

RP210 – Tailored nutrient and farm management solutions for the Herbert catchment area (Herbert RP161)

Milestone Report #9

Milestones	Outputs and other deliverables that make up this milestone	Milestone Key Performance Indicators	Submission date for outputs and deliverables	OGBR review of milestone (date)
Milestone 9 Provide farm specific 6 Easy Steps training (including remaining 2019 Year growers), and support implementation through on ground activities to all Year 2 growers and growers representing the 2020 Year 1 farms.	Training On farm support	Training delivered to remaining 2019 Year 1 growers, Year 2 growers and growers representing the 2020 Year 1 farms.	31 December 2020	31 January 2021

Provide Farming 4 CASH® training and support through on ground activities.

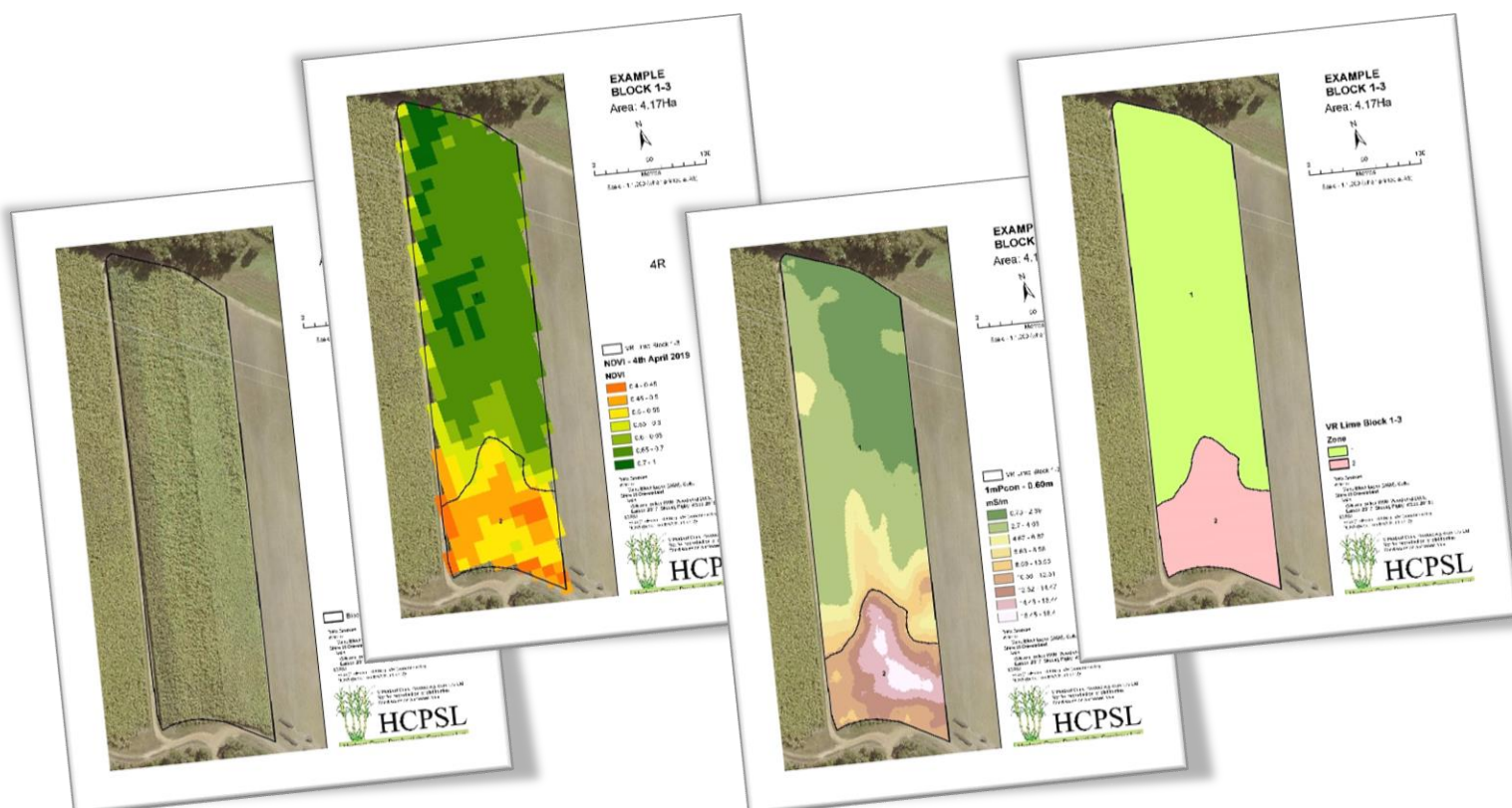
Farming 4 CASH® Workshops

- Following the February 2020 Farming for CASH workshops, project staff agreed that to maintain grower engagement, and further develop their skills, a series of new topics would be delivered during the November workshops.
- After a review of suitable topics, it was decided that the last round of Farming 4 CASH® workshops would cover three primary areas;
 - Soil sampling
 - Legume fallow management
 - Phosphorus management
- Subsequently, two Farming 4 CASH® workshops were held on the 18th and 19th November 2020 with growers from 32 farms attending.



- The workshops covered the following;
 - Soil Sampling
 - Taking samples
 - Strategic soil sampling
 - Tools to help get more from soil sampling
 - Legume fallows
 - Legume options
 - Applying lime before legumes
 - Legume and nitrogen management
 - Phosphorus
 - The phosphorus cycle
 - Managing phosphorus
 - Mill by-products (mud/ash)
- Each workshop facilitated peer to peer discussion as well as offering real-life examples of strategic soil sampling and how learnings guided nutrient management decisions
- Feedback from growers was 100% positive and several topic specific on-farm visits were initiated following the workshops.

