



Burdekin grower Laurence Dal Santo in Q240<sup>®</sup> first ratoon in late October 2016.

## Q240<sup>®</sup> delivering solid results in the Burdekin

*Burdekin grower Laurence Dal Santo is having positive results with the relatively new variety for the region, Q240<sup>®</sup>.*

Following planting in April 2015, this year's plant crop yielded slightly over 180 tonnes of cane per hectare and was between one and two units above the mill, outperforming his other plant crop of Q252<sup>®</sup>.

"It got away early and had a good strike, and we kept it clean and the water up to it, and the sunlight did the rest," he explained.

"It has been a good growing year and the rain we received in June has put more weight on the crop, which is good, although will also prolong the season."

Laurence farms 240 hectares and has about 10 percent of his farm to Q240<sup>®</sup>, which he is expecting to increase to 20 percent by this time next year, and to further increase in 2018.

It sits alongside other varieties that he grows including Q252<sup>®</sup>, Q253<sup>®</sup>, and Q232<sup>®</sup>, with the increase in Q240<sup>®</sup> largely replacing Q208<sup>®</sup>, which for Laurence performed poorly in comparison to other varieties.

Q240<sup>®</sup> has been approved across the industry and was available commercially for Burdekin growers in 2013, following an initial release in the southern region in 2009. The variety is increasing in popularity. In 2015 it represented just under four percent of the Australian crop, including about 3.5 percent of the Burdekin region.

It is resistant to two of the major diseases of concern in the Burdekin region, sugarcane smut and leaf scald.

In Burdekin trials it produced good tonnes but moderate sugar, which is what Laurence said that he looks for in a variety.

"We tend to get good sugar here, so I look for high tonnes."

Laurence grows his cane on dual rows on 1.8 metre centres, which he says has delivered multiple benefits that he has seen over the last seven years since switching to wider rows.

"Even when cutting after the rain we are still seeing a stool that hasn't been touched or squashed, the ground between the wheel tracks remains soft, and there are efficiencies with irrigation penetration, and also with fertilising and tillage being in a wider pass," he said.

More information on the variety Q240<sup>®</sup> and other sugarcane varieties is available via SRA's online variety selection tool, QCANESelect™, at <http://tools.sugarresearch.com.au/QCANESelect/>