

VARIETY GUIDE 2024/2025

Central Region







HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is designed to help growers in the Central cane growing region with their agronomic considerations when selecting new varieties to plant and trial on their farms. The information comes from the best available data of regional variety performance and disease ratings. The information in the tables will help you understand:

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WANT TO KNOW WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE OTHER REGIONS?

You can find all the regional variety guides on the SRA website.
Visit sugarresearch.com.au or scan the QR code.



*(Cover page) Irrigating the Central seedlings straight after planting at the SRA station Te Kowai.
(Left) Central seedlings precision-planted using GPS.*

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NEW AND RECENT VARIETIES AVAILABLE IN THE CENTRAL REGION

Variety Recommendation and Release Process

Regional Variety Committees (RVCs) are responsible for variety release decisions. SRA supports these groups with secretariat support and the provision of technical information to assist the committee making decisions on particular varieties.

RVCs are composed of voting and non-voting members to ensure transparency in the decision making process.

The Central RVC (Sugarcane Biosecurity Zone 3) voting membership consists of one grower representative from Proserpine, Mackay

and Plane Creek, and representatives from Wilmar and Mackay Sugar.

The Central RVC requires a majority vote for progression of a variety through the breeding program and a unanimous vote for the release of a variety.

If you would like more information on new variety releases and regional variety committees, visit the SRA website: sugarresearch.com.au or scan the QR code.



Presented below and over the following pages are the results of trials conducted in the Central region. Yield (TCH) and CCS for each new variety are compared with the trial results of various standard varieties.

Variety: SRA32 [®]		Parentage: QN80-3425 x QN86-2168 Summary: High tonnes cane; slightly below CCS								
TRIAL HARVEST YEAR	CROP CLASS	YIELD (TCH)				CCS				# OF HARVESTS
		SRA32 [®]	Q208 [®]	Q240 [®]	SRA9 [®]	SRA32 [®]	Q208 [®]	Q240 [®]	SRA9 [®]	
(2020 series FATS): 2021	Plant	139	128	126	133	17.8	18.0	18.0	17.5	3
2022	1R	138	124	114	119	16.8	16.9	17.1	16.6	3
2023	2R	83	70	71	79	18.0	18.3	18.3	17.9	3
(2022 series FATS): 2023	Plant	139	119	119	145	16.7	17.1	16.5	15.9	3
Overall performance		125	110	108	119	17.3	17.6	17.5	17.0	12
Available 2024										
Comments:		SRA32 [®] has shown a 15% TCH yield advantage over Q208 [®] in Central field trials. This yield advantage is consistent across trial locations in Central, Burdekin, Herbert and Far North. SRA32 [®] is a reliable germinator for early crop establishment, it continues growing throughout the season and is best harvested mid to late. SRA32 [®] is a more profitable variety choice for growers with a low Pachymetra and smut risk. SRA32 [®] was approved for release in the Central region by the Regional Variety Committee in 2024. Whole sticks will be available from SSP and PCPSL in 2024 and from MAPS in 2025.								

Variety: SRA40 [®]		Parentage: CP70-1547 x QA96-1492 Summary: High tonnes cane; low CCS							
TRIAL HARVEST YEAR	CROP CLASS	YIELD (TCH)			CCS			# OF HARVESTS	
		SRA40	Q208 [®]	Q240 [®]	SRA40	Q208 [®]	Q240 [®]		
(2014 series FATS): 2015	Plant	105	95		15.7	17.4		4	
2016	1R	112	104		16.0	16.8		4	
2017	2R	86	84		17.2	18.5		4	
(2018 series FATS): 2019	Plant	115	91	96	15.2	16.9	16.7	3	
2020	1R	100	103	99	15.6	16.8	16.8	3	
2021	2R	105	102	104	16.6	17.8	17.8	3	
Overall performance		104	96	*	16.1	17.4	*	21	
Available 2023									
Comments:		SRA40 [®] is a fast and reliable germinator which ratoons well when compared to Q208 [®] . It has a large stool with high stalk number, the stalks are average thickness with good length. SRA40 [®] has sparse arrowing, remains upright even in large crops, and doesn't sucker readily even in sprawling crops. It will continue to grow steadily throughout the autumn and winter months, and we recommend it is harvested mid- to late-season to maximise its TSH. Consider planting on poorer soils or reduce the N applied to maximise CCS. It is important to note that SRA40 [®] will get brown rust similar to Q253 [®] ; this level of brown rust was observed in SRA field trials and at the MAPS farm at Victoria Plains. *Q240 [®] was only evaluated in the 2018 series FATS and can only be compared against those particular plant and ratoon crops.							

Variety: SRA26[®]		Parentage: QN97-2122 x Q146 / Summary: Slightly below tonnes cane; higher CCS								
TRIAL HARVEST YEAR	CROP CLASS	YIELD (TCH)				CCS				# OF HARVESTS
		SRA26 [®]	Q208 [®]	Q240 [®]	SRA9 [®]	SRA26 [®]	Q208 [®]	Q240 [®]	SRA9 [®]	
(2020 series FATs): 2021	Plant	119	128	121	130	17.7	17.1	17.3	16.8	3
2022	1R	126	133	127	126	17.4	17.1	17.2	16.7	3
2023	2R	77	79	79	85	18.1	17.8	18.0	17.4	3
Overall performance		107	113	109	113	17.7	17.3	17.5	17.0	9
Available 2022/2023										
Comments:		SRA26 [®] is a variety that is resistant to smut, pachymetra, leaf scald, and red rot, and is intermediate to fiji leaf gall. It has been evaluated in plant 1R and 2R crops in Central trials where it is slightly below in TCH & higher CCS compared to current commercial cane varieties. SRA26 [®] was distributed to growers in Proserpine and Plane Creek in 2022, and to Mackay growers in 2023. Chlorotic streak has been observed in SRA26 [®] in low lying areas after rainfall events. Growers are advised not to source their SRA26 [®] planting material from, or to plant SRA26A in low lying areas.								
Variety: SRA22[®]		Parentage: QS91-7179 x CP72-2086 / Summary: Equal tonnes cane; higher CCS								
TRIAL HARVEST YEAR	CROP CLASS	YIELD (TCH)				CCS				# OF HARVESTS
		SRA22 [®]	Q208 [®]	Q238 [®]	KQ228 [®]	SRA22 [®]	Q208 [®]	Q238 [®]	KQ228 [®]	
(2013 series FATs): 2014	Plant	84	78	85	78	16.5	16.2	16.4	15.9	4
2015	1R	97	95	95	89	18.0	17.4	17.6	18.0	4
2016	2R	98	96	94	91	17.1	16.9	16.3	16.9	4
(2016 series FATs): 2017	Plant	77	70	65		17.4	17.8	17.1		3
2018	1R	88	93	87		18	17.7	17.5		3
2019	2R	88	86	85		17.4	17.1	16.8		3
Overall performance		89	86	85	*	17.4	17.2	17.0	*	21
Available since 2020										
Comments:		SRA22 [®] is a variety that is resistant to pachymetra, smut and fiji leaf gall, intermediate-resistant to leaf scald, and intermediate to red rot. It has slightly higher TCH & higher CCS when compared to current commercial cane varieties. Commercial data suggest that the optimal time to harvest SRA22 [®] is early to mid-season to optimize CCS.								
*KQ228 [®] was only evaluated in the 2013 series FATs and can only be compared against those particular plant and ratoon crops.										
Variety: SRA21[®]		Parentage: QC82-663 x Q205[®] / Summary: Equal tonnes cane; equal CCS								
TRIAL HARVEST YEAR	CROP CLASS	YIELD (TCH)				CCS				# OF HARVESTS
		SRA21 [®]	Q208 [®]	Q183	Q238 [®]	SRA21 [®]	Q208 [®]	Q183	Q238 [®]	
(2011 series FATs): 2012	Plant	107	92	101		16.4	16.9	16.1		4
2013	1R	88	92	92		17.9	18.4	18.1		4
2014	2R	83	87	82		17.4	17.9	17.6		4
(2014 series FATs): 2015	Plant	90	95	89	98	17.5	17.4	17.2	17.2	4
2016	1R	101	104	102	98	16.8	16.8	17.0	16.8	4
2017	2R	80	84	80	80	18.5	18.5	18.3	18	4
Overall performance		92	92	91	*	17.4	17.7	17.4	*	24
Available 2019										
Comments:		SRA21 [®] is a variety with intermediate-resistant rating for smut, intermediate to pachymetra and red rot, and is resistant to leaf scald and fiji leaf gall. It has equal TCH and CCS compared to current commercial cane varieties. Preliminary tests suggest good sugar early in the season, and it is recommended that SRA21 [®] is harvested by early-mid season as a decline in CCS later in the season may occur. SRA21 [®] has performed well in the commercial setting when planted on sandy soils and in waterlogged conditions.								



