

Wednesday, 1 July 2020

NEWS RELEASE

Proserpine crush under way

The 2020 crushing season is now under way at Wilmar Sugar's Proserpine Mill.

Mackay Regional Operations Manager Craig Muddle said the first cane was crushed about 12.40pm today (*Wednesday 1 July*), after weekend rain delayed the start-up by one day.

"Field conditions were too wet for harvesting on Monday, but the harvesting crews were able to supply enough cane for us to get going today," he said.

"There was a bit more rain around last night, but the weather's cleared up now and we're anticipating good cane supply tomorrow."

Mr Muddle said the factory was running well, with no major issues so far.

"The factory started up well and we've had a good run at the front end so far. We expect to see the first sugar go up the belt tomorrow morning."

Proserpine Mill is the last of Wilmar's eight factories to start up for 2020.

Invicta Mill in the Burdekin was the first to kick off, on 10 June. Wilmar's Herbert and Plane Creek mills started crushing last Tuesday (23 June).

Mr Muddle said Wilmar's Proserpine workforce had completed a large number of capital and maintenance projects ahead of this year's crush, despite the additional challenges posed by COVID-19.

"As a business, we responded to the COVID threat by putting a lot measures in place to keep our people safe and our industry running.

"Our Proserpine employees did a fantastic job of delivering this year's works program against a backdrop of great uncertainty."

Mr Muddle said Proserpine Mill would process about 1.62 million tonnes of sugarcane this season and produce about 230,000 tonnes of raw sugar.

As a group, Wilmar's eight mills will process about 15 million tonnes of cane and manufacture about two million tonnes of sugar.

Proserpine Cane Supply Manager Tony Marino said the start of crushing meant cane trains were on the move and people should approach all cane rail crossings with caution.

"Our cane trains can't come to a quick stop and they can't swerve. Our message to motorists is clear: Please use your train brain.

“That means to always be on the lookout for cane trains, to obey all signs and signals at cane railway crossings, and to always give way to oncoming cane trains.”

Wilmar launched a new Train Brain song this season to reinforce the safety message. Listen to it [here](#).

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