systems
  - Crop pest and disease
  - Crop nutrition
  - Farming systems
  - Soil health
  - Irrigation advice
  - Rotational crop management
  - Drainage
  - Supporting women in the industry
  - Supporting youth in the industry
  - Supporting new graduates

### KTA5: Strategic Alliances

1. Industry groups
  - CANEGROWERS
  - ACFA
  - Wilmar
  - Other Productivity Companies
  - SRA
2. Government agencies
3. NRM groups
4. Co-operative Research Centres (CRC's)
5. Universities
6. Private Companies

# Have we hitting the TARGET since the inception of **TARGET 85**?



Yes, we have seen:

- ▶ Cane and sugar yields exceeded 85tcph (3 years in 6 years) or >10 tsph (in 6 years in 6 years)
- ▶ Increased adoption of Clean Seed cane.
- ▶ Increase in area planted to Clean Seed cane for sale- 29ha in 2020.
- ▶ Increases in cane yield or reduction of costs associated with some changes to the farming system.
- ▶ Reduction in the impact associated with feral pig and cane grub damage.
- ▶ Identification of *Pachymetra* root and nematodes as a limiting factor to cane yield and variety management strategies to over come the issue.
- ▶ Some changes to harvesting systems eventuating in more cane and sugar recovery.
- ▶ Adoption of variable rate soil amendments to target problem areas and reduce costs.
- ▶ Availability of a range of different varieties for commercial production.

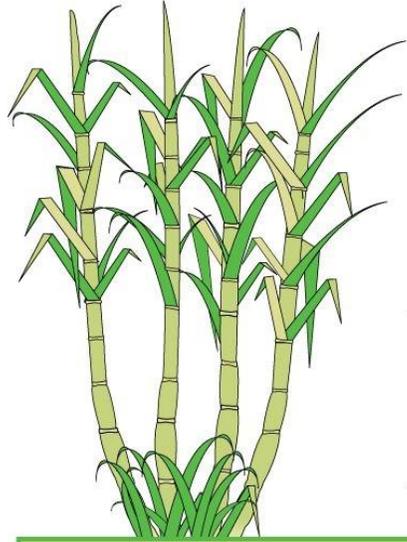
While some benefits are yet to be realized through the program.



# Special thanks

- ▶ On-behalf of the Board we would like to thank the following:
- ▶ Our members for their on-going support
- ▶ Support agencies who have invested in HCPSL and the region
- ▶ The HCPSL staff





# HCPSL

Herbert Cane Productivity Services Ltd.

## **Annual General Meeting- 2020.**



# The Manager's report

# What services do I receive as a member?

## Core services:

- ▶ Access to Clean Seed
- ▶ Cane hot water treatment services
- ▶ Access to the HCPSSL basestation network
- ▶ Cane variety advice
- ▶ Crop agronomy advice
- ▶ Fallow management advice
- ▶ Pest and disease management advice
- ▶ Weed management advice
- ▶ Access to extension services and activities (newsletters, field days, etc.)
- ▶ Biosecurity services
- ▶ Basic drainage services

# What services are offered as user pays or externally funded?

## User pays services:

- ▶ Soil testing (nutrients)
- ▶ Nutrient management plans and budgets
- ▶ EM soil mapping
- ▶ Weed management plans
- ▶ Weed management consultancy
- ▶ Variable rate prescription mapping
- ▶ Drone services
- ▶ Irrigation water testing
- ▶ Leaf testing
- ▶ Pathology testing (Pachymetra and nematodes)
- ▶ Product develop services (fertilizer, amendments and chemicals)
- ▶ Chemical accreditation



# External funded projects and activities



Maintaining external funding to deliver activities and maintain technical capacity is a significant challenge because of the following:

- ▶ Securing funds from various sources
- ▶ Delivery of services desired by the funding agent
- ▶ Meeting funders requirements
- ▶ Alignment to the company's Strategic direction
- ▶ Having the desired staff skill set to deliver activities
- ▶ Maintaining the company's profile, reputation and image



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**TARGET 85**



**ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR**

# Managing pest and diseases

# Investment in Approved Seed provision

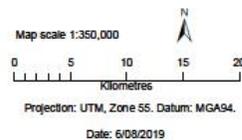


- ▶ HCPSL has commercial arrangements with private companies to grow Clean Seed:
  - ▶ Ingham Line
  - ▶ Abergowrie
  - ▶ Hawkins Creek
- ▶ HCPSL now leases 3 properties to grow Clean Seed:
  - ▶ Stone River
  - ▶ Macknade
  - ▶ Central Herbert