NEW AND RECENT VARIETIES AVAILABLE IN THE CENTRAL REGION (CONT)

Variety: SRA9 [®]		Parentage: QN81-289 x Q166 / Summary: Higher tonnes cane; lower CCS								
TRIAL HARVEST YEAR	CROP CLASS	YIELD (TCH)				CCS				# OF HARVESTS
		SRA9 [®]	Q208 [®]	Q200 [®]	KQ228 [®]	SRA9 [®]	Q208 [®]	Q200 [®]	KQ228 [®]	
(2007 series FATS): 2008	Plant	95	90	84	85	16.0	16.7	16.5	16.7	4
2009	1R	80	80	74	75	15.3	16.0	15.8	16.1	4
2010	2R	100	76	68	70	14.6	14.6	14.8	14.4	2
2011	3R	32	33	30	36	14.8	15.4	15.6	15.4	1
(2009 series FATS): 2010	Plant	74	75	74	69	15.1	15.5	15.8	14.9	3
2011	1R	87	82	81	79	15.1	15.3	15.3	15.4	3
2012	2R	87	84	75	71	17.0	17.3	17.0	17.6	3
(2019 series FATS): 2020	Plant	110	108		98	16.5	17.0		17.0	3
2021	1R	111	104		106	16.8	17.0		17.0	3
2022	2R	108	112		111	17.3	17.4		18.3	3
(2020 series FATS): 2021	Plant	129	130		128	16.8	17.0		17.6	3
2022	1R	126	133		133	16.7	17.0		17.4	3
2023	2R	85	79		83	17.4	17.8		17.8	
Overall performance		94	91	*	88	16.1	16.5	*	16.6	35
Available 2017										
Comments:		SRA9 [®] is a variety with intermediate rating for smut, is resistant to pachymetra and leaf scald, intermediate to fiji leaf gall and intermediate-resistant to red rot. It has higher TCH against current commercial cane varieties. CCS is slightly lower than the standards. SRA9 [®] performs well on a wide variety of soil types and continues to yield well into ratoons. It is recommended to harvest mid to late to optimise CCS.								

SRA32[♂]



SRA40[♂]



SRA26[♂]



SRA22[♂]



SRA21[♂]



SRA9[♂]



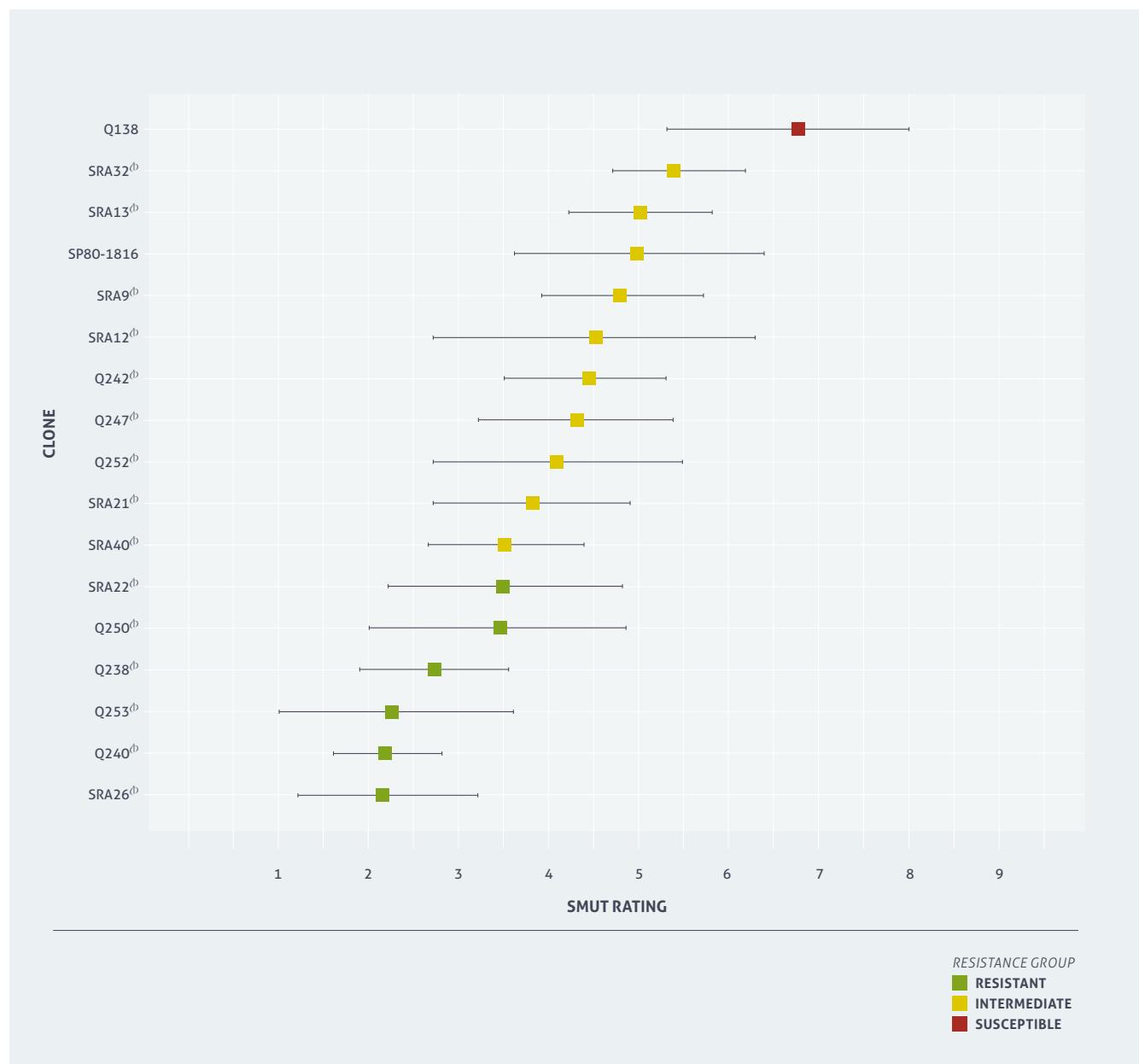
For more information on *variety field trials* contact:

