New soil guide unlocks soil secrets in Isis

In late 2014 Sugar Research Australia launched the Soil specific nutrient management guidelines booklet at the Isis Productivity Limited’s Annual General Meeting attended by growers, millers and industry representatives.

The booklet combines the six easy steps program – a nutrient management package that seeks to improve on-farm productivity, profitability and sustainability – with unique aspects of growing cane using nutrient management guidelines linked to soil in the Isis district.

John Panitz, SRA Principal Technician Nutrient Management, said the guidelines will help growers to improve their knowledge of the different soil types on their farms and make better farm practice decisions.

“On farm nutrient management should be based on a sound understanding of soils,” John said. “Soil type influences decisions on what cane variety to grow and how much fertiliser to apply. It also has an impact on the choice of tillage practices, planting techniques, irrigation and harvest schedules.

“Growers are always looking at ways to farm sustainably and this booklet is a valuable nutrient management tool,” John said.

Mark Mammino, Isis Landcare Chairman said the soil nutrient management guidelines provide growers with a more accurate way to manage fertiliser inputs than the traditional one-size-fits-all approach.

“These guidelines not only aim to improve crop yield, soil fertility and reduce production costs, they also provide ways to minimise the impact of nutrient movement on the environment,” Mark said.

The Isis soil specific nutrient management booklet is available from Isis Canegrowers or can be downloaded from the SRA website: www.sugarresearch.com.au

Contact: SRA Communications Carolyn Martin mobile: 0439 399 886.

Help on its way for soil health in Herbert

Soil health in the Herbert will be given a boost with the appointment of full time agronomist, Phil Patane, who has recently joined the Sugar Research Australia team as Development Officer in Ingham.

SRA Executive Manager for Professional Extension and Communications (PEC) Dr Andrew Ward said the Herbert region is an important production area generating over four million tonnes annually.

“Phil has been a valuable member of the PEC team for the past two years and his breath of research and development knowledge will be an asset to Herbert cane growers,” Andrew said.

From a cane farming background originally, Phil developed a keen interest in soils and went off to study agronomy at Gatton.

After graduation, he was quickly picked up by SRA and has been has been stationed at SRA in the Burdekin for the past two years working as the Development Officer for harvesting and machinery.

Phil says he is really looking forward to getting back into soils and is excited to be joining the Ingham team.

“My focus will be on delivering the latest research findings to cane growers in the Ingham area. I’ll be working closely with a great team of agronomic researchers both within and outside of SRA to make sure local farmers get access to all the latest information about the best practices and technology out there,” he says.

Contact: Phil Patane – mobile 0431 818 482.

Mark Mammino and Neil Kingston getting some down to earth advice at the Isis Soil Guide launch.

Phil Patane has been appointed SRA Development Officer for Soil Health based in Ingham Queensland.