

## MIDLANDS SOUTH

## EXTENSION MATTERS

# SEEDCANE

Beaumont Eston Farmers Club, P.O. Box 112, Eston, 3740

Direct Line: +27 31 781 2000/1

Fax: +27 31 781 2003

Cell: 082 654 3546

Email: paul.botha@sugar.org.za



PAUL BOTHA

Dear Grower

As you would know, a decision was taken by the industry that **by 2023 all sugarcane planted must be either from a certified or approved nursery.**

This decision has been postponed for now, however a **Working Plan must be put into place on how each region will achieve these goals.**

The use of good quality, true-to-type, pest and disease-free seedcane has been accepted as best practice throughout the sugarcane producing world.

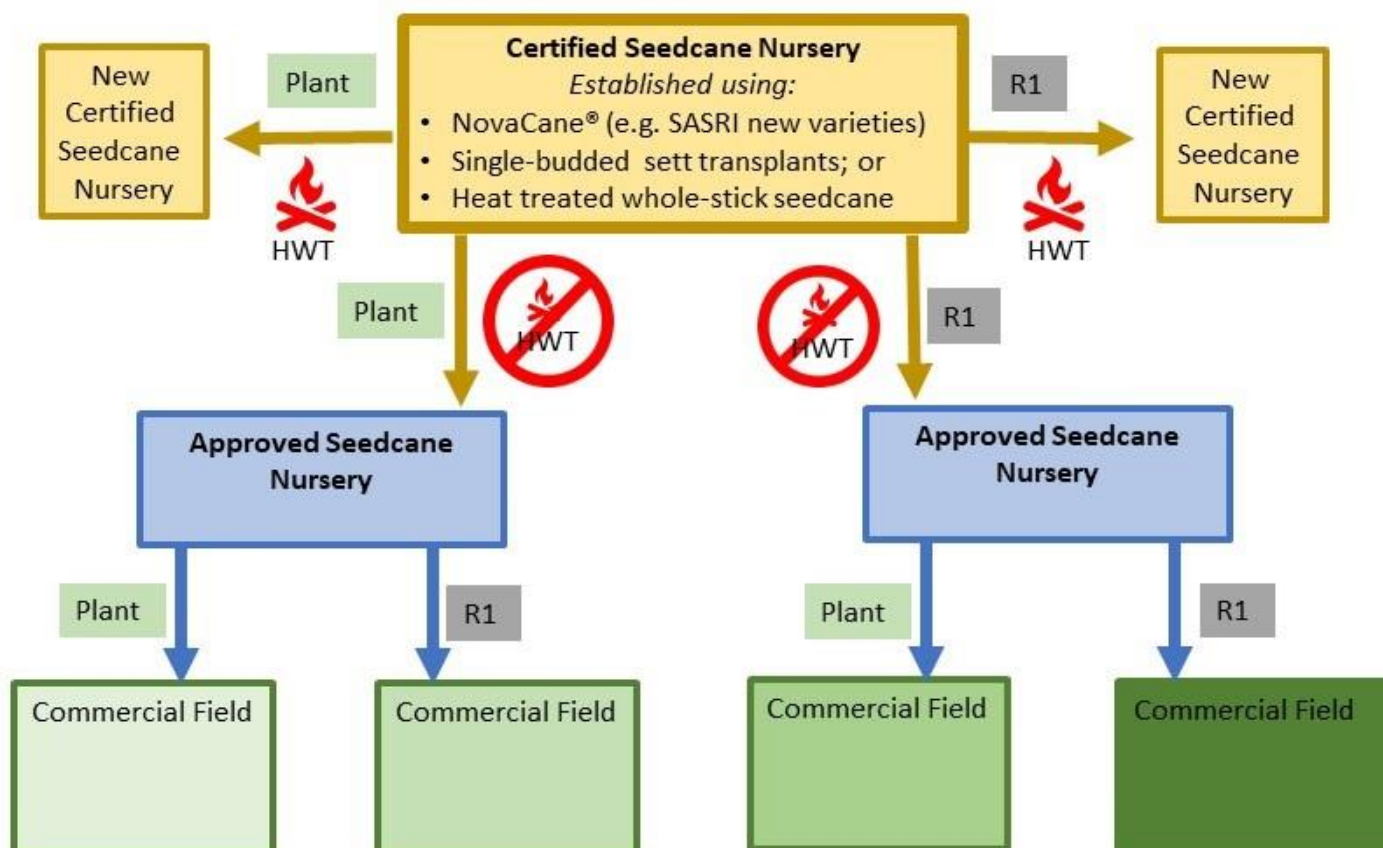
Planting healthy, well-grown seedcane ensures good germination and optimal plant population, which in most instances guarantees longer ratoon life. However, and most importantly, planting healthy seedcane also ensures that the spread of pests and diseases is kept in check and is one of

### Criteria for Seedcane

- ✓ Seedcane nurseries must be registered and inspected by the LPD&VCC. (Fallow inspection; 3 line-by-line inspections for Certified seed and 2 random inspections for Approved seed).
- ✓ Seedcane must be inspected whilst at knee height and then again at hip height.
- ✓ A year's fallow period is required for a Certified Seedcane Nursery and 9 months for an Approved Seedcane Nursery.
- ✓ 2 cuts/harvests from a Certified Nursery are allowed and, at the moment, 2 cuts/harvests are allowed from an Approved Nursery.
- ✓ Seedcane used to establish a Certified Seedcane Nursery must itself be from a certified seedcane source.
- ✓ If whole-stick seedcane, it must be hot water treated (HWT) at 50°C for 2 hours. Transplants from HWT cane or NovaCane<sup>®</sup> plantlets may also be used.
- ✓ Must have less than 0.1% smut, mosaic and off-types.
- ✓ Must be inspected for Eldana - Maximum of 1E/100 is allowed.
- ✓ Must be tested for RSD (and found to be negative) prior to harvest and distribution.
- ✓ Must be healthy and stress free.
- ✓ For our Midlands area, at time of harvest, seedcane must be between 12 and 18 months.

## What seedcane is NOT...

- ⊙ You cannot plant cane that has never been inspected by the Biosecurity teams.
- ⊙ You cannot just plant any cane that “looks” good as seedcane.
- ⊙ You cannot plant cane that is NOT from a Certified or Approved source.
- ⊙ You cannot plant cane that has NOT been tested for RSD and Eldana.



**Diagram showing the establishment of Certified and Approved seedcane**

### Points to note:

- Certified seedcane is either hot water treated whole-stick cane, transplant seedlings or NovaCane® seedlings.
- From this source, two cuts are allowed to plant in an Approved Seedcane Nursery.
- From the Approved Seedcane Nursery, two cuts are allowed to be planted into your commercial fields.
- After two cuts from both nurseries, the fields revert back to commercial fields and the process has to start anew with hot water treated cane.

### Example:

**0.5ha of Certified seedcane** should produce **60 tons of seed** over the 2 seasons. This could plant **6ha of Approved seedcane** over the 2 seasons and **30ha of commercial fields** over the 2 seasons.



**If you are interested in registering a Seedcane Nursery - please contact Paul**