SRA Central Variety Officer Christopher Tom E ctom@sugarresearch.com.au M 0411 589 806



SMUT RATINGS

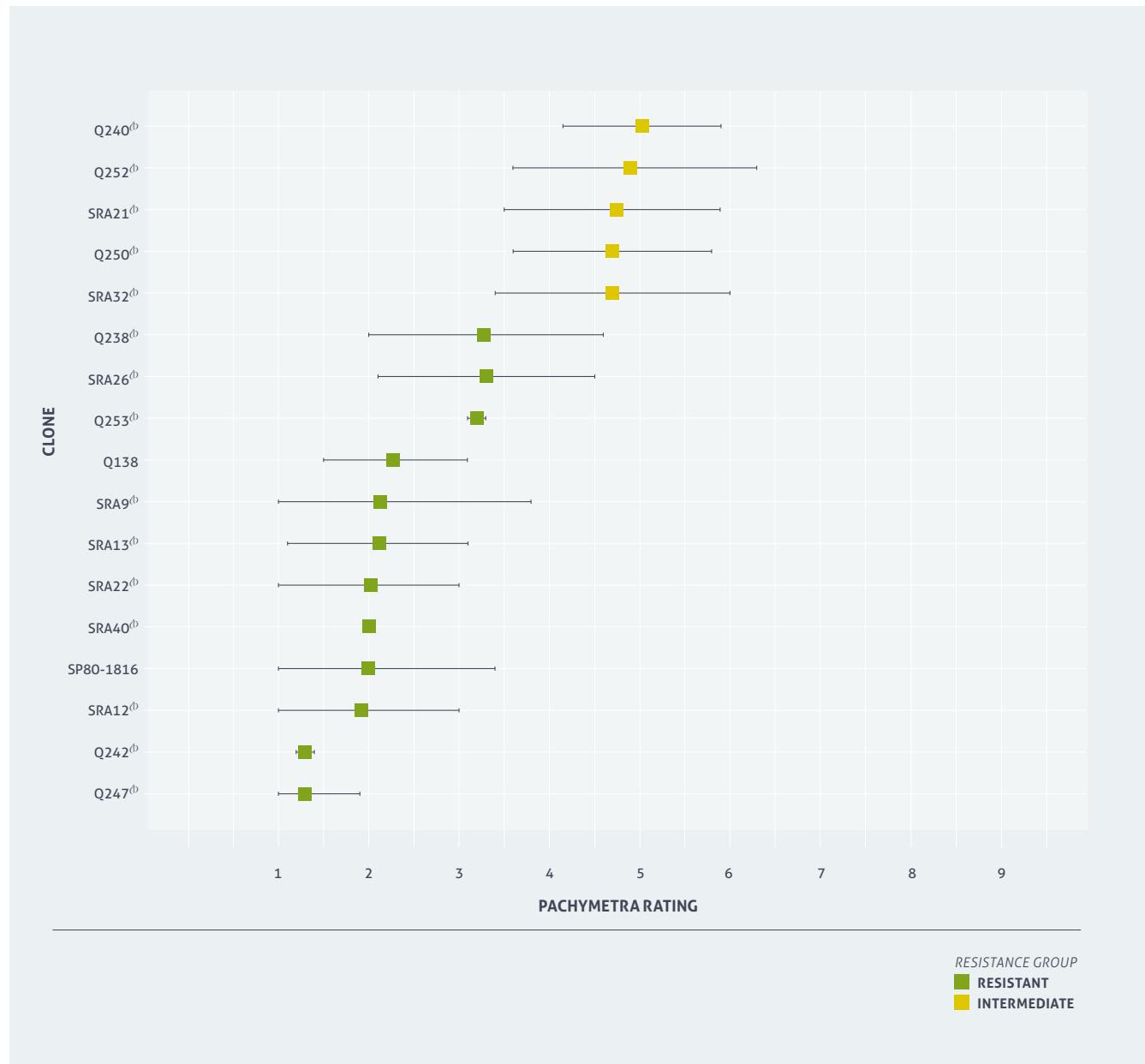
Smut resistance ratings are calculated from the incidence and severity of infection compared to standard varieties in inoculated field trials. The graphic includes the rating and the 95% confidence interval for each variety. The confidence interval is influenced by factors such as the number of trials and the uniformity of smut infection. For example, the variety Q240[◊] has been tested in 14 trials and has a narrow confidence interval from 1.6 to 2.8 while the new variety SRA22[◊] has only been tested in five trials and ranges from 2.3 to 4.8 and new variety SRA21[◊] has only been tested in four trials and ranges from 2.7 to 4.9. Rating confidence will improve as more data is collected.





PACHYMETRA RATINGS

Pachymetra resistance ratings are calculated from the severity of infection in a test clone compared to standard varieties in inoculated bench trials. The graphic includes the rating and the 95% confidence interval for each variety. The confidence interval is influenced by factors such as the number of times a variety has been tested and variability of Pachymetra infection within each trial. Rating confidence will improve as more data are collected.



RESISTANCE GROUP
RESISTANT
INTERMEDIATE



DISEASE RESISTANCE

Disease has the potential to lower the performance of varieties on your farm. This table contains all of the varieties approved for planting in the Central region, and will help you select varieties that will perform well given the diseases that may be present on your farm.

Central Disease Ratings										
VARIETY	SMUT	PACHYMETRA	LEAF SCALD	RED ROT	CHLOROTIC STREAK	FIJI LEAF GALL	ORANGE RUST	BROWN RUST	YELLOW SPOT	MOSAIC
SRA32 [®]	I	I	R	I		I-R		R		R
SRA40 [®]	R	R	R	R		I				I
SRA26 [®]	R	R	R	R		I-R	R		R	S
SRA22 [®]	R	R	I-R	I		R	R	R		R
SRA21 [®]	I-R	I	R	I		R	R		R	I
SRA13 [®]	I	R	R	I-R		R	R			R
SRA12 [®]	I	R	R	I		I	R		I-R	I
SRA9 [®]	I	R	R	I-R		I	R		I-R	R
Q253 [®]	R	R	R	I		S	R	I-S	S	R
Q252 [®]	I-R	I	R	R		I	R		I	R
Q250 [®]	R	I	R	I		I-S	I		I-R	R
Q249 [®]	R	I-R	R	I-R		R	R		R	R
Q247 [®]	I-R	R	R	R		R	R		S	R
Q242 [®]	I-R	R	R	I-R	I	R	R		R	R
Q240 [®]	R	I	R	R	I-R	I-S	R		I	R
Q238 [®]	R	R	R	I-R	S	I-R	R	R	S	R
Q232 [®]	I-R	I	R	I-R	R	I	R		R	R
KQ228 [®]	I	I	R	R	S	I	R	R	I	R
Q226 [®]	R	I-S	R	R		R	R	I-S	R	R
Q208 [®]	I-R	I	R	R	R	I-S	R	R	R	R
Q200	I	I	R	R	I	R	R	R	I-R	R
Q190	R	R	R	R		R	R	I-R	I-S	R
Q183	R	R	I	I	S	R	R	R	I-S	R
Q138	S	R	R	I-S	I-R	R	R	R	I	I-S
SP80-1816	I	R	R	R		R	R		I	R

Rotation of Varieties

Rotation of varieties for each crop cycle is important in the management of diseases. Arrange for your local productivity services officer to inspect your farm for disease.

