



Case Study

Refining Whole Farm Nutrient Management Planning



LANDHOLDER	Peter White
LOCATION	Silkwood
CATCHMENT	Johnstone
RAINFALL	3283 mm
PROPERTY SIZE	69.6 ha
ON-GROUND PROVIDER	CANEGROWERS Innisfail

Project Catalyst is a grower led, sugar cane innovation and adoption project that explores, develops and validates farm management practice change to improve the enduring water quality of the Great Barrier Reef.

BROADER ADOPTION VALIDATION & GROWER SUPPORT

Founded in 2009, the project operates in the Mackay Whitsunday, Burdekin and Wet Tropic regions to deliver valued practice change outcomes and develop methods for industry adoption. Under the Broader Adoption and Grower Support program, professional on-ground service providers assist selected growers to adopt and validate appropriate change practices. Service providers continue to monitor implementation benefits and derived environmental performance improvements. Through targeted extension activities, the program seeks to accelerate the uptake and broader adoption of improved farming practices at local, regional and industry levels.



Great Barrier Reef Foundation



●●●● Goal

To refine the growers whole of farm nutrient management plan with specific focus on steps 5 & 6 of the SIX EASY STEPS program.



2022 Ratoon crop

●●●● Overview

Having had a whole of farm nutrient management plan developed for the farm and following the plan for a few years now, Peter is interested in refining their nutrient rates to take into account all aspects of nutrient management.

This plan will take into account a wide range of agronomic data and farm production data as well as grower knowledge and experience to tailor their existing Nutrient Management Plan.



Tully Soil Profile

●●●● Action

As part of updating their Nutrient Management Plan, Peter indicated that he was interested in adjusting the fertiliser used on some of his ratoons.

As part of the nutrient management plan update, a full review of the previous years fertiliser and nutrient rates was completed. This was then assessed along with the farm productivity data, new and historic soil testing results, Peter's knowledge and experience on his farm as well as the tools in the SIX EASY STEPS TOOLBOX. This process checks the adequacy of all nutrients applied, trends in block fertility and grower knowledge. As a result of the nutrient management plan review and update, Peter indicated that he wanted to try reducing his Nitrogen rates in ratoons with the aim of increasing CCS without reducing cane t/ha. The 2021/22 fertiliser plan was developed with a 10kg/ha reduction in nitrogen.

●●●● Outcome

At this stage Peter is happy with the ratoon crop performance and is intending to continue with the current rates in future ratoon crops.

