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## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **Herbert mills welcome new apprentices**

Six new apprentices have started their trade training at Wilmar Sugar's Herbert mills.

The new Herbert recruits are among 38 first-year apprentices to join the Wilmar business this year, working across the company's eight Queensland sugar mills and bioethanol distillery.

Training Superintendent Daniel Shipard said this year's intake was the largest in many years and reflected the company's long-term commitment to trade training.

"With more of our work being done in-house, we identified a need to maintain and build up the trade skills that exist within our business," Mr Shipard said.

"We have a strong track record of producing quality tradespeople across the electrical, fitting and turning, boilermaking and diesel fitting disciplines, with our apprentices getting exposure to a wide range of work within our factories.

"We're particularly proud of our completion rates. More than 90 per cent of our recruits complete their respective apprenticeships, which gives us one of the highest apprenticeship completion rates in Australia."

This year's intake comprises 21 Burdekin, six Herbert, five Proserpine, four Plane Creek and two BioEthanol Distillery apprentices.

First-year Herbert apprentice Lachlan Seri said he had always been a hands-on person, so was looking forward to completing an electrical apprenticeship with Wilmar.

"If I do want to do further studies later on, my trade training will give me a good practical foundation for university," he said.

Herbert boilermaking apprentice Dale Cantoni said he was keen to learn about all of the different processes that go into making sugar.

"As a boilermaking apprentice, I'll be learning about all the different components in the mill. I'll be doing welding, fabricating, some gouging, thermal cutting, all that type of stuff to produce the final products that go into the mill," Mr Cantoni said.

"I'll get to learn from experienced tradesmen so that I can become a good tradesman myself."

Mr Shipard said Wilmar currently employed 134 apprentices across the business.

He said the Herbert and Burdekin apprentices had recently completed a two-week safe start course at the Burdekin TAFE facility, ahead of starting work at their respective mills. The Mackay region apprentices commenced work at their sites late last year.

Wilmar has created more than 330 new apprenticeship positions since buying Sucrogen in 2011.

*ENDS*



*Wilmar's new Herbert region apprentices, from left, Jack Appleton (boilermaking), Liam Di Bartolo (fitting and turning), Lachlan Seri (electrical), Dale Cantoni (boilermaking) and Joe Exelby (fitting and turning). Absent: Mitchell Davis (electrical).*



*First-year fitting and turning apprentice Liam Di Bartolo inspects loco wheels being machined at the Burdekin Centralised Workshop.*



*Fitting and turning apprentice Joe Exelby completes an exercise in Wilmar's two-week safe start program, before beginning work at Victoria Mill.*

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