The *Diseases of Australian Sugarcane Field Guide* provides information on diseases including how to identify and manage them. The guide is available on the SRA website. [Visit sugarresearch.com.au](http://sugarresearch.com.au) or scan the QR code.



NOTE: You will note that Ratoon Stunting Disease (RSD) resistance ratings are not included in this variety guide. Varietal resistance is not one of the three pillars of RSD disease management; growers should continue to ensure that approved seed cane is used to establish crops, that crops are planted into volunteer-free land and the equipment is decontaminated regularly.

No sugarcane varieties are resistant to RSD: they can all become infected, suffer yield losses, and further spread the disease.

Some varieties are more sensitive to RSD and carry significantly higher levels of the bacteria. In situations where RSD is a high risk and hygiene measures are not guaranteed, it may be appropriate to avoid varieties such as KQ228[®] and Q253[®].

- █ RESISTANT (R)
- █ RESISTANT-INTERMEDIATE (I-R)
- █ INTERMEDIATE (I)
- █ INTERMEDIATE- SUSCEPTIBLE (I-S)
- █ SUSCEPTIBLE (S)
- █ UNKNOWN

*PROVISIONAL RATING



HARVEST MANAGEMENT

Select varieties for a harvest plan that can be followed to maintain maximum CCS throughout the year. The tables below indicate early, mid or late sugar varieties. The information presented in this table for the recently released varieties is based on very limited information and could be expected to differ in different circumstances and conditions. SRA will continue to monitor this information and update as more becomes available.

Central Harvest Management					
VARIETY	EARLY SUGAR	MID SUGAR	LATE SUGAR	SPEED OF GERMINATION	TRASH YIELD
SRA32 [◊]	Average	Good	Good	Good	Average
SRA40 [◊]	Poor	Average	Average	Good	Average
SRA26 [◊]	Average	Good	Good	Good	Average
SRA22 [◊]	Average	Good	Average	Good	Good
SRA21 [◊]	Good	Good	Average	Average	Average
SRA13 [◊]	Average	Average	Poor	Good	Average
SRA12 [◊]	Poor	Average	Average	Average	Good
SRA9 [◊]	Average	Average	Good	Average	Good
Q253 [◊]	Good	Good	Average	Good	Average
Q252 [◊]	Average	Good	Good	Good	Average
Q250 [◊]	Good	Good	Average	Good	Good
Q247 [◊]	Average	Average	Average	Good	Average
Q242 [◊]	Average	Average	Average	Good	Good
Q240 [◊]	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
Q238 [◊]	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
Q232 [◊]	Poor	Good	Poor	Average	Average
KQ228 [◊]	Good	Good	Average	Good	Average
Q208 [◊]	Good	Good	Good	Average	Average
Q183	Good	Good	Good	Good	Average
Q138	Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Good
SP80-1816	Average	Good	Good	Average	Good

Maximise your profit at harvest:

Selecting varieties for specific sugar maturity profiles, planting and harvesting them for optimal CCS maturity at time of harvest can make a significant difference in the profit your crop can make for you. Making harvest decisions based on in-field maturity maximises profit making decisions.





VARIETY BY HERBICIDE SCREENING TRIALS

Sugarcane varieties are known to have variable responses to herbicides with some being more impacted than others. As a result, data outlining susceptibility is critical to optimise productivity outcomes.

Since 2014, SRA has conducted trials following a two-step process to obtain reliable data for the susceptibility of varieties to herbicide. This process is:

- a fully randomised replicated pot trial in year one to shortlist the most susceptible combinations of varieties and herbicides
- a fully randomised replicated field trial in year two to confirm that the shortlisted combinations have an impact on yield.

In year three, the two-step process starts again, with new combinations of newly released varieties and herbicides.

In these trials, products are applied at their maximum label rate (and their minimum water label rate) when plant cane is at four-to six-leaf stage.

In the pot trials, weekly phytotoxicity ratings are conducted using the European Weed Research Council (EWRC) rating scale (table 1) and the aerial plant dry biomass is measured 10 weeks after spraying.

In the field trials, plant cane yield is

measured at harvest using a weigh truck.

In all trials, KQ228[®] is assessed and used as a susceptible reference variety to compare to other tested varieties.

Table 2 describes the phytotoxicity symptoms obtained on KQ228[®] and their expected severity. All varieties present identical symptoms but their severity may vary between varieties.

Tables 3, 4 and 5 summarise all phytotoxicity, biomass and yield results obtained in the pot and field trials from 2014 to 2022.

These tables are updated yearly to include newly tested combinations of varieties by herbicides.

TABLE 1. EWRC selectivity rating scale

SCORE	SELECTIVITY
1	No effect
2	Very slight effects. Some stunting and yellowing just visible
3	Slight effects. Stunting and yellowing obvious, effects reversible
4	Substantial chlorosis and or stunting, most effects probably reversible
5	Strong chlorosis/stunting, thinning of stand (50% loss)
6	Increasing severity of damage (70% loss)
7	Increasing severity of damage (85% loss)
8	Increasing severity of damage (90% loss) a few plants survive
9	Total loss of plants and yield

For more information contact:
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TABLE 2. Summary of phytotoxicity ratings and symptoms obtained on the reference susceptible variety KQ228[®]

	2,4-D	AMETRYN	AMETRYN+TRIFLOXY SULFURON	AMICARBAZONE	ASULAM	DIURON	FLUMIOXAZIN	METOLACHLOR	METRIBUZIN	MSMA
DESCRIPTION OF SYMPTOMS	Small white spotty discolorations	Yellowing of the whole plant	Slight yellow blotching	Small white spotty discolorations	Bright yellow blotching	Slight yellowing of the whole plant	Large necrotic lesions	Small necrotic lesions	Slight yellowing of the whole plant	Large necrotic lesions
PHOTOGRAPH OF SYMPTOMS										
SYMPTOM SEVERITY ON KQ228 [®]	Mild	Medium to severe	Mild	Mild	Medium	Mild	Severe	Medium	Mild	Medium to severe
KQ228 [®] PHYTO RATING RANGE										
1.2 to 2.3	1.8 to 3.2	1.3	1.3 to 1.8	1.1 to 2.6	1.8 to 2.0	3.9 to 4.1	1.1 to 2.8	1.2 to 2.0	1.7 to 3.8	

TABLE 3. Herbicide symptoms severity on the cane foliage for all testing varieties. (Legend: Refer to Table 1 (left) Page 12)

