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NEWS RELEASE

Steam trials set for Proserpine Mill

Proserpine residents can expect to see steam rising from the stacks at Proserpine Mill this week as Wilmar's operations team runs pre-season steam trials ahead of the start of the 2020 crush.

Mackay Regional Operations Manager Craig Muddle said major capital projects had been completed and final testing was under way.

"We'll run our first steam trials this week to commission our high-energy plant and test the process house equipment.

"A second set of steam trials is planned for next week."

Mr Muddle said the factory was on track to start crushing operations on Tuesday 30 June.

"We expect to process 1.62 million tonnes of cane this year to manufacture about 230,000 tonnes of raw sugar," he said.

Major maintenance season projects this year include replacement of the mill's bagasse bin slew bearing. This \$760,000 project will improve reliability of the site's bagasse feeding system.

About \$1 million was spent on a complete upgrade of Loco 9. It got a new engine, drive train, remote shunting unit upgrade and new cabin.

"It's basically new from the chassis up," Mr Muddle said. "At the end of the 2019 season the crews stripped it down completely. Over the past six months, it's been completely rebuilt.

"The rebuild is part of a broader business strategy to upgrade Wilmar's loco fleet. It delivers greater hauling capacity with reduced fuel consumption and emissions."

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Proserpine Mill's Hunter Thrupp (left) and Scott Grigg have been working on the \$1 million rebuild of Loco 9 ahead of the 2020 crush. Photo: Jodie McDonald