

All the farms are on 1.8 metre rows and GPS. Mark said the initial investment in GPS came as part of the Reef Rescue program (now known as the Australian Government Reef Programme) about 10 years ago, but it has since taken a life of its own, as demonstrated by their recent investment.

"We are happy with the results of both the GPS and the 1.8 metre rows and we feel so strongly about that that we were happy to buy this gear with no funding.

"With the wide rows, we have seen that this year when there has been wet weather there have been times when we have been the only group that has been cutting.

"It's not ideal, but we are only punishing a small area and there is a lot less damage to the crop."

For Mark, he is expecting the group's average to be about 95 tonnes of cane per hectare this season, but admits

that the race will be on to crush the region's crop, which has increased to an estimate of 1.9 million tonnes.

This would be the region's largest crop in 10 years.

He grows Q240<sup>th</sup> on his better soil, Q232<sup>th</sup> on the poorer soil, and Q208<sup>th</sup> as an all-rounder, with several other varieties playing a minor role.

## SRA welcomes Anthony Curro to Brandon research station

SRA has welcomed Mr Anthony Curro to the role of Adoption Officer based in the Burdekin.

In his role within the SRA Adoption Group, Mr Curro will work with sugarcane growers and millers to drive productivity and profitability improvements.

Leader of the Adoption Group, Mr James Ogden-Brown said the Adoption Group was a crucial link between the research and development conducted by SRA, and translating this into practical outcomes that can be adopted by sugarcane growers and millers.

Mr Curro is working the Burdekin with a focus on precision agriculture, and alongside fellow Adoption Officer in the region, Andres Jaramillo (irrigation).

**Right:** SRA Adoption Officer, Anthony Curro.

Mr Curro grew up in the Burdekin and worked in the family farming business consisting of horticulture, sugarcane and mango orchards on a full time basis for 12 years.

He has also studied science at JCU and worked with the industry through work at the region's Natural Resource Management organisation.

"I'm excited about the opportunity with SRA to continue working in the Burdekin and also taking on the discipline of precision agriculture," Mr Curro said.