VARIETY	2,4-D	AMETRYN	AMETRYN+TRIFLOXY-SULFURON	AMICARBA-ZONE	ASULAM	DIURON	FLUMIOXAZIN	METOLACHLOR	METRIBUZIN	MSMA
KQ228 ^Ø	1.6	1.9	1.7	1.3	1.9	1.3	3.6	2.1	1.5	3.0
Q208 ^Ø	1.5		1.6		1.8			2.0	1.4	2.9
Q232 ^Ø	1.6		1.8		1.9			2.2	1.6	3.0
Q238 ^Ø	1.7		1.8		2.0			2.3	1.6	3.1
Q240 ^Ø	1.6		1.7		1.8			2.1	1.5	2.9
Q242 ^Ø	1.6		1.8		1.9			2.2	1.6	3.0
Q250 ^Ø	1.6		1.8		1.9			2.2	1.6	3.0
Q252 ^Ø	1.6		1.7		1.8			2.1	1.5	3.0
Q253 ^Ø	1.7		1.8		1.9			2.2	1.6	3.0
SP80-1816	1.7		1.8		2.0			2.3	1.3	3.1
SRA9 ^Ø	1.4	1.7		1.1	1.7		3.4	2.0	1.7	2.8
SRA12 ^Ø	1.7	2.1		1.4	2.0		3.8	2.3	1.4	3.1
SRA13 ^Ø	1.7	2.0		1.4	1.9		3.7	2.2	1.6	3.0
SRA21 ^Ø	1.6	1.9		1.3	1.8	1.3		2.1	1.5	2.9
SRA22 ^Ø	1.9	2.2		1.6	2.2	1.7		2.5	1.9	3.3
SRA26 ^Ø	1.6	2.0		1.4	1.9	1.4		2.2	1.6	3.0

The predicted EWRC scores and associated colour code are presented for each tested combination of herbicides by variety. The predicted EWRC scores derive from the average EWRC scores for each trial series, using KQ228^Ø as reference variety, in an attempt to harmonise trial variations as symptom severity can vary between trials: weather conditions at application, and/or during the trial can alter cane growth and herbicide response. Predicted EWRC scores derive from average EWRC scores across the 10-week assessment period, which means higher symptoms intensity and scores could have been observed during the assessment period.

TABLE 4. Percentage sugarcane dry biomass reduction in the pot trial (10 weeks after spraying) compared to the untreated control. (Legend: bottom of page)

VARIETY	2,4-D	AMETRYN	AMETRYN+TRIFLOXY-SULFURON	AMICARBA-ZONE	ASULAM	DIURON	FLUMIOXAZIN	METOLACHLOR	METRIBUZIN	MSMA
KQ228 ^Ø	-19%	-46%	-55%	-15%	-16%	-14%	-36%	no reduction	-25%	-21%
Q208 ^Ø	-29%		-33%		-12%			-51%	-21%	-50%
Q232 ^Ø	-13%		-42%		-26%			-33%	-13%	-33%
Q238 ^Ø	-40%		-34%		-62%			-35%	-32%	-39%
Q240 ^Ø	-36%		-28%		-41%			-7%	-21%	-37%
Q242 ^Ø	-14%		-12%		no reduction			no reduction	-7%	-12%
Q250 ^Ø	-49%		-53%		-66%			-56%	-20%	-63%
Q252 ^Ø	-38%		-11%		no reduction			-6%	-20%	-26%
Q253 ^Ø	-29%		-49%		-52%			-18%	-51%	-54%
SP80-1816	-26%		-9%		-10%			-35%	-32%	-33%
SRA9 ^Ø	-13%	-22%		-29%	-37%		-43%	no reduction	-2%	-28%
SRA12 ^Ø	-9%	no reduction		no reduction	no reduction		-12%	no reduction	no reduction	no reduction
SRA13 ^Ø	-23%	-26%		-27%	-7%		-80%	-41%	no reduction	-63%
SRA21 ^Ø	-10%	-47%		-14%	-32%	-14%		no reduction	-36%	-9%
SRA22 ^Ø	-39%	-28%		no reduction	-68%	-22%		no reduction	-20%	-34%
SRA26 ^Ø	-35%	-44%		-26%	-27%	-21%		-12%	-34%	-47%

The predicted biomass reduction in the pot trials is represented in a green-to-red scale. The predicted biomass reduction is derived from the biomass reduction for each trial series, using KQ228^Ø as the reference variety, in an attempt to harmonise trial variations: weather conditions at application, and/or during the trial can alter cane growth and herbicide response. Predicted biomass reduction compared to the untreated control is indicated in the table. The derived predicted biomass reduction values differ from the observed biomass reduction values in each trial series and should only be used as indicators to compare the severity of the treatments on cane growth across all varieties (in some cases the predicted values exceed 100% biomass reduction. It does not mean the death of the treated plant). Severe biomass reductions recorded 10 weeks after spraying are typical, as the plant metabolism has just been diverted into detoxifying the applied herbicide to the detriment of its growth. Usually yield loss by harvest time is less severe as the plant has had more time to recover from its growth delay.

TABLE 5. Percentage yield reduction in the field trial (at harvest) compared to the untreated control. (Legend: bottom of page)

The predicted yield reduction in the field trials is represented in a green-to-red scale. The predicted yield reduction is derived from the yield reduction for each field trial series. The percentage value compared to the untreated is indicated in the table (a negative value indicates a yield reduction compared to the untreated).

VARIETY	2,4-D	AMETRYN	AMETRYN+TRIFLOXY-SULFURON	AMICARBAZONE	ASULAM	METO-LACHLOR	METRIBUZIN	MSMA
KQ228 ^Ø	no reduction	-11%		-7%	-1%		no reduction	-1%
Q232 ^Ø			-6%				no reduction	-4%
Q238 ^Ø			-8%				-3%	-5%
Q242 ^Ø			no reduction				-3%	-2%
Q250 ^Ø			-1%				no reduction	-1%
SRA9 ^Ø					-3%			
SRA12 ^Ø	-7%				no reduction			
SRA13 ^Ø	-5%							