## HCPSL CLEAN SEED PLOTS



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Graeme Holzberger, Sam Sellick and Tony McClintock lead these activities

**TARGET 85**



# Investment in Approved Seed provision

- 2014- 1200 tonnes of cane purchased  
200 tissue cultured plants purchased  
110 tonnes hot water treated
- 2015- 842 tonnes of cane purchased  
3500 tissue cultured plants purchased  
93 tonnes hot water treated
- 2016- 1012 tonnes of cane purchased  
2500 tissue cultured plants purchased  
73 tonnes hot water treated
- 2017- 1169 tonnes of cane purchased  
104 tonnes hot water treated
- 2018- 1183 tonnes of cane purchased  
90 tonnes hot water treated
- 2019- 980 tonne of cane purchased  
110 tonnes hot water treated  
6000 tissue cultured plants purchased
- 2020- 1087 tonne of cane purchased  
100 tonnes hot water treated  
9000 tissue cultured plants purchased
- 2021- 17000 tissue cultured plants already ordered



# Investment in Approved Seed provision



Sourcing of new varieties from outside the Herbert to build up - 12t collected.

Varieties sourced: SRA15 (1t), SRA28 (1t) and SRA26 (10t)



# Investment in Approved Seed provision



## *Cane sales*

HCPSL's aim is to sell:

- 2000+ tons by 2021
- 3000+ tons by 2022

**Core business funded**

**INCREASING CLEAN SEED ADOPTION WILL DEFINITELY ASSIST WITH GETTING SIGNIFICANT PRODUCTIVITY GAINS ACROSS THE HERBERT.**

*Asset investment over the past 8 years-*  
\$250,000

*Annual investment by HCPSL:* \$200,000



# RSD Management

- ▶ 1771 RSD tests of grower seed cane was undertaken.
- ▶ 163 (9.2%) confirmed cases of RSD found. All tests were undertaken through the HCPSL microscope or SRA lab.
- ▶ 111 cases were Q253

**THIS IS JUST NOT ACCEPTABLE!**



# Feral pig management

## Hinchinbrook Community Feral Pig Management Program:

- ▶ This is a continuing program with a huge success rate.
- ▶ Over 600 pigs were controlled through trapping and baiting activities between January 2020 and August 2020.
- ▶ The environment, industry and the community significantly benefit from this program

HCPSL annual investment into feral animal management- \$52,000

**Core business funded**

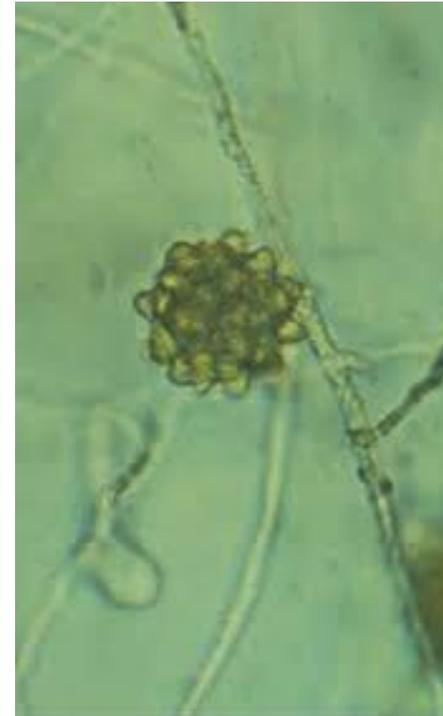


# *Pachymetra and nematodes*

75 Pachymetra and 8 nematode soil tests have been sent to SRA this year to date.

Pachymetra root rot continues to be a major issue for the industry.

**Fee for service**



# YCS research



- HCPSL continues to work with SRA.
- Leads are now being followed up.
- A variety x time of planting/harvesting time was harvested this year to assess genetic differences to YCS and an insecticide treatment.
- A insecticide trial will be established in late 2019 and harvested in 2020.

**HCPSL component-  
Core business funded**



# Variety development and improvement





# Variety development and improvement



- ▶ Assisted Wilmar and SRA planting breeding efforts in the Herbert.
- ▶ *Annual investment by HCPSL- \$70,000*
- ▶ Sam Sellick leads project activities



**Core business funded**





# Variety development and improvement

Work undertaken with SRA Plant Breeding Team:

- Funded the RVT program in the Herbert, which consists of 8 trials across the Herbert to assess ratooning of varieties under difficult conditions.
- Funded the planting of the RVT YCS trial site in the Herbert and support SRA research staff.
- Supported SRA through:
  - The Introgression plant breeding effort in the Herbert, through the provision of land and glasshouses at the HCPSL Macknade

**Core business funded**

# Variety development and improvement

Multiplication of the following potential new varieties for release in years to come:

- QS05-2408
- QS08-8662
- QN08-2274
- QC05-1281
- QA07-2978
- SRA15
- SRA22

**Core business funded**

These varieties were planted at the HCPSL Stone River farm

# Improving water quality through improved land management practices

# Extension activities: WTSIP



Wet Tropics  
Sugar Industry  
Partnership

Employment of Jarrod Sartor, Leanne Carr and Megan Zamhel as WTSIP Extension Officers and Melissa Royle as Extension Support Officer.

