



## Our newest Bio Dunder® application contractor

*Dan Bezzina has expanded his service offering to include Bio Dunder application.*

After six years of transporting Bio Dunder to farms across the Mackay region, Dan Bezzina has branched into the application side of the industry.

Dan and his wife Helene have owned and operated Bezzina Haulage Pty Ltd since 2014, carting Wilmar's liquid fertilisers and stockfeeds to properties in the central region and further afield.

They're proud to be able to add fertiliser application to their service offering.

"We're fortunate to have a very experienced operator in Andy McEwen to work in the application side of the business. Andy's been applying Bio Dunder for the last 14 years and

does an excellent job.

"We hope to continue working with farmers to transport and apply Bio Dunder liquid fertilisers on properties across our region."

Dan said two of his key focus areas were service and safety.

"I enjoy talking to all the farmers and discussing anything from general day-to-day farm operations to how we, as Bio Dunder applicators, can better our services to meet their needs.

"Although I don't drive the applicator, I have a keen interest in the technology side of the application process and identifying ways to improve our business."

Dan said compliance with new environmental standards had become a high priority for all sectors of the sugar industry.

"The new reef regulations have created some additional challenges for farmers and we, as application contractors, can help them meet those higher standards.

"The new fertiliser delivery reports being provided this season will assist farmers to meet their record-keeping obligations."

Dan said he had seen significant changes in safety protocols since starting out in the transport industry.

"An increased emphasis on safety is a change I've noticed and welcomed," he said.

[>> Continued page 2](#)

# Navigating *new* challenges



By George Russell  
AgServices Business Manager

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced all of us to make changes to the way we operate, and our business is no different.

The outbreak forced a cancellation of our annual grower meetings, which for years have been an important forum for providing our customers with updates about our products and services.

We implemented strict guidelines to prevent and manage the risk of COVID-19. Among other things, that meant restrictions on travel, site visits and face-to-face interactions with our customers and contractors.

Despite the additional challenges, we remained focused on key projects to deliver better service and products to our customers.

Our production and operations teams carried out capital and maintenance work at the Oonooie plant to ensure the continued quality and supply of liquid fertilisers and stockfeeds.

This included improvements to the Di Ammonium Phosphate (DAP) hopper roof facility to improve access and supply during wet weather events. We also replaced one of our DAP mixing tanks.

We made improvements to our data management so we could provide growers with detailed fertiliser delivery reports. Most of our customers would have received these reports in their inbox by now. They're emailed within three days of application to help growers meet their record-keeping obligations under the new Reef Regulations.

The 2020 season is now well under way and our Bio Dunder application contractors are doing an excellent job of meeting demand during this peak fertilising period.

Contractors get the job done efficiently and with a high degree of accuracy – ensuring your crop gets the nutrition it needs, at the right time, precisely where it needs it.

This value and convenience is particularly important in the current season, given the uncertain weather outlook for the months ahead.

Thank you for your continued support, and I wish you a safe and successful completion of the 2020 season.

>> *Continued from page 1*

“Safety is our top priority. We go above and beyond to follow the guidelines – from pre-starts to filling out Take 5s – so that everyone returns home safely each night.

“It does require a little more paperwork each day, but it’s worth it to keep everyone safe at work.”

Dan grew up on a farm and has broad experience in sugarcane and cattle. He lives on a small cattle property at Oakenden with his wife and three children.



Dan Bezzina sets up the applicator boom for a Bio Dunder application.

*I enjoy talking to all the farmers.* ”

Dan Bezzina



Dan Bezzina with wife Helene and daughter Evie at their Oakenden property.



Mackay grower Michael Galea and Dan Bezzina.



# The crucial role of lime in low pH soils

Agronomist Menno Bokma collects soil samples for testing.

By Menno Bokma  
Northern Sales Agronomist

In recent months, I've looked at a fair few soil analysis results and recommendations for the southern region. The main point of interest has been the requirement for agricultural lime for the next crop cycle where the pH is slipping.

