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## **New sugarcane industry research to drive profitability and productivity**

Sugar Research Australia (SRA) has announced a range of new research projects that will begin from July 1 onwards to drive productivity, profitability, and sustainability for Australian sugarcane growers and millers. These new projects have been announced following a call last year for new research projects that address critical research needs for the Australian industry.

SRA Chairman Dr Ron Swindells said this new investment from SRA will see scientists from several leading research institutions look at a full range of important research issues in the Australian sugarcane industry.

“This research includes projects that are looking at the energy use of sugarcane growing to help growers become more efficient and competitive, including looking at options such as renewables, batteries, and energy efficient infrastructure,” Dr Swindells said. “Another project is looking to ensure that growers have information about the impact of chlorotic streak disease on new varieties, while another project in the Wide Bay region is looking at the important role of rotational crops in the sugarcane crop cycle.

“We are also investing in major projects to improve sugar quality and improve milling efficiency and also a project to improve the Six Easy Steps nutrient management guidelines, along with several other projects. “This is a diverse range of new investment for SRA that is looking at a range of important research activities. The common factor that all these new research investments share is that all these projects have been rigorously assessed on their ability to provide real outcomes based on the needs of our investors.

“We continue our focus on research activities that can be adopted on farm and at the mill.”

Research providers who will undertake the projects include SRA, Queensland University of Technology, University of Southern Queensland, University of Queensland, Griffith University, Ag Analytics, Wilmar, and DAF Queensland.

SRA’s investment is funded by the statutory levy of 70 cents per tonne of cane, to which growers and millers each contribute 35c per tonne of cane each. This investment in research is supported by funds of about \$6.5M from the Federal Government and \$2.85 million from the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF).

Dr Swindells said the new investment added to SRA’s existing portfolio of research, which delivered against the strategic plan and the four impact areas of varieties, harvesting optimisation, yellow canopy syndrome, and delivering extension and adoption.

**Media Contact:** Brad Pfeffer: 0419 175 815

**Sugar Research Australia Limited**  
ABN 16 163 670 068

**Head Office**  
50 Meiers Road  
Indooroopilly QLD 4068  
Australia

**Postal Address**  
PO Box 86  
Indooroopilly QLD 4068  
Australia

**Tel** 07 3331 3333  
**Fax** 07 3871 0383  
**Email** [sra@sugarresearch.com.au](mailto:sra@sugarresearch.com.au)  
**Web** [sugarresearch.com.au](http://sugarresearch.com.au)