Below: A real-life example, of the tools and tactics available to growers to enhance soil testing results, presented at the recent Farming 4 CASH® workshops



On-ground Activities

Soil testing

- Primary on-farm activity for project staff during October to December was the collection of soil samples.
- During this period staff collected, interpreted, and developed recommendations for 89 project related soil nutrient analysis samples.
- This was the highest number of samples recorded since the project commenced.
- Staff also collected and interpreted soil samples for Pachymetra root rot.
- On top of this, project staff provide recommendations and advice relating to soil testing to a number of non-project growers.
- To encourage greater adoption of soil testing, staff posted a series of promotional posts on the HCPSSL Facebook page.

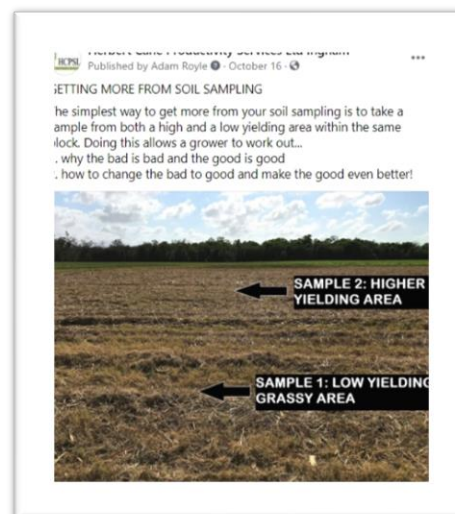
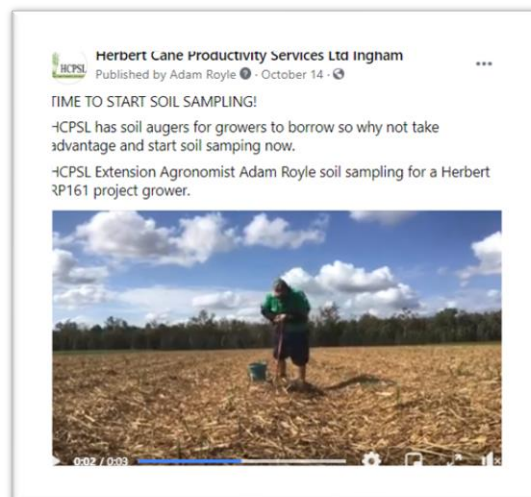
On-farm Activities

- Project staff continued to offer calibration of fertiliser boxes, as well as other equipment such as spray rigs.
- Farm visits continued and aside from soil tests staff also provided advice on the following;
 - Weed management
 - Drainage and sediment management
 - Ameliorating soil constraints (including sodic, magnesian, saline and low pH soils)
 - Managing drought stressed crops
 - Pest management (including rats and pigs)
 - Disease management (including Ratoon stunting disease and Pachymetra root rot)

General Activity Updates

Low Risk Compliance

- Growers under the Herbert RP161 were offered the opportunity to be included in the Low Risk listing for Reef regulation compliance.
- After discussions, including group and one-on-one meetings between staff and growers, 18 farms took up the opportunity to be listed before the end of 2020.



Staffing Farewell

- It was with a tinge of sadness that project staff member Shannon O'Brien announced her departure from HCP SL, and Herbert RP161, on December 18th 2020.
- Shannon will be greatly missed, particularly her enthusiasm for developing new extension and grower tools to assist with better management of nutrients, as well as her knowledge of GIS and P2R systems.
- Prior to Shannon's departure she was tasked with and subsequently completed the 2020 P2R data entry.

Several staff share smoko with Shannon during her last day with HCP SL and the project.



Facilitator Cory Tiger instructs Shannon O'Brien & Ellie McVeigh during the Mangrove Watch workshop

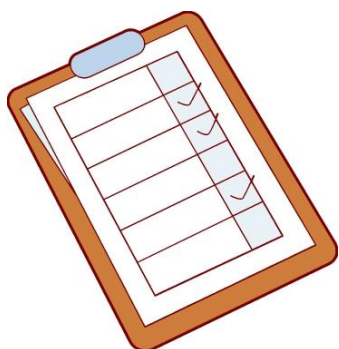


Mangrove Watch Workshop

- Project staff members Shannon O'Brien, Ellie McVeigh and Adam Royle were joined by HCP SL support staff member Melissa Royle, and several members of the community, to participate in a Mangrove Watch training workshop on 20th October.
- Mangrove Watch was established to educate and recruit members of the community in monitoring the health of mangrove systems in local waterways
- After an initial classroom session, participants hopped aboard two boats for an on the water training session.

General Learnings & Observations

Grower Surveys



- Following a video meeting between DES and HCP SL project staff on the 23rd October, where they discussed findings from the subsequent round of social indicator questions, Herbert RP161 staff investigated options for collecting the end of 2020 round of social indicator questions.
- The project team discussed the likelihood of the results from the previous survey being biased by project staff, who assisted growers to complete the survey by interviewing and filling in the questions as growers dictated to them.
- After much discussion regarding the pros and cons of various ways to collect survey data, staff agreed that the method for collecting survey information would change for the next round.
- Survey questions will be provided to growers, who will be asked to fill out the survey independently before returning to staff for collation.
- To date only a small number of surveys have been returned and a reminder email and text will be sent out to growers in early 2021.