## Role-

1. Assist growers with nutrient management planning
2. Assist growers adopt better pesticide application and IPM programs
3. Assist growers with specific Reef water quality grants projects
4. Industry training and development ie. Back to Basics Workshops

**Externally funded**

## Key partners:



# Extension activities: RP161

- ▶ The project funded by State and Federal governments to improve industry profitability and sustainable land use (especially managing water quality outcomes).
- ▶ Adam Royle, Shannon O'Brien, Ellie McVeigh, Rod Nielson, Melissa Royle and Farmacist deliver activities under this project.
- ▶ Activities undertaken:
  - ▶ Farm Management Plans delivered under this project
  - ▶ On farm assistance and advice
  - ▶ Soil testing for nutrient, *Pachymetra* and nematode.
  - ▶ EM mapping
  - ▶ Farming 4 CASH™ workshops

**Externally funded**



**Herbert RP161**

Crop & Nutrient Plan



## Externally funded

- ▶ Project Catalyst supported the following activities:
- ▶ Employment of Megan Zamhel and Minka Ibanez- as the Project Support Officers
- ▶ Supported grower driven trials
- ▶ Wider adoption of innovative practices
- ▶ Shed meeting proposed later in the year
- ▶ Bioohra Field Day



# Managing Soil Health





Externally funded



## SRA funded Soil Health Project

This is a joint project between SRA research group, HCPSL, BPS, Wilmar, Universities of Queensland and Southern Queensland and QDAF.

This project will define what is soil health and develop tools and strategies to improve soil health in a sustainable and economic manner.

Dr Danielle Skocaj (SRA research group) leads this large industry project. Richard Hobbs (HCPSL) is the Herbert Soil Health Officer.





Performance through collaboration

CRC partner and Grower Group



- ▶ A 10-year funded national program investing into soils and soil health.
- ▶ HCPSL and BPS are the only sugarcane partners nationally.
- ▶ Projects operating in the district:
  - ▶ Soil chemical project
  - ▶ Compaction /Drought resilience
  - ▶ Root rhizosphere
  - ▶ Innovation in soils
  - ▶ Soils data systems

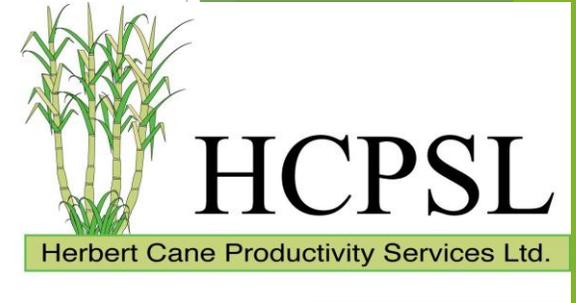
**Externally funded**





# Green waste stream project

- ▶ HCPSL received a grant from the National Landcare Program to assess the value of green waste streams from regional councils.



## Externally funded



# SRA funded CSIRO Sugarcane Root Systems Project



HCPSL assisted the SRA funded CSIRO funded Sugarcane Root Systems Project.

**Externally funded**



# Precision Agriculture





**Core business funded**

# Precision agriculture- HCPSL base station network

Mike Sefton leads this activity.



# Capturing data- drone technology

Rod Nielson leads this activity

## Fee for service

- ▶ The HCPSL drone has been used to capture trial data.
- ▶ The drone is hired out at commercial rates to SRA and other commercial groups.



