



In this edition of the Link....

- SASRI Director, Terry Stanger, reflects on the challenges and improvements in 2023, commending SASRI staff for resilience and research progress. He also highlights climate warnings, El Niño forecasts, and SASRI's efforts in engaging small-scale growers. Additionally, the discovery of longhorn beetle larvae prompts eradication measures on previously unaffected fields.
- Robyn Jacob, a Molecular Biologist, discusses a solution for the eldana stalk borer using genetically modified sugarcane with CRY proteins. The In Vitro Plantlet Bioassay (IVPB) assesses resistance efficiently during early development, providing a quicker alternative to traditional pot trials.
- We also have an overview of recent weather events, and an outlook for the near future.
- Rowan Stranack, SASRI's Extension and Biorisk Manager, provides comprehensive and timely advice for sugarcane farming, especially during the off-season.
- Dr Stuart Rutherford (Principal Scientist: Integrated Pest Management) and Dr Sandy Snyman (Principal Scientist: Biotechnology) discuss SASRI's efforts around mutation breeding to enhance sugarcane resilience to environmental stresses like drought and heat. This cost-effective method in the laboratory avoids introducing foreign genes, speeding up crop improvement.

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