It is important to note that pH is measured on a logarithmic scale. That means when your pH drops by just one unit, it is effectively 10 times worse! So it is vital to get lime on to make your applied fertiliser and nutrients in the soil available to your crop.

This is particularly important in view of the limited rates of application allowed under the Six Easy Steps guidelines. We can't just increase the amount of fertiliser or add another top-dressing as an insurance – we must make the most of what we have available, which is otherwise known as nutrient use efficiency. We must also attend to other factors such as soil acidity.

### Acidic soil

The major nutrients, NPKS, become relatively unavailable in very acid soils, such as those below pH 5.0, due to an excess of hydrogen and aluminium on the cation exchange sites of organic matter and soil particles.

Low pH (acid soils) aggravates the already low cation exchange capacity of our tropical soils with the soil solution dominated by the acidic hydrogen and aluminium ions. This means there is less storage capacity for other nutrients like calcium, magnesium and potassium, especially in sandy soils.

The ideal pH range for the overall availability of all nutrients is between pH 5.5 and pH 7.0 [pH .H2O scale] because the aluminium concentration in solution is reduced.

Sugarcane is generally quite tolerant of high levels of aluminium, however it is toxic to most fallow crops and especially legumes such as bean crops. So the importance of liming cannot be overstated.

### Lime products

Agricultural lime products are essentially made up of calcium carbonate. The main thing to look for in a suitable liming material is its neutralising

value and its fineness. A good-quality lime needs to be fine to get the greatest surface area contact with your soil particles. A neutralising value of > 90% is what you should be looking for in a good-quality product.

Once broadcast, the product will need to be incorporated and thoroughly worked into the soil to benefit the next crop cycle. Moisture in the form of rainfall or irrigation is required for the lime to start working.

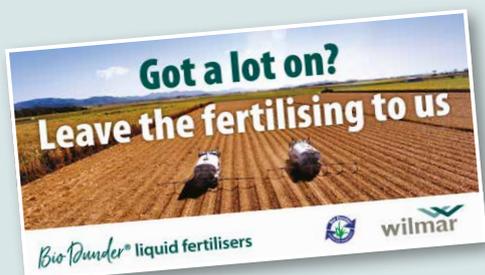
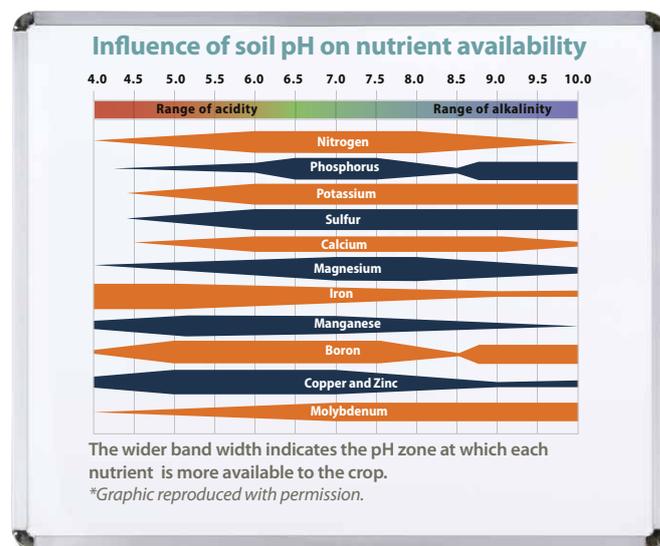
### Bio Dunder

What can't be seen in Bio Dunder, but is certainly there, is extra calcium and organic carbon.

Bio Dunder liquid fertilisers contain calcium, magnesium and nine per cent organic carbon on top of the main NPKS nutrients.

This means an average application of 3.5 cubic metres of Liquid One Shot per hectare will give you an extra 20kg/ha of calcium, 13kg/ha of magnesium and 325kg/ha of organic carbon.