SLIGHT BIOMASS/YIELD REDUCTION IN POT/FIELD TRIAL COMPARED TO UNTREATED



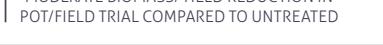
SEVERE BIOMASS/YIELD REDUCTION IN POT/FIELD TRIAL COMPARED TO UNTREATED



NO BIOMASS/YIELD REDUCTION IN POT/FIELD TRIAL COMPARED TO UNTREATED



MODERATE BIOMASS/YIELD REDUCTION IN POT/FIELD TRIAL COMPARED TO UNTREATED



Legend

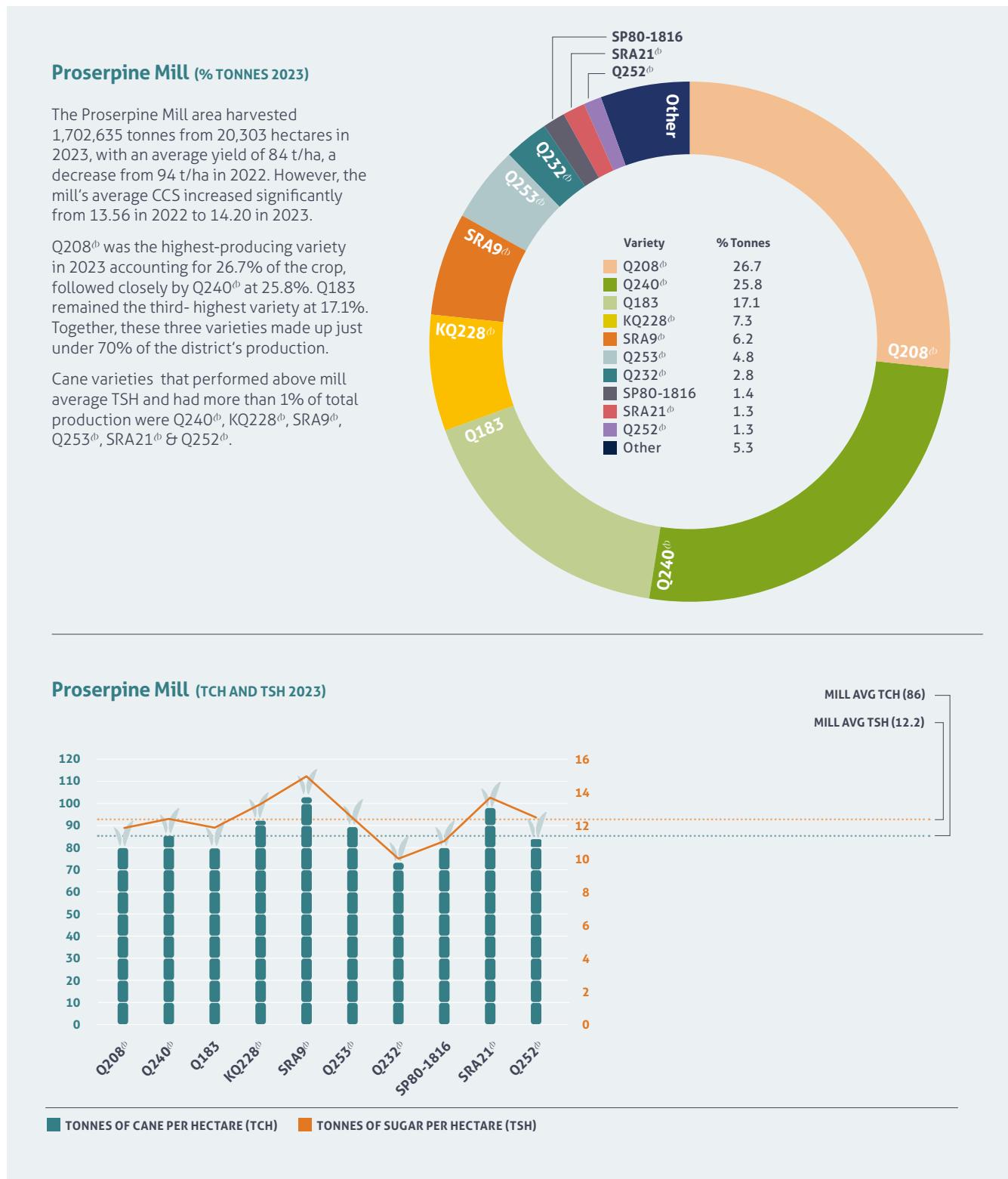
% VALUE = BIOMASS/YIELD REDUCTION (-%) OR GAIN (+%) IN THE POT/FIELD TRIAL COMPARED TO THE UNTREATED

☒ COMBINATION OF HERBICIDE BY VARIETY NOT TESTED



VARIETY ADOPTION IN EACH MILL AREA

The following graphs are generated from mill statistics from the 2023 season. Use this information to assess yield performance of varieties over a number of years. Caution should be taken when comparing commercial performance of newer varieties (from plant and young ratoons) to older/established varieties (which include older ratoons).

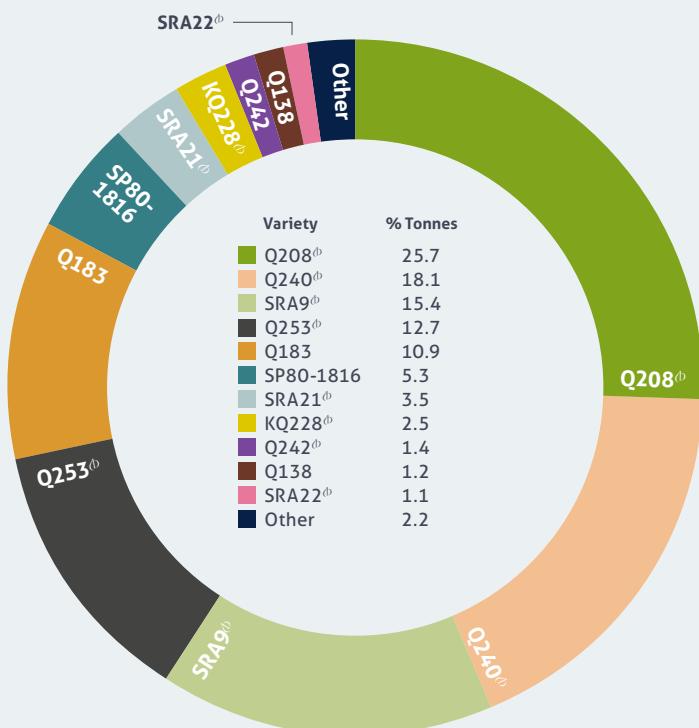


Mackay Sugar Mills (% TONNES 2023)

Mackay Sugar Mills reported harvesting 5,154,838 tonnes of cane from 62,016 hectares in 2023. The mill area's average yield decreased from 96 t/ha in 2022 to 83 t/ha in 2023, while the average CCS increased from 12.45 in 2022 to 13.06 in 2023.

Q208[®] was again the highest-producing variety in the region, accounting for 25.7% of total production. Q240[®] remained in second place with 18.1%, followed by SRA9[®] at 15.4% and Q253[®] at 12.7%. These top four varieties made up 72% of the total crop in 2023.

Q208[®], Q240[®], SRA9[®], Q253[®], SRA21[®] and KQ228[®] all produced higher tonnes of sugar per hectare than the district average, although SRA21[®] may be influenced by the high proportion of plant cane to ratoon cane harvested. Among these six varieties, SRA9[®], Q253[®], and SRA21[®] increased their production in 2023, while the others saw a reduction.



