

**Yellow cane update
No. 1 27 March 2013**

In early 2012, several crops of cane in the Mulgrave Mill area, just south of Cairns, showed visible yellowing of the leaves.

This year the yellowing has again been noticed in the Mulgrave area (although in different fields) and additional cases have been reported in the Herbert and Burdekin regions. In some fields the symptoms appear to be reducing.

The Professional Extension and Communication Unit, BSES is coordinating a working group of technical experts including entomology, pathology and agronomy researchers from BSES and staff from Cane Productivity Services groups to identify the cause of the yellowing.

Evidence collected from soil samples, leaf test and inspections suggests that the condition does not appear to be entomological, pathological, nutritional, viral or phyto-toxicity.

A number of key actions have been organised as part of the continuing investigation. These include developing a detailed description of the symptoms to ensure that all reported cases refer to the same thing, creating a severity-rating scale, and establishing a database of affected fields. Further tests and site visits will continue.

The Professional Extension and Communication Unit will release a new CaneClip extension video about the yellowing cane on Tuesday 3 April 2013.

Growers should continue to look out for the following symptoms in their crops and report any findings to their local Cane Productivity Services group:

- A strong yellowing of the lower (older) leaf blades.
- Discoloured broad longitudinal stripes that cover the length of the leaf, or almost complete yellowing of the leaf with the midrib remaining white.
- Tips and sides of the leaf may have a scorched appearance with premature death of the leaf often occurring.
- Possible bending and distortion of cane stalks.

Updates will be provided as additional information becomes available.