

NEWS RELEASE

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QCANESelect™: a new, web-based sugarcane variety selection tool

Today, BSES Director and Burdekin cane grower, Paul Sgarbossa launched the BSES Limited QCANESelect™ web site.

Around 40 guests including growers and industry representatives attended the launch.

Mr Sgarbossa said that growers are eager for information on the performance of smut-resistant varieties including their disease resistance, sugar content and adaptation. The smut epidemic is causing a rapid change to varieties in many regions, and growers need up-to-date information on new varieties. "QCANESelect™ is an exciting new way for growers and other users to get this information through your home or office computer, he said.

Mr Sgarbossa said all sectors of the sugar industry will benefit from the capacity to access the extensive BSES database of sugarcane variety information by using QCANESelect™. Growers can obtain specific recommendations for their farm, variety information sheets, photographs to aid identification of varieties and charts to show the proportion of their farm planted to smut-resistant and susceptible varieties. Extension and mill staff can download tables of information such as disease resistance ratings, and graphs that summarize the up-to-date information on how varieties are performing in their region.

Manager of the BSES QCanes Business Unit, Dr Ross Gilmour, said the project was initiated by BSES Program Leaders, Mr Barry Croft and Dr Mike Cox. They saw the need to ensure that growers had access to the most up-to-date information available on the performance of varieties. They saw this as critical to growers planting decisions, whether it was taking up a new variety or replanting an existing variety on farm. The project commenced in 2006 and featured the active involvement of growers in the design, development and road testing of QCANESelect™. This web-based resource has been designed and implemented with the specific needs of growers in mind.

Dave Millard, BSES extension officer based in the Burdekin was one of the development team members. Mr Millard advised growers to register on the BSES website (bses.org.au/QCANESelect), to start using this user-friendly resource immediately, and its free. At the launch, Mr Millard and Andrew Burrows, BSES extension officer, based in Bundaberg, demonstrated how users can enter specific block details and soil information to tailor variety recommendations for their farm, and how QCANESelect™ can generate whole-farm variety management plans. This particular feature will assist growers in managing risks like the outbreak of smut while maximising productivity.

QCANESelect™ was developed with funding from BSES, the Sugar Research and Development Corporation and Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries. BSES will support the ongoing development of QCANESelect™ and will promote its adoption via the network of BSES extension officers.

Sugarcane growers and other industry staff interested in testing QCANESelect™ can access the on-line resource through the BSES website (bses.org.au). Questions regarding the use of

QCANESelect™ can be addressed to Dave Millard (dmillard@bses.org.au, 07 4783 8619) or Andrew Burrows (aburrows@bses.org.au, 07 4155 7448).

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About BSES Limited - BSES Limited is the leading provider of research, development and extension services to the Australian sugarcane industry.