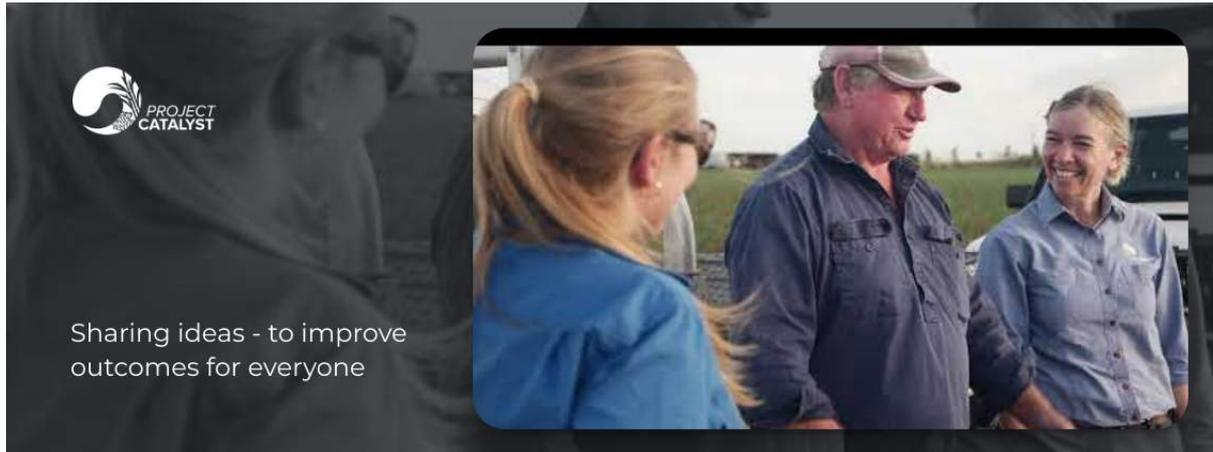


## Catalyst News & Views: sharing ideas to improve outcomes for everyone.

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## Hello!

Thank you for being part of our Catalyst community.

We are counting down the months, weeks, and days until we reunite at Forum in Cairns, 2023.

In the spirit of sharing our knowledge and information, this quarterly publication provides a platform for you to preview events, review workshops, tell us about your experience and get to know each other through stories.

I hear some hilarious happenings on the grapevine, with celebrations and awards occurring almost every month, I'm sure you have something to share.

Please send your stories, information, and anything you want people to know to me - Kim Kleidon, via our new email

[comms@projectcatalyst.net.au](mailto:comms@projectcatalyst.net.au)



To kick us off Bethany Donker, from Herbert Cane Productivity Services shares valuable information about sugar ripeners, following the success of a workshop held in Ingham.

We'll be introducing you to key members of the Catalyst team responsible for overseeing trials, (you may learn something you don't know about them). Like the fact that Peter Becke knew from a young age what he wanted to do.

Ross Neivandt has an update on project activities, along with what's finalised and the reports submitted.

As for me, I'd like you to join us on social media following the development of exciting new content and connection:

[YouTube](#) where we've launched your new Podcast with Dr Chandra Iyer sharing his expertise on Inoculant Success.

PLUS if you have a Facebook account then make sure you like our [page](#), which aims to engage and educate - everyone is welcome to join us.



Megan Zahmel interviewing John for the sugar ripener videos being produced.

MODDUS has been on the minds of Project Catalyst growers in the Hebert following a workshop held on the 30<sup>th</sup> of March. The workshop was facilitated by the team at HCPSL, prompted by conversations with several growers who had used the product successfully over the past 12 months and were considering its wider application across farm.

Over the course of the workshop growers discussed how crop ripeners work to increase CCS, how varieties are affected, and the importance of timing their application. In preparation, the team at HCPSL also met with Herbert growers from across the district currently using MODDUS. Growers participating in the recorded one-on-one interviews shared some valuable insights for how crop ripeners have worked for them. The team hopes to use, produce, and share this material in the coming months to assist growers wanting to apply product over the course of the season. We'll be rolling out all the new content on the [HCPSL website](#) and Project Catalyst social media, so please follow us and like our Facebook pages for notifications.

Bethany 😊



*Meet Peter Becke (right) pictured with Catalyst Grower Damian Wirth*

### **Project Catalyst Team Profile**

Peter Becke – PC Agronomist  
District Extension Officer, Innisfail Region  
Wet Tropics Sugar Industry Partnership – Canegrowers

Raised amongst the Burdekin cane outside Home Hill, Peter realised at a young age that he wouldn't be a rocket scientist. In fact, he was on a school bus passing his grandmother's house when he chose to pursue his passion for plants.

“After studying for a Bachelor of Applied Science (Plants major) at UQ Gatton, I worked as an agronomist in Mareeba for four years, mostly in horticulture. My parents had always worked on the family farm which led to my passion for agriculture - even though my parents had suggested I may be better off working in other fields.”

Peter is happiest when flying drones as part of his research, highlighting an interest in Ag Tech and the potential opportunity it offers in further developing the sugar industry. But it's Project Catalyst he credits with enhancing his understanding of farmers and farming.

“Catalyst has supported me to help work with growers and deliver projects they're passionate about. I enjoy providing good agronomic advice to growers that can help them improve their farm and sustainability. I'll be doing this for the next ten years at least.”

Peter features in our Virtual Farm Tour that will screen at Forum 2023 in Cairns. In his spare time, you'll find him enjoying sport, camping, and exploring outdoors. (It seems he settled in the perfect location. KK)



## ***PC UPDATE from Ross***

2022 is already proving to be as fluid and challenging as previous years, with all the changes we've faced these challenges can only make us more resilient.

The 10 innovation trials that ran up to March 2022 have been completed and the final report to the GBRF has been submitted.

The 2021 Coca-Cola practice change adoption program has been completed and reported to WWF-Australia.

We can now confirm that funding from the Coca-Cola Foundation is in place to continue our practice change program into 2022. A limited number of places are available for new growers in the Burdekin and Wet Tropics to join Project Catalyst's practice change pathway. Perhaps you could invite a neighbour.

*To register interest, please contact your local Project Catalyst service provider or give Ross a call on 0408 139 289.*

The GBRF verification visit last month in the Lower Herbert went well and the GBRF spoke highly of our progress when we were with them in the field.

Project Catalyst is currently 100% practice change adoption and I'm still waiting for innovation ideas and EOIs from growers and On Ground Service Providers. If you have something to submit we'd really like to see it.

Don't forget to take advantage of the resources being produced and published on the website, YouTube and Facebook. We have several Practice Fact Sheets available to you and more coming, including [EM Mapping](#) and a Fallow Cropping Guide for Mackay and Whitsundays (based on the work done by HCPSL in the Herbert).

Until next time,

Ross Neivandt  
Project Coordinator



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