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Australian Banana Growers' e-Bulletin

16 December 2016

Grower input required for Levy Investments

Horticulture Innovation Australia (HIA) is looking for growers' input into its new Banana Industry Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) currently being updated for 2017-2022.

HIA's website notes the most important functions of the SIP are to ensure levy investment decisions align with industry priorities, guide Strategic Investment Advisory panels and assist in the prioritisation and implementation of levy R&D and marketing programs.

In 2014, when the current SIP was developed, it included approximately \$35 million invested in banana R&D and marketing over five years.

A review of the SIP has already included extensive industry consultation – including workshops – and HIA also intends to conduct grower surveys to obtain feedback.

Growers who wish to participate in the review can register their interest on the HIA website; <http://horticulture.com.au/grower-focus/banana/>

2017 pest management workshops

Queensland landholders and primary producers wanting to learn more about the latest tools and techniques to tackle feral pests are being urged to register for one of 30 AgForce workshops to be held in 2017.

Twenty free workshops have been held throughout the state since September, training 200 landholders so far in chemical handling safety and pest management – including PAPP baits and Canid Pest Ejectors - with another 30 workshops planned in the new year.

To register in a workshop go to AgForce Projects website; www.agforceprojects.org.au or call (07) 32386048.

DAF pilot trials take flight

Three small, 'out of the box' innovative banana trials have commenced at South Johnstone.

One is trialling chemical options to remove flower remnants, another is looking at the effect on suckers by injecting harvested mother plants with a urea solution and a third is looking at different desuckering methods.

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries' senior development officer Tegan Kukulies, who is co-ordinating the trials, said "These trials are high-risk in nature."

"For example we have already damaged bunches attempting to remove flower remnants. I would like to know if growers are interested in receiving regular updates (including the failures) of these trials".

If you are interested in receiving more regular updates contact Tegan at tegan.kukulies@daf.qld.gov.au or 07 4220 4152.

(The project is funded by Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited using the banana industry levy with co-investment from DAF and the Australian Government.)

Congress & Origin II!

Have you set the date for the Australian Banana Industry Congress yet? If not, mark June 22- 24 into your calendar.

State of Origin will be held in Sydney on June 21 so it's the perfect timing to gather with your fellow banana growers, researchers, scientists and support industries to celebrate the best of the industry and set sail for an innovative, resilient and sustainable future!

Keep up with the developments for the biennial event here: <http://bananacongress.org.au/>

Great response to reef grants

Grants being delivered by ABGC as part of the Australian Government Reef Trust III closed today.

ABGC's Reef Extension Program have been very happy with the level of grower interest in the grants.

These grants are to assist growers in making on-farm nutrient and sediment management practice changes, which lead to improved water quality.

In January 2017, the grants selection panel will meet and go through all grant applications, with successful and unsuccessful applicants to be advised in late January.

Calling all growers ... it's your time to shine!

Another shout out to growers from Australian Bananas which is looking for three new Facebook stars!

Following the success of their FB 'grower campaign', Australian Bananas needs three new stars to carry the flame by showcasing their favourite banana recipes.

All you need to do is snap a picture of yourself or your family in front of your crop, and provide your most-loved family recipe - whether it be a banana damper or banana loaf and custard – and send it to Elisa King at elisa.king@horticulture.com.au or phone 0403 378888.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

The ABGC would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very merry and safe Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Both ABGC offices – Rocklea and South Johnstone – will be closed over the Christmas/New Year's break from 24/12/16 to 02/01/17.

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