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MEDIA RELEASE

Wilmar mills gear up for start of crush

The first of Wilmar Sugar Australia's eight mills are on track to start the 2019 crush in a fortnight.

Kalamia and Inkerman mills in the Burdekin are set to crush the first cane for the season on Tuesday 4 June.

Wilmar's other two Burdekin mills – Invicta and Pioneer – are scheduled to start a week later on Tuesday 11 June.

Crushing is expected to commence in the Herbert and at Plane Creek on 18 June, and at Proserpine Mill on 25 June.

Cane Supply and Grower Relations General Manager Paul Giordani said Wilmar expected to process about 15.41 million tonnes of sugarcane this year, to manufacture about 2.1 million tonnes of raw sugar.

"As a group, we're expecting a similar throughput for 2019 as last year, when we processed 15.44 million tonnes of sugarcane," Mr Giordani said.

"The crop estimate is down in the Herbert this year due to the big summer rain events causing flooding and crop damage, but we're seeing bigger crops in the Burdekin, Proserpine and Plane Creek regions."

Wilmar's regional crop estimates for the 2019 season are:

- Herbert – 4.26 million tonnes
- Burdekin – 8.24 million tonnes
- Proserpine – 1.61 million tonnes
- Plane Creek – 1.3 million tonnes

General Manager Operations Mike McLeod said work teams across the four regions were finalising an extensive capital and maintenance works program to get the factories ready for the crush.

"We're spending about \$134 million across our sites this year, with a particular focus on further improving performance and reliability.

"Major projects this year include the installation of three new pans in the Burdekin, a new high-grade centrifugal at Plane Creek Mill, mill turbine overhauls at Proserpine Mill and a new cane shredder in the Herbert."

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