

IT'S TIME TO MAKE POSITIVE STEPS TO STAMP OUT RSD.



This year HCPSL staff have undertaken 2321 seed inspections the year to date, with over 8% of samples found to be positive for RSD. The level of infection is serious and needs urgent attention by industry.

Growers must consider the following to manage the disease:

- Obtain Approved Clean Seed cane from the following sources:
 - HCPSL Approved Clean Seed plots
 - Order tissue culture cane from HCPSL
 - Long hot water treat cane at the HCPSL tanks, located at Victoria Mill.
- Get cane to be planted inspected by HCPSL for RSD. HCPSL staff will need at least 2 weeks' notice because there are many farms to inspect. It may take up to 2 weeks to receive the results from the RSD lab. Please be patient because there maybe many growers in the queue.
- Plant your Approved Seed cane with a stick planter (if possible because it has been found that growers who plant with a stick planter have a significantly lower chance of disease infection) or ensure that all billet planting equipment is effectively sterilised.
- Plant Approved Seed cane into fallow fields free of volunteer cane.
- Sterilise all planting and harvesting equipment. Use either 70% metho and 30% water or Sterimax® at 100mls in 10L of water (1% ratio).

HCPSL investment into managing RSD.

HCPSL has recently made significant investments to assist the industry better manage RSD in the district:

- Undertaking strict hygiene and sampling activities in its plots to manage RSD and other diseases. HCPSL has been testing its plots for 3 years using the qPCR method. To date HCPSL has never found RSD in any of its plots.
- HCPSL has invested in the delivery of the new RSD diagnostic detection method of qPCR in 2021 to industry.
- Provides both a PCM and qPCR RSD testing service.
- Significantly increasing the area planted to Approved Clean Seed plots over the past 3 years. HCPSL has 3 lease farms (Macknade, Stone River and Central Herbert) and has commercial arrangements in place in the Abergowrie and Ingham Line areas.
- Purchased a whole stalk cutter and billet harvester in 2019 to be used in plots.
- Purchased a secondhand tractor and blower in June 2021 for use in plots.
- HCPSL has now available contractor or a HCPSL whole stalk harvesters in all plots in 2021.
- HCPSL has a tissue culture planter available for grower use.
- In 2020, HCPSL sourced additional SRA26 and SRA28 varieties from the Cairns region to increase stocks within its plots.
- HCPSL purchased tissue cultured cane of new varieties to increase stocks of new varieties coming from SRA in 2020 and 2021.
- Upgraded the crane at the hot water treatment tanks in 2020.
- Spent \$40,000 in June 2021 to upgrade monorail beam at the hot water treatment tanks at Victoria Mill to meet WHS compliance requirements.
- Annually hot water treats more cane than any other district.



HCPSL provides these services as a part of the service fee paid by the Herbert industry.

Recently HCPSL and SRA studies have found that Herbert growers who regularly use Approved Clean Seed cane return **13% more \$/ha** annually- this is a quick way to improve productivity.

Let us work together to stamp out RSD from the industry.

For more information concerning the RSD services provided by HCPSL, please contact:

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