Mackay Sugar Mills (TCH AND TSH 2023)



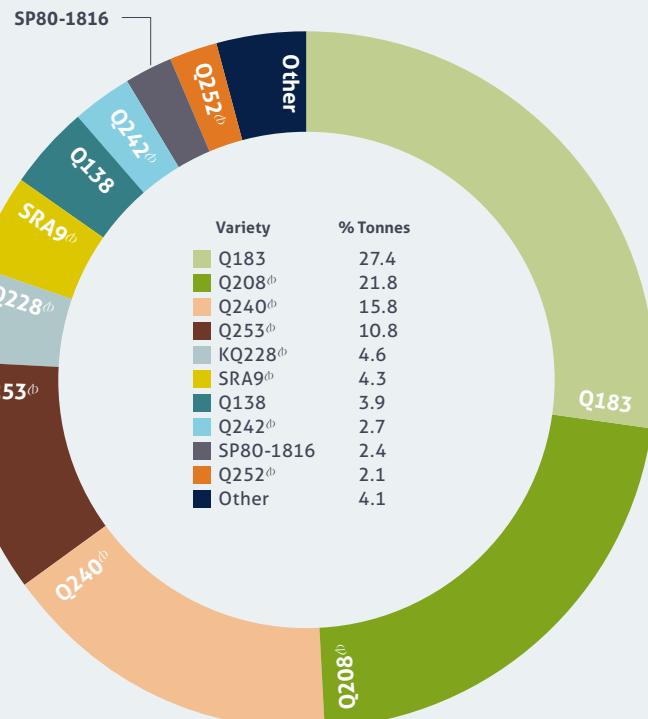


VARIETY ADOPTION IN EACH MILL AREA (CONT)

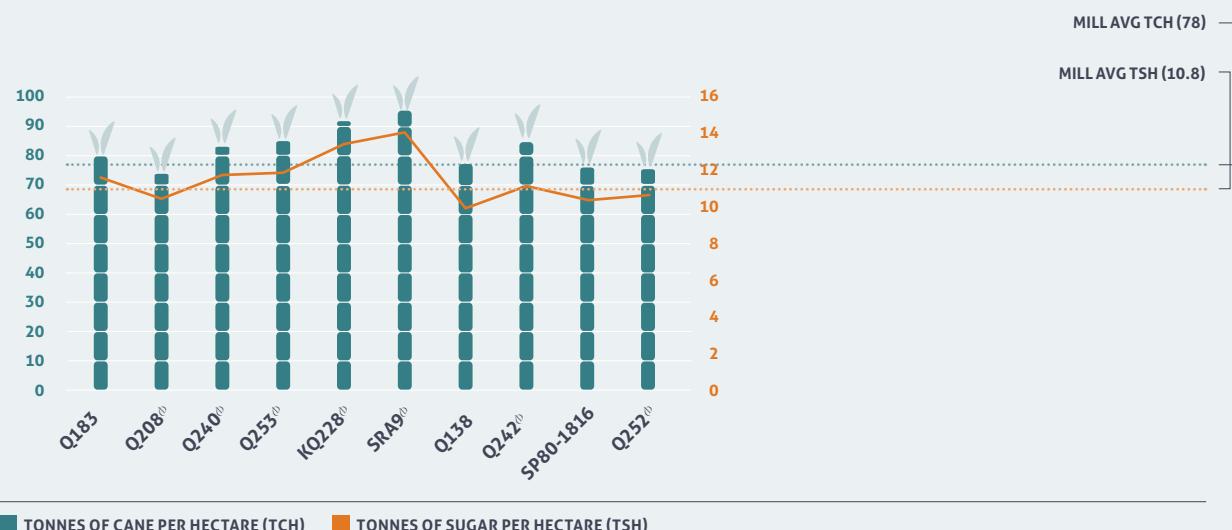
Plane Creek (% TONNES 2023)

The Plane Creek region harvested 1,304,348 tonnes of cane from 16,322 hectares in 2023, with an average CCS of 13.69, up from 12.72 in 2022. The average yield was 80 t/ha, down from 90 t/ha in 2022. Q183 continued to dominate the crop with 27.4% of production, followed by Q208[®] (21.8%), Q240[®] (15.8%) and Q253[®] (10.8%). Together, these four varieties represented nearly 76% of the 2023 crop.

The top performers with tonnes sugar per hectare higher than the mill average were Q183, Q240[®], Q253[®], KQ228[®], SRA9[®] and Q242[®].

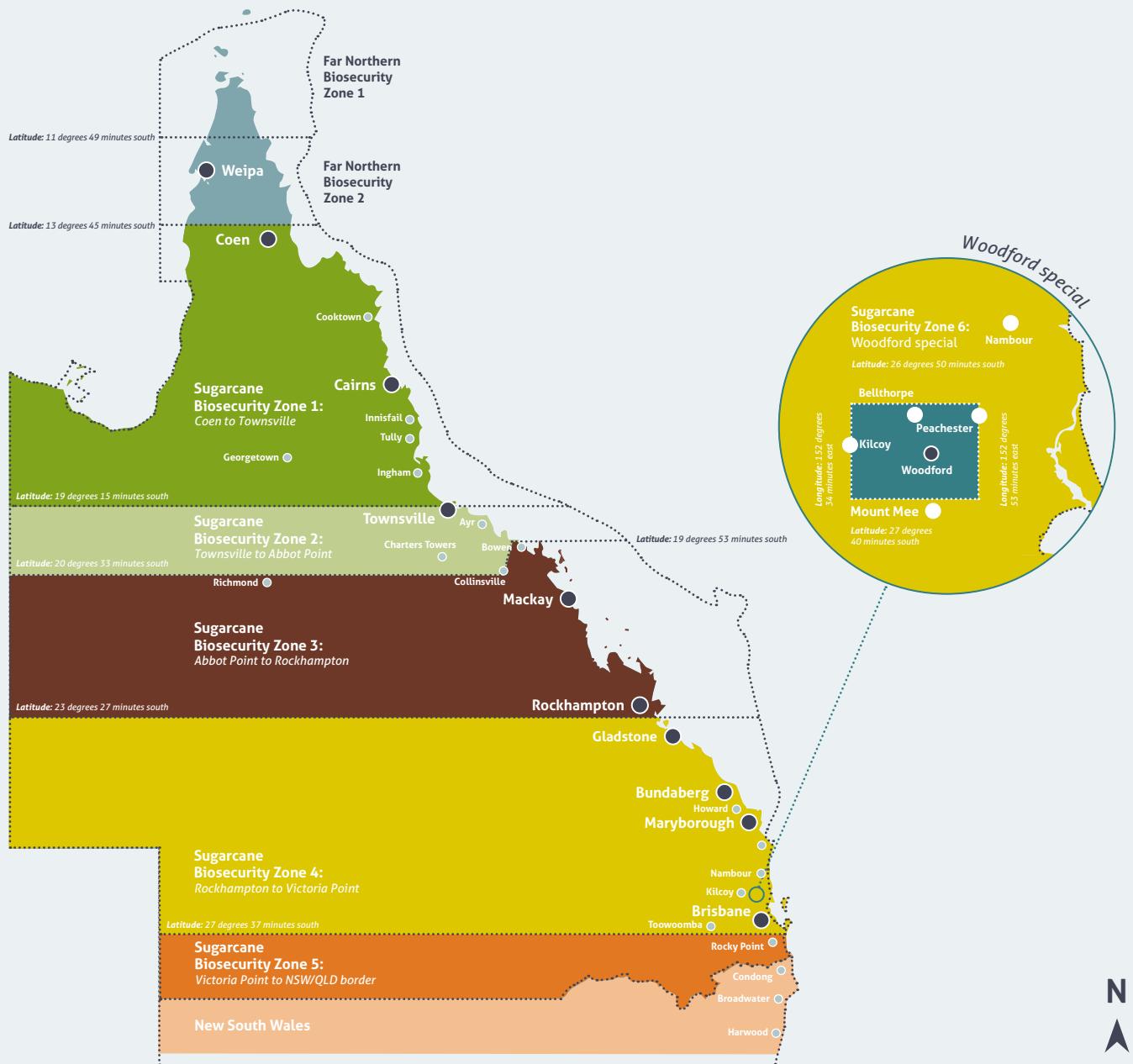


Plane Creek (TCH AND TSH 2023)





SUGARCANE BIOSECURITY ZONE MAP



- All appliances (harvesters and other sugarcane machinery) moving between sugarcane biosecurity zones must:
 - > be free of cane trash and soil
 - > be inspected by an authorised inspection person who will issue a Plant Health Assurance Certificate (PHAC)
 - > be accompanied during transportation by the PHAC.
- Machinery moving from NSW to Qld requires a Plant Health Certificate issued by NSW Department of Primary Industries.
- Machinery inspections can be arranged by contacting the local Productivity Service organisation.
- To move sugarcane plants (stalks, leaves, potted plants, etc) between biosecurity zones contact Biosecurity Queensland (13 25 23).



