
CANEGROWERS

24-10-2025

# PLANE CREEK GROWERS DEMAND QSL INDEPENDENCE

Plane Creek Area Committee Chairman Kevin Borg has said growers across Queensland are growing tired of conflict in the sugar marketing space.

"The CANEGROWERS Plane Creek Area Committee whose members supply Wilmar Plane Creek Mill are disappointed at the outcome of a vote at the Queensland Sugar Limited (QSL) Annual General Meeting this week," Mr Borg said.

Mr Borg is also a QSL Grower Representative Member for Plane Creek, who spoke out at the QSL AGM held on 21 October, saying it was time for QSL to "take the gloves off".

At the AGM, QSL sought to make changes to its constitution to have members right to vote based on the amount of sugar they market through the renowned sugar marketing body, aligning member voting rights with those who actually use its services. Currently, Millers have a voting right based on their suppliers Grower Economic Interest (GEI) sugar. It is a constitutional clause dating back to the single-desk marketing era.

"Millers Wilmar and MSF voted down proposed changes to the QSL constitution," he said.

"These mills market the entirety of their Mill Economic Interest sugar production through their own marketing arms, having no interest in the future of QSL except as a competitor.

"Whilst we don't have an issue with these millers using their own marketing arm, it remains an issue that they refuse to have their right to vote based on present day throughputs and not based on a constitution that was fit for the past regulated, non-competitive era.

"As competitors to QSL, this gives them control within the QSL organisation and an opportunity to white-ant the organisation from within."

CANEGROWERS fought long and hard for the right to have a choice in who markets their Grower Economic Interest sugar some 12 years ago when Wilmar attempted to take on the marketing of all their sugar production. Choice is critical for growers to make informed choices to maximise their income. Competition is healthy.

"Growers are fed up with the antics of these mills giving us the impression that the days of all stakeholders working together for the betterment of the industry is a thing of the past.

"I commend those Millers – Mackay Sugar, Bundaberg Sugar and Isis Sugar - who supported the vote and have shown commonsense and a willingness to work with industry."

“This action by Wilmar and MSF, both foreign millers, maintaining a controlling interest in QSL, in combination with their controlling interest in Sugar Terminals Limited is a challenge to the sovereignty of the Queensland sugar industry.

“STL has already gone down the path of removing QSL as Bulk Sugar Terminal Operator as of 30 June 2026, giving STL a monopoly control of Queensland’s sugar terminal ownership and operations.

“Lack of investment in our mill is also a thorn in growers’ sides, causing longer season lengths and thus reduced crops, this being a root cause of growers choosing leaving the industry.

“It is time for the Federal Government to reinforce the Sugar Industry Code of Conduct, protecting marketing choice. A political path may be the solution.

“For the sake of preservation of grower choice, CANEGROWERS Plane Creek Area Committee now urge QSL to get their gloves off and fight tooth-and-nail for its own - and the industry’s – future.”