



AGRONOMIC INSIGHT

4 May 2017

Transition to BMP with a little help from ENTEC®



By Rob Dwyer - Tropical Systems Agronomist

All cane growers are being encouraged to use best practices and record them under the new Smartcane Best Management Practices (BMP).

The Smartcane BMP brings together the best existing industry practices to help growers to be more profitable and sustainable.

It will also demonstrate to the public and the government that cane growers can be good stewards of their land and water resources without additional regulation.

Incitec Pivot Fertilisers is backing the Smartcane BMP project and has always encouraged best management practices in nutrition.



This starts with regular soil testing with the [Nutrient Advantage](#)® laboratory and calculating optimum fertiliser rates based on the Six Easy Steps soil specific nutrient management guidelines.

Using best management practices for nutrition means using the right product, including custom blends, applying the right rates and using appropriate application methods to encourage better nutrient use and minimise losses.

In following best management practices, some growers are likely to receive recommendations which challenge their usual nitrogen rates.

Reducing nitrogen rates is understandably difficult - who would want to risk compromising their crop's growth, reduced cane or sugar yields?



ENTEC® is a management option available to assist with the transition.

Where the rates of nitrogen fertiliser applied are lower than previous practice, it can assist by helping the fertiliser to work extra hard for your crop.

More Nitrogen where it's needed

ENTEC gives growers a mechanism to manage nitrogen fertiliser after it has been applied - a new management option that removes some of the uncertainty around growing sugar in an unpredictable climate.

Put simply, it keeps the nitrogen fertiliser stable and available in your soil for weeks, even months longer than regular granular urea.

When conventional urea is applied in the soil, soil bacteria quickly convert the ammonium form of nitrogen to mobile nitrate nitrogen.

Any nitrate nitrogen not taken up by the plant may be lost to leaching or denitrification, especially in high rainfall conditions.

When ENTEC is used, a greater percentage of the nitrogen applied is usually available to the crop.

This is especially important when less nitrogen fertiliser is being applied.

ENTEC means extra confidence in your crop's ability to produce optimal yields if there are loss conditions in the weeks after fertiliser is applied.





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Using ENTEC effectively

Cane growers can use ENTEC to protect side dressed nitrogen in plant and ratoon crops.

It can be used on straight nitrogen or on the nitrogen component of fertiliser blends.

ENTEC treated fertiliser should be applied under the soil with the furrow closed over with finger press wheels to provide 10cm of compacted soil cover.

Any nitrogen fertiliser sitting in high concentrations in furrows that are left open to the atmosphere is at risk of significant volatilisation losses, including ENTEC treated fertilisers.

For more information



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www.nutrientadvantage.com.au



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