The lack of rainfall has created ideal harvesting conditions and the season is progressing well. The cane crushed to-date is 3.2% ahead of estimate and hopefully this trend will continue. CCS has also been better than expected.

The dry conditions are forecast to continue until the end of the year and there is a good chance of El Nino conditions developing through summer. This could cause a prolonged dry spell into January and February but local conditions do not always conform to forecast conditions. Let’s hope that is the case this season.

Variety Performance
The graphs below show the relative performance of the main varieties this season to date. Most of the main varieties are performing better than the original estimate in the 1 year-old cane, and the 2 year-old cane is only slightly above estimate.

KQ228 is not performing according to expectations and the reasons for this are not clear, as the yields are satisfactory but the CCS has been dismal. Q208 continues to hold its own, as does Q183 and Q240 has
proved itself as an early season cane. Other varieties that are performing well are Q244 and Q254. The few blocks of SRA1 And SRA2 will be harvested shortly and it will be interesting to see how they perform.

2018 Planting

Soil moisture conditions are of concern, with the planting season coming up and every effort should be made to conserve what little remains. Some general guidelines to achieve this are:

- In replant blocks, limit soil tillage to the minimum necessary to get the ground ready to plant.
- Use a roller to “seal” the surface of the soil to minimise moisture loss after the final “working”.
- Fallow blocks with the remnants of soybean volunteers should have been sprayed out by now and should only be worked just prior to planting.

Soil Temperatures

Soil temperature trends for the past two weeks are shown in the graph alongside. The average is still low and variable. Waiting a week or two before commencing planting is advised. The soil temperature will continue to be monitored over the coming weeks and we will keep you informed of developments.

Variety Walk

18 growers attended the ASP walk and a good discussion of the attributes of the varieties available this year was enjoyed by all who participated. The cut-off date for seedcane orders is today and based on orders received so far, there is enough seedcane to cover all requirements.

Further details of when the plot will be open for business will be forthcoming in the next few weeks.

Harvesting Trials

SRA will be conducting two trials at Condong this week and if anyone would like to have a look at what is involved, please give us a call and we will let you know where and when the trials are taking place.

Acid Sulfate Management Audit

The annual audit took place a few weeks back and ten farms were visited. Thank you to the growers for your co-operation and diligence in having all the necessary documentation up to date for the audit, it is sincerely appreciated.

Last word

We hope that the planting season goes well for everyone and that we get just the right amount of rain exactly when we need it, or is that asking too much??

See you in the paddocks.

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