

Project Catalyst Update



Happy new year to all Project Catalyst growers and team members! Let's hope 2021 holds fewer surprises than the last year and we can all return to some sort of normal with our lives and jobs. Our thoughts remain with our project sponsors that are based interstate who remain impacted by harsher COVID restrictions than us lucky Queenslanders.

Forum

It's that time of the year once again as we rapidly approach our major annual grower event – the Project Catalyst Forum. This year we will be gathering in Townsville for our reception event and presentations at The Ville Resort-Casino, followed by a day of field activities at either Ingham, AIMS or the Burdekin.

The event will run from 21-23 February, so if you have not already booked and are interested in attending, please contact Joanne Gibbs at Catchment Solutions on 4968 4216.

Please be aware that places are limited while we work under COVID restrictions, so act now.

We are all looking forward to a wonderful event that provides a great range of information of interest to all growers and you'll find more details in the program on the Eventbrite registration page. We are especially excited about our day of field activities, and whether it be on farm or on the water we look forward to seeing you there.

Update from Coca-Cola and WWF-Australia

We are fortunate once again that the Coca-Cola Foundation and WWF-Australia can continue with funding contributions to Project Catalyst in 2021. These funds will be used for our on-ground service providers to continue to support growers in a second year of the broader adoption program. This program will continue to promote precision nutrient application, weed and pest management, and legume fallow practices that commenced in the Burdekin and Wet Tropics regions in 2020.



Megan Zahmel from HCPSL explaining EM mapping.

Recent Events

Megan and the team from HCPSL held a Variable Rate Amendments & Micro-Nutrients grower information evening and BBQ in November which was attended by over 20 growers. Ross from Catchment Solutions was lucky enough to attend this great evening and chat with interested growers. Kim and Jac were also able to interview growers and discover new stories while in the district for four-days of Project Catalyst filming. During their travels, Kim and Jac filmed on nine farms for a range of videos, including the Forum virtual farm tours and practice fact videos through the Burdekin and Wet Tropics districts.

Project Catalyst was invited to speak at the Australian Water Association's Queensland state conference on the Sunshine Coast in November 2020. Ross from Catchment Solutions presented a 20-minute overview and conference paper that outlined the achievements and activities of Project Catalyst. The project received many compliments for

the outstanding work it does in improving farming and environmental outcomes and for its significance in the Queensland cane growing industry. The conference paper is available on the project catalyst website [here](#).



Ross Neivandt from Catchment Solutions presenting at the Australian Water Association Queensland state conference.



Great Barrier
Reef Foundation



Projects Update

Lower Herbert Practice Change Adoption

We are pleased to announce that Project Catalyst has secured 4 years of Great Barrier Reef Foundation project funding to engage growers in the Lower Herbert region under our practice change adoption program. This funding will allow HCPSL to work with new Project Catalyst growers to adopt farm management practice change activities with the aim of improving productivity and water quality outcomes. Please contact Megan Zahmel on 0447 317 102 if you would like further information of the opportunities available to growers new to Project Catalyst.

Mackay & Plane Creek Practice Change Adoption

Nutrien Ag Solutions and Catchment Solutions have started work with the first group of four Pioneer and Plane Creek catchment growers who have entered the Practice Change Adoption focused Mackay Whitsunday Water Quality Program. We are now inviting a further ten Pioneer and Plane Creek catchments growers to join the program for the 2021 & 2022 growing seasons. Please contact Audra Allan at Nutrien Ag Solutions on 0418 940 786

Weed Control using Microwave Technology

Unfortunately, we have had to cancel the microwave weed control project due to the withdraw of Growave from the project partnership. We thank GBRF and Burdekin Productivity Services for their support in initially establishing the project and are extremely disappointed that the project can no longer proceed. This is exciting technology with huge potential so we will continue to look for opportunities to re-establish the trials in the future.

Please visit the [Project Catalyst website](#) for all the latest news and project information.

PROJECT CATALYST WEBSITE

Project videos are also available at [Project Catalyst's YouTube Channel](#)

PROJECT CATALYST YOUTUBE CHANNEL

Communications Survey

Thank you to the 77 growers who were able to participate in the digital communications phone survey conducted in December 2020. Your valuable ideas, insights and opinions will help us to provide you with the most suitable and best communication products that we can. Thanks to Red Hot Blue for conducting the telephone interviews and we look forward to sharing with you what was learned once we finish this work.



For further information, contact:

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Audra Allan and Michael Turner from Nutrien Ag Solutions with the new Project Catalyst practice change signs.

New Signs

Project Catalyst "Practice Change in Sugarcane" corflute signs are now available to promote broader adoption and practice change project sites. Please see your on-ground service provider if you would like one.

Grower and Service Provider Visits

One of the most interesting and valuable aspects of Project Catalyst is working with so many different partners, service providers and growers, understanding their farming businesses and seeing the desire that drives you all to improve farming systems. Project Coordinator, Ross Neivandt will continue to travel from the Mackay Whitsundays to the Burdekin and Wet Tropics as often as he can so please make contact if you wish to catch up or discuss anything Catalyst or sugarcane with Ross.