

NEWS RELEASE

Burdekin crushing under way

The 2015 crushing season is under way at three of Wilmar Sugar's four Burdekin mills.

The first cane billets of the season were crushed at Inkerman Mill about 8.50am today, with Kalamia and Pioneer mills starting about 1.15pm and 2.05pm respectively.

Invicta Mill is set to commence crushing tomorrow morning, after a one-day wet weather delay.

Wilmar Sugar Operations General Manager Mike McLeod said daily cane supply to the mills would slowly increase as the factories began to settle.

"We've completed another large capital and maintenance program at the mills this year, so there is a lot of new equipment being tested with product for the first time," he said.

"Provided weather conditions remain favourable for harvesting, we expect the four mills to be at full production by early next week."

It takes about 20 hours for harvested sugarcane to be transformed into raw sugar after it is tipped out of cane bins at the mill's tippler.

About 8.27 million tonnes of cane is expected to be harvested and crushed in the Burdekin this year.

Mr McLeod said the crop was about 200,000 tonnes larger than last year's and about an average size for the district.

“Based on our crop estimate and an allowance for some in-season wet weather, crushing should be finalised in mid-November,” he said.

With another crushing season under way, cane trains are on the move again across the Burdekin district 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Motorists are urged to approach all cane railway crossings with caution, obey all signs and signals and always give way to oncoming cane trains.

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