University of Queensland (UQ) research into environmentally and economically sustainable production of sugars and ethanol biofuel has helped CSR Sugar Limited sweeten a deal with agricultural research giant, Syngenta.

Working with UQ, CSR and Syngenta have negotiated the transfer of exclusive licensing rights for SugarBooster™ technology developed by UQ's Professor Robert Birch and Dr Luguang Wu.

SugarBooster™ has been shown to increase sugar production in sugarcane, leading to higher yields and a new raw material for the production of ethanol biofuel.

Under the new agreement, Syngenta has obtained exclusive rights outside of Australia to further develop and use the SugarBooster™ technology. CSR receives milestone payments from Syngenta and royalties from sales outside of Australia, and also retains the commercialisation rights within Australia to maximise the benefit of SugarBooster™ to the Australian industry. UQ will retain ownership of the intellectual property.

“While commercial release is not expected for at least several years, this agreement with Syngenta will accelerate the potential development of the new high-yielding varieties,” said CSR Sugar CEO Ian Glasson.

“This will assist CSR Sugar in improving Australian sugar industry sustainability through new products and increased efficiency in the production of sugar and biofuels.”

The deal with Syngenta was announced on 16 December 2009. Financial terms were not disclosed.