

# CASE STUDY



O'CONNELL CATCHMENT PRECISION SERVICES

2011



Scott Simpson harvesting the OCPS skip row trial on a farm south of Proserpine near Bloomsbury, Queensland, Australia

## O'Connell Catchment Precision Services

John & Carol Simpson, Scott & Maria Simpson, Ian & Gary Considine, Tony & Mandy Jeppesen

OCPS - O'Connell Precision farming Services, was formed in early 2000 as a means to rationalise machinery and personnel on a large tract of country as well as allowing individuals to maintain ownership of land and machinery in their own right. The Jeppesen, Simpson and Considine families are the core group of OCPS, with farms neighbouring each other in the O'Connell River area.

This group has survived some very poor seasons

because of the close ties the main personell have with each other and the ability to liaise operations through varying ideas and personalities.

It is enlightening to see a large operation that incorporates smaller farming enterprises and still survive and actually grow in harsh times while still maintaining a highly technologically advanced machinery and spatial operation.



# Trial: Single skip row precision agriculture

**Trial Description:**

Single skip row with limited water supplies.

**Issue being addressed:**

- Beneficial use of water in a larger areas.
- Half the inputs for greater outputs
- Increased harvesting efficiency

**What is the problem, when was it recognised, and by who?**

Issues being addressed in this trial is the monoculture that crucified sugar production over time in addition to the large cost of planting cane.

We didn't have to modify the machinery but for alternate crops, we had to change a fair bit, such as modify planters to go down the single row and

narrow up machinery and cultivators.

**Solutions being tested:**

The first priority is to farm areas with reduced inputs and establish long term farming plans by halving your costs.

**Immediate results:**

Easy to harvest. Increased profit was better than normal farming procedures, easy to control totally throughout crop cycle.

**Has the solution been practical, productive and economic?**

Solution has been practical and economic from farmer perspective, miller interest has been minimal because of the perceived decline in production which is only from initial results so far a perception as total yield over time if results from this trial

keep going the way they are will be negligible.

**Future plans:**

Increased areas to 5 ha and looking for large areas for these trials that we can establish in skip row concept like total farm and are continuing in establishing more areas to skip row, need to do more work on total farm planning to establish a skip row farm over a ten to fifteen year plan.



"We were honoured to be chosen to be part of Project Catalyst, to be recognised for being pretty good at what we do. Doing the skip row trial showed it was easier to look after at half the cost and was fantastic to harvest." Scott Simpson (right)

