

Flexibility important in sugarcane nutrient management

Supplied by Stoller Australia

Consistent yield increases have the Werner family impressed. For the past five years they've been running a commercial Stoller liquid fertiliser trial on their property. They've been testing a liquid fertiliser program, including ClearStart 15KZ+N Action 5 and Bio-forge with unique Stoller technology, alongside their regular program to investigate its impact on sugarcane profitability.

"We find that there's more crop vigour with the Stoller program when we get into the ratoons compared to our standard practice. One of the other advantages with the product is that you have three options – you can apply it after harvest as a foliar spray, streamed over the row or sub-surface," says John Werner, Mackay canegrower.

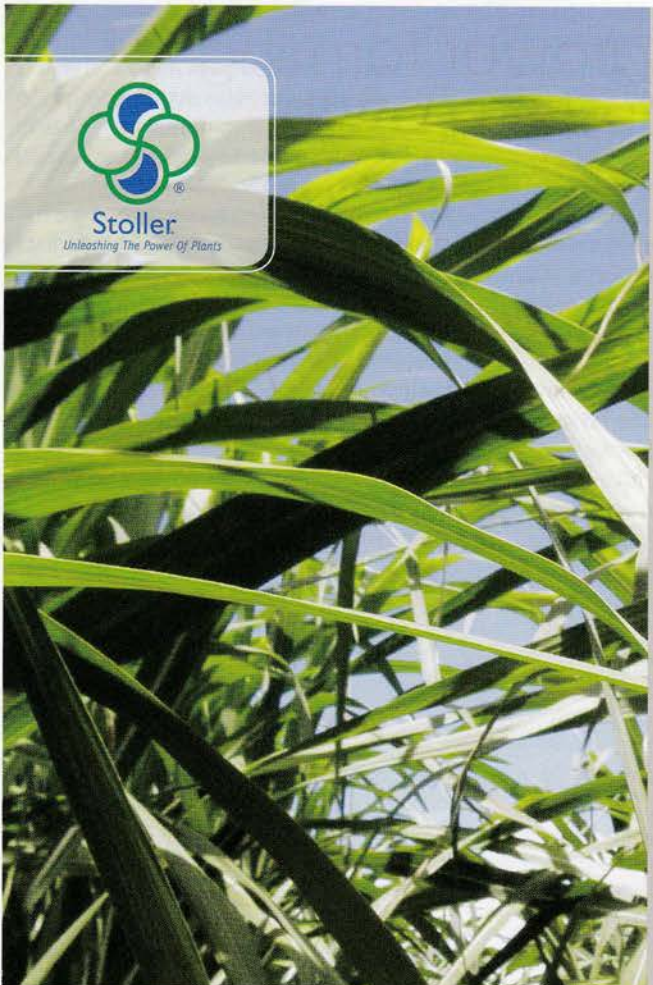
Over the past three seasons, cane yield in the trial has increased by 13.5% or 15.5 t/ha on average. Average sugar yield has also risen, leading to an income increase of just over \$490/ha.

"We've seen around a 10% increase in productivity with the Stoller program and that's been continuing every year now for about five years. It has a huge impact on our dollars per hectare income."

The Werners have begun using what they've learnt from the trial on the rest of their property. With last year's yield at about 110 t/ha (40 t/ha higher than the district average) their willingness to test products like ClearStart 15KZ+N is paying off in profitability. They now use ClearStart in combination with granular fertiliser to maximise production and minimise their risk.

"We know that if we only use the liquid, we have to be back on that crop within 3-4 weeks. We can't guarantee that because of harvesting, wet weather or other factors and that's why we use a combination to protect ourselves," John says.

"It comes down to changing farm management, for more profit." ■



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MORE SUGAR
MORE PROFIT**

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