PROPAGATING NEW VARIETIES

Contact your local productivity services organisation for regional advice on varieties (see back page for details). They can supply approved planting material of recommended varieties and place orders for tissue culture plantlets.

Billet planting



PLANT MATERIAL FROM AN APPROVED SEED SOURCE

Approved seed provides cane growers with the highest quality planting materials in terms of disease status and being 'true-to-type'. Approved seed (stalks, billets, sets or tissue culture plantlets used for planting) is a key control measure for systemic diseases of sugarcane, including chlorotic streak, Fiji leaf gall, leaf scald, mosaic, ratoon stunting disease (RSD) and smut. Provision of approved seed in each mill area in the Australian sugar industry is coordinated by SRA, in cooperation with the local productivity services group. SRA provides DNA fingerprinted new varieties which the local productivity services group then maintains and distributes the approved seed to growers.



GROW SUGARCANE SPECIFICALLY FOR PLANTING MATERIAL

The block selected for growing plant material should be weed-free and sugarcane volunteer-free. When selecting cane for planting material the cane should be less than one year old, erect and free from damage. Plan for two or more eyes per sett when harvesting for billets or stick planting. For non-irrigated regions plants should be well watered, have adequate nutrition immediately prior to harvest for billet planting. For irrigated regions you may need to reduce fertiliser rates, withhold irrigation, or plant late in the season. The cane should also have originated from an approved seed plot and therefore be no more than three years away from long hot water treatment.

The best "whole farm" disease risk minimisation and productivity strategies can be achieved through consistent access to approved seed. It is highly recommended that cane considered for use as planting material be RSD tested well in advanced of harvest so an informed choice can be made prior to planting.



SET UP THE HARVESTER FOR CUTTING HIGH QUALITY SOUND BILLETS

Rubber coating rollers and optimising the roller speeds to chopper speed will produce good quality billets with minimal split or crushed ends and damaged eyes. Reduce the speed of harvesting and maintain sharp basecutter and chopper blades for clean cutting. Disinfect the machinery used to cut and plant new varieties to limit the spread of disease and weeds.

Tissue culture



CALCULATE HOW MUCH TISSUE CULTURE TO ORDER

We've made it easier with our online tissue culture calculator. It demonstrates the speed at which large quantities of planting material can be produced from a set number of plantlets or for a set cost. Below is a look-up table including common results. The calculator is available on SRA's website. [Visit sugarresearch.com.au/calculator](http://sugarresearch.com.au/calculator) or scan the QR code.



TRY TISSUE CULTURE AS AN APPROVED SEED SOURCE

Tissue culture is an excellent source of approved seed for all varieties and can help reduce the spread of serious diseases such as RSD, smut and Fiji leaf gall. Tissue-cultured plantings are more uniform and produce more sticks than conventional plantings so larger quantities of planting material are achieved the following year. This means earlier commercial-scale production of more productive new varieties can be achieved when using tissue culture.

STAGE	ORDER DEADLINE FOR SPRING PLANTING	ORDER DEADLINE FOR AUTUMN PLANTING
Grower finalises order. Productivity services group places order with SRA.	15 November	1 July
Productivity services group receives established plantlets from nursery and distributes to growers.	Delivery on agreed date between grower, productivity services group and nursery. Available in August.	Delivery on agreed date between grower, productivity services group and nursery. Available in March.

ESTIMATED COST AND TIME TO SCALE UP NEW VARIETY PRODUCTION USING TISSUE CULTURE

	No. plantlets ordered	100	250	500	1000
Yr 1	Approximate cost	\$150	\$375	\$750	\$1500
	Metre row planted @ 0.8m	80	200	400	800
	Metre row available for planting	2400	6000	12000	24000
Yr 2	Ha avail for planting @ 1.8m	0.4	1.1	2.2	4.3

For more information on *varieties*, contact:

SRA Central Variety Officer Christopher Tom

E ctom@sugarresearch.com.au **T** 0411 589 806

For more information on *tissue culture*, contact:

SRA Tissue Culture Manager Clair Bolton

E [cbo](mailto:cbolton@sugarresearch.com.au) **T** 07 3331 3374

PLANTING AND MANAGING TISSUE-CULTURED PLANTLETS IN THE FIELD

Planting

- Prepare soil to a fine tilth to ensure good soil/root contact.
- A seedling planter can be used if one is available, although hand planting small numbers is not a huge job. Plant them deep at the bottom of a drill to prevent stool tipping.
- Fill in after early growth.
- Plant the plantlets 50cm to 1m apart. A good distance is 80cm, which will allow tillering to produce a high number of sticks.

Irrigating

- Provision of water is the most critical factor for the successful establishment of tissue culture plantlets.
- Irrigate plantlets immediately after planting and monitor them to ensure they don't dry out over the first three weeks to get the roots well established.
- If you do not have access to flood or sprinkler irrigation a simple irrigation system can be set up using cheap drip tape and an in-line filter hooked up to your garden tap or water tanker.

Weeds

Weed control is important for good establishment and growth.

- Ideally pre-irrigate the soil to germinate weeds, then apply a knock-down herbicide or cultivate just prior to planting to reduce the weed pressure on young plantlets.
- Allow at least one week after planting before applying pre-emergent herbicides, longer if planted into cold, wet soils, as the root system needs time to establish:
 - > Atradex® at 2.5kg/ha plus Dual Gold® at 1.5L/ha has been successfully applied over the top, for grass and broadleaf weed control.
 - > Do not use diuron as young plantlets are sensitive to this product.
- Sempra® at 100g/ha plus Activator at 200mL/100L for nutgrass. Both applications were sprayed over the top for nutgrass control.
- Do not use paraquat unless you have no other option and only on established plantings.

Insects

- If you expect problems with insects then an application of an insecticide drench (such as chlorpyrifos or imidacloprid) at planting will protect the young plantlets.
- In canegrub-prone areas use your standard grub control treatment.

Fertiliser

- Fertiliser requirements of the tissue cultured plantlets are the same as for billet plantings.
- If possible, plant with a planter mix to maintain good early growth, and side-dress later to avoid fertiliser burn.

Your local productivity services:



Mackay Area Productivity
Services (MAPS):
T 07 4963 6830



Plane Creek Productivity
Services Ltd:
T 07 4956 1488



Sugar Services
Proserpine Ltd:
T 07 4945 0513



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