



INFORMATION DAY AT MONZI



The Umfolozi Cane Growers' Association (UCGA) invited SASTA to their meeting, held on 22 November, at Monzi Golf Club. At the meeting, SASRI Extension Specialist and SASTA Council Member, Dr Ruth Rhodes, gave a presentation that described SASTA's objectives, operations and events. Three SASRI researchers then presented their SASTA Congress papers, to give growers a feel for the valuable information disseminated at this annual event:



Senior Soil Scientist, Dr Louis Titshall's paper explored the benefits of silicon application, along with the practical challenges of applying enough of this nutrient to ensure sufficient plant uptake (and hence efficacy in the crop).



Agricultural Engineer, Dr Peter Tweddle outlined the impact of lodging on grower revenue, a very topical issue in the high-yielding Umfolozi region. Dr Tweddle's paper quantified the amount of revenue lost following lodging and described ways of minimising such losses.



Plant Pathologist, Sharon McFarlane presented the practical and economic aspects of two types of roguing for sugarcane smut disease: manual, and chemical (using glyphosate). Again, this provided fuel for good discussion around this very topical issue.

The afternoon continued with many questions and much discussion – a fair portion of it over the meal and drinks kindly sponsored for the event. SASRI Senior Plant Breeder and newly elected SASTA Council Member, Dr Shailesh Joshi, was also present and noted that there was much interest in alternative uses for sugarcane, and in alternate crops.

It is hoped that this type of event in different regions will attract more grower members and congress attendees. A big thank you to UCGA for inviting us to be part of this well-attended event.

by Dr Ruth Rhodes, SASTA Councillor

Honorary SASTA membership for Gavin Smith

The SASTA Constitution provides for the nomination and election of honorary members to such persons deemed worthy of such honour by virtue of their dedication and contribution to the industry. The most recent recipient of this honour is Sugar Process Specialist, Gavin Smith.



Over his 35-year association with the industry, Gavin has occupied Engineering positions in Tongaat-Hulett Sugar, Illovo Sugar Technical Services, SiVest Project Management, SMRI and RCL Foods. He continues this association with the industry through his sugar process consultancy service, G Smith Consulting.

Gavin has been a member of SASTA since 1988, and served as President of the Association from 2010 - 2019. He has also served on the SASTA Congress Organising Committee, the Factory Control and Advisory Committee (FCAC) and numerous industry committees, working groups and advisory boards.

Gavin Smith is well known for his many papers at SASTA Congresses, including the Annual Reviews of

the Milling Season. For the technical expertise he has brought to the industry, and for the rich leadership he has provided to SASTA Council, he is indeed worthy of this honorary membership. We take this opportunity to congratulate and thank Gavin for his years of tireless and enthusiastic service to SASTA, and we look forward to many more with him in his honorary capacity.

API Solutions Golf Day

The SASTA-supported API Solutions Golf Day was a success once again, this time held early on the Friday morning after the SASTA Congress in August. Ninety players were treated to great weather on the well-prepared Royal Durban Golf Course. Players competed for various prizes which were presented, after a delicious lunch, at the prizegiving event in the clubhouse. Many thanks are due to the organiser and sponsor, API Solutions International, for an event which is always a highlight with the golfers amongst sugar technologists.

by Dr Ruth Rhodes, SASTA Councillor



SASTA WISHES ALL MEMBERS A SAFE AND ENJOYABLE HOLIDAY PERIOD.

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