# Soil mapping

**Fee for service and externally funded**

- ▶ HCPSL worked the UNSW to develop soil mapping protocols and analytics.
- ▶ Over 2500ha have been mapped in the past 2 years
- ▶ HCPSL now develops variable rate soil amendment maps for use on farm





# Developing & extending knowledge-nutrition



## Developing & extending knowledge- nutrition

- ▶ Activities:
  - ▶ Development of a Decision Support Tool for the Use of EEF's (funded by SRA funding unit and managed by CSIRO)
  - ▶ New generation EEF products (funded by SOS Bio)
  - ▶ WTSIP Nutrient Management Planning
  - ▶ DES Smart Blend EEF trials
  - ▶ Silica research (funded by Agripower)
  - ▶ EEF60 project (funded by Australian Govt, managed by CANEGROWERS Brisbane)

**Fee for service and externally funded**

# Developing and extending knowledge- pesticides

# Developing and extending knowledge- pesticides

## Activities undertaken this year:

- ▶ Auschem training
- ▶ IWM training under WTSIP program
- ▶ Weed management planning under the WTSIP program
- ▶ DAF Peer to Peer Herbicide Management Project
- ▶ Bayer / HCPSL Farm Demo site
- ▶ Imidacloprid industry survey
- ▶ Variety herbicide phytotoxicity trials

## Key partners:



**Fee for service and externally funded**



# Extending knowledge

# Back to Basics workshops

- ▶ WTSIP and RP161 funded staff worked together the Back to Basics workshops
- ▶ These workshops were well received by growers.

**Externally funded**



# Herbicide peer to peer shed meetings

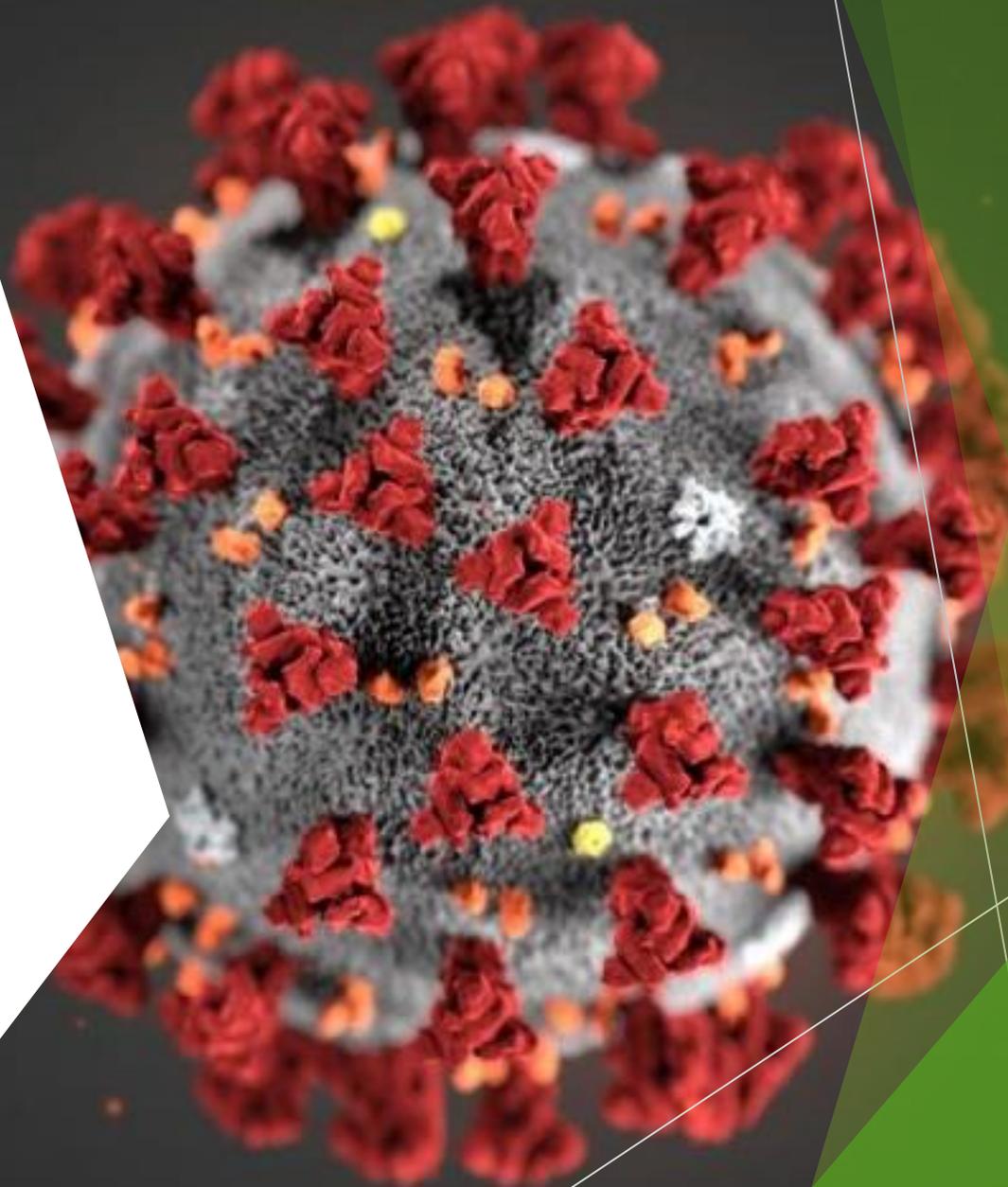


**Externally funded**

- ▶ Funded by DAF
- ▶ The activity was well attended and received.



