

May 2008

Sugar industry's new leaders - a sweet future!

The National **Advance in Sugar** Leadership Development Program concluded in Canberra where participants had the opportunity to talk with the Hon. Tony Burke, Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. The Minister welcomed the opportunity to speak to the young leaders from the sugar industry, saying the next generation would help to shape a modern, vibrant future for not only the sugar industry but the agricultural industry in Australia.

“As I told the 2020 Summit in Canberra, I want agriculture and primary industries to be seen as the top echelon of career choices for young Australians,” Mr Burke said.

“The Rudd Government is committed to investing in research and development, infrastructure and global competitiveness to provide new opportunities for young people in our primary industries,” he said.

During the six month program participants have had the opportunity to invest in their personal development, team work and professional development. The final session in Canberra focused on facilitating the participants to understand ‘how the system works’. In addition to meeting with staff from a range of Departments and Government Authorities, they attended question time at Parliament House and met with many politicians before hosting an industry dinner where the Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Senator The Hon Nigel Scullion attended, together with The Hon. Bob Katter, Member for Kennedy, Kirsten Livermore, Member for Capricornia and Brad Henderson, Federal Director, The Nationals were among the guests.

The Graduates of this program who represent production, milling, research and extension have demonstrated the benefits of investing in the next generation of leaders within the sugar industry. They have each delivered on a project which will contribute to the efficiency, professionalism and sustainability of the industry.

Leading Industries General Manager, Cheryl Phillips was delighted with the outcomes of the program and believes each graduate is now positioned to make a contribution to industry at the next level.

The projects ranged from researching new farming system based on skip row planting, to establishing a Future Farmers group, to organising an innovation forum, to developing quarantine guidelines for the movement of micropropogated sugarcane plantlets across state borders, to establish a community based training model for the sugar industry, to lobbying for the relocation of power supply structures on farms to more effective irrigation systems to be installed.

“The quality of the participant’s industry projects presented to industry, business and government clearly demonstrated the potential of the next generation of industry decision makers. In this process participants also made their commitment to the future of the industry very clear,” Cheryl said.

“Programs like this help demonstrate the opportunities available to the next generation to forge a future in industry and develop their skills and leadership potential so they can take up those opportunities.”

“The mark of a successful industry is its ability to embrace change, adopt new technology and new ideas. Young people – as the future of the industry – are often the best-placed to identify the opportunities that change brings and have a critical role to play in achieving that success.”

Senator Nigel Scullion, Shadow Minister for Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry, met with the participants to share his views on leadership, lobbying and making a difference. He commended the group for putting their hand up to take the lead in shaping the future of their industry.

“It is vital to have up and coming leaders from Primary Industries who can hit the ground running and communicate effectively with government and political bodies”, he said.

“The group showed an intense desire to learn how to communicate in a way where they can achieve positive outcomes for their industry. Their eagerness to develop the skills required to lobby and counsel governments and peak industry organisations leaves me with every confidence for the future of the Australian Sugar Industry”, said Senator Scullion.

Cheryl Phillips said that the *Advance in Sugar Leadership Development Program* is unique in the way in which it is building the capacity of the sugar industry.

“However, it must be acknowledged that building the depth and breadth of industry leadership does not happen quickly or by accident. Therefore, it is critical that graduates of the *Advance in Sugar Leadership Development program* continue to be supported by the current industry leaders and the mentors who have supported them throughout this program,” Cheryl said.

The program has been developed and is delivered by Leading Industries with support from the Sugar Research and Development Corporation and FarmBis.

A list of the participants’ project overviews is attached with this release. Contact Leading Industries Training Coordinator Kelly Tape on 0408850110 to arrange to speak with one of the participants or for further information.

**Advance in Sugar
Leadership Development Program
2007/08**

Participant & Project List

Name	Contact Details	Sector	Project
Nicole Thompson	Quarantine Pathologist BSES Ltd. 50 Yeronga St Yeronga Qld 4104 07 33313365 Wk nthompson@bses.org.au	Research	Development of quarantine guidelines for the movement of micropropogated sugarcane plantlets across state and quarantine borders.
Philip DeGuara	Assistant Farm Manager 118 Sorbello's Road, Eton Qld 4741 0417 796468 Wk 07 49541812 Hm 07 49541812 FX pf.deguara@hotmail.com	Production	Develop a young growers group for 18-25 year olds in the Mackay area. Base the group around the values of ethical and progressive practice.
Kalya Abbey	Extension officer - Rural Water Use Efficiency Initiative BSES Ltd. 34 Rae Street, East Mackay Qld. 4740 07 49531551 Hm 0427 7163779 Mb kabbey@bses.org.au	Extension	Research the potential for cost effective options for moving power poles to create the necessary space for centre pivots and lateral move watering systems.
Lee Blackburn	Owner/Operator Blackburn Brothers 1056 Marian Road North Eton Qld 4741 0405 140322 Wk 07 49541525 Hm blacky@mcs.net.au	Production	Investigate a new farming system including skip row planting. This may include cane with peanuts or soy.
Kirsten Brooks	Business Manager 59 Spanos Road Silkwood QLD 4856 Tel: 0740652288 Mob: 0419181641 rnk94@bigpond.net.au	Production	Develop and implement a community based training model relevant to the sugar industry.
Gerard Puglisi	PO Box 191 Mossman QLD 4873 Tel: 07 4030 4174 Tel Home: 07 4098 3535 Mob: 0428 988 136 gpmossag@bigpond.net.au	Production / Technical Field Officer & Traffic Controler	Deliver a forum for young growers in FNQ to expose them to innovative approaches in production, business and value adding.