*\*Acknowledgement: Graphic and information sourced from the Australian Sugarcane Nutrition Manual (SRA, 2018).*



### Driving home the message

We've taken to the highway to spread the word about the benefits of choosing Bio Dunder. Two new billboards in the Mackay region are driving home the message about the convenience and sustainability of our Queensland-made liquid fertilisers. The billboards are situated on the Peak Downs Highway at Ooralea and the Bruce Highway at Farleigh.



## Application contractors

### MACKAY REGION

#### A1 Farming

Tractor  
M 0429 143 074

#### Bezzina Haulage

Tractor  
M 0417 475 721

#### Andrew Chetcuti

Truck  
M 0428 185 307

#### Damian Gunning

Tractor  
M 0427 070 110

#### Peter Hackett

Trucks  
M 0428 564 607

#### Keating Haulage

Tractor  
M 0413 769 769

#### Mel Janke

Truck  
M 0408 147 740

#### Trent Janke

Truck  
M 0439 526 537

#### Darren Little

Tractor  
M 0407 731 115

#### Joe Quattromani

Truck  
P 4950 3925  
M 0419 782 673

#### Van Damme Plant Hire

Truck  
P 4956 2214  
M 0427 996 898

#### Nathan Ross

Tractor  
M 0438 523 774

#### Phillip Ross

Tractor  
M 0408 701 693

#### Vella Haulage

Truck  
M 0423 138 781  
M 0419 651 242

### PROSERPINE

#### Paul McDougall

Tractor  
M 0448 374 831

#### Stacey Hadlow

Dunder Under  
M 0427 678 572

### BURDEKIN

#### Griggs Haulage

Tractors  
M 0407 731 213

# Bespoke 'beast' offers a better way



Ben Flynn (left) and Brenden Aslette with their majestical beast.

Two Sarina Distillery employees have come up with an innovative solution to remove the temporary cover on our ET04 storage dam at Oonooie.

Mechanical Trades Coordinator Brenden Aslette and Mechanical Fitter Ben Flynn invented a machine specifically to do the job, which has been dubbed the 'majestical beast'.

It meant the cover removal job could be done in-house this year for the first time – a significant cost saving for the business.

Wilmar BioEthanol National Operations Manager Carl Morton said Brenden and Ben showed great initiative, mechanical skills and Aussie ingenuity to come up with the improvement project.

"We've always used external contractors to remove the temporary covers from the dunder dam," Carl said.

"The guys said 'we could do that' and asked if we'd let them have a go.

"They came in on the weekend and built the main part of it. After a safety check, they were told to add some guarding and a few other safety features, which they did.

"In the end, we got a solution that was safe and rolled the cover up neatly, so it was great from an environmental perspective."

Carl said the distillery's maintenance team would use the majestical beast for future dam cover removals, delivering ongoing savings for the business.

## New phos tanks for Oonooie site

We've installed a new storage and loading station at Oonooie ahead of the launch of our new liquid stockfeed range in June this year.

SuplaFlo®+Phos was developed to help graziers address phosphorus deficiencies in cattle, which can cause a significant loss of appetite and condition.

The production of the new stockfeed product demanded a unique storage and dosing solution, and our engineers worked with Victorian tank manufacturer Polymaster to design and build the facility.

Capital Engineer Shaun Thompson said the system dosed phosphoric acid into the SuplaFlo liquid stockfeed product as it was being pumped into trucks to transport to agents and customers.

The tanks are manufactured out of different materials to the other stockfeed storage tanks at Oonooie because of the corrosive nature of the phosphoric acid.

"The tanks are made out of polyethylene and use both polyethylene and stainless steel piping," Shaun said.

"To also save space and minimise cost, the new unit uses

three interlinked dual-walled tanks instead of a single large tank in a concrete bund to capture leaks."

The market response to SuplaFlo+Phos has been strong and sales are exceeding expectations.



Capital Engineer Shaun Thompson at the new storage and loading station.

#### Disclaimer

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