**COVID-19**  
did have some  
impacts on extension  
delivery this year.



# Investment into youth.

- ▶ School visits by staff.
- ▶ Hosted Ingham High and GSM secondary students throughout the year at various events.
- ▶ Hosted university students





**Special thanks**

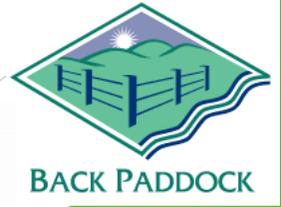


**Thanks to the HCPSL team-  
job well done**

# Key partners in 2019-20:



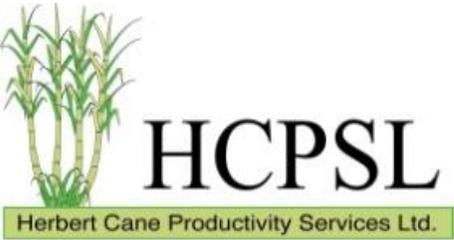
Project Catalyst Partners



# Conclusion

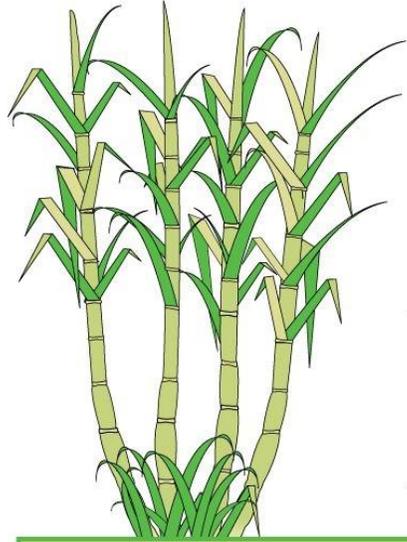
The HCPSL aim is to continue to strive to make things better, through the services it provides for its members.

Thanks for your on-going support.



Thank you!  
Questions ?

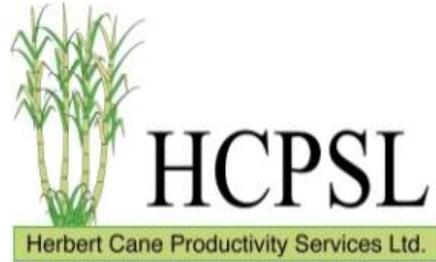




# HCPSL

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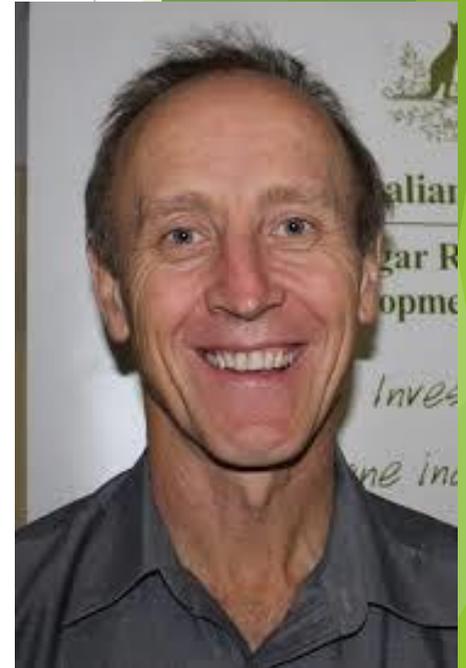
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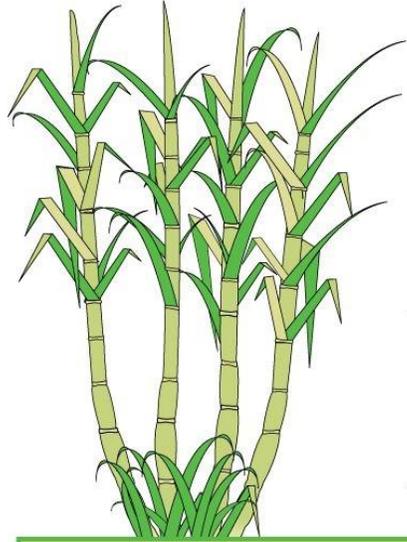


**AGM**

**Guest speaker- Dr. Rob Magarey**

**Topic-“The Spreading of RSD in a District”**





# HCPSL

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