



Case Study

Bare Fallow to Legume Fallow



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|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| LANDHOLDER | Peter White |
| LOCATION | Silkwood |
| CATCHMENT | Johnstone |
| RAINFALL | 3283mm |
| PROPERTY SIZE | 69.6ha |
| ON-GROUND PROVIDER | CANEGROWERS Innisfail |

Project Catalyst is a grower led, sugar cane innovation and adoption project that explores, develops and validates farm management practice change to improve the enduring water quality of the Great Barrier Reef.

BROADER ADOPTION VALIDATION & GROWER SUPPORT

Founded in 2009, the project operates in the Mackay Whitsunday, Burdekin and Wet Tropic regions to deliver valued practice change outcomes and develop methods for industry adoption. Under the Broader Adoption and Grower Support program, professional on-ground service providers assist selected growers to adopt and validate appropriate change practices. Service providers continue to monitor implementation benefits and derived environmental performance improvements. Through targeted extension activities, the program seeks to accelerate the uptake and broader adoption of improved farming practices at local, regional and industry levels.



Great Barrier
Reef Foundation



●●●● Goal

To move from spray out fallows to legume fallow, with the aim to improve soil health.



Fallow block 17/02/2021

●●●● Overview

Peter is interested in growing legume cover crops on his fallow blocks. Currently his standard practice is to spray out the ratooning cane at the end of the crop cycle and any weeds are managed throughout the fallow period with broad spectrum herbicides as required. Peter hopes that the legume cover crop will provide good ground cover reducing erosion risk, suppress weeds and improve soil health through crop rotation.

●●●● Action

Peter planned to plant the fallow block by discing out the old cane stool, spread the cover crop seeds using a seed box and then incorporate the seeds with another shallow pass with the discs.

However the block that Peter left fallow this year is very low in the landscape and known to flood in wet years. With the forecast of a big wet season Peter decided not to plant any cover crops this year.

●●●● Outcome

Peter is managing the 2020/21 fallow as a spray out fallow and is planning to plant his 2021/22 fallow blocks with a legume cover crop.



Sprayed out fallow.

