

MAURITIUS CANE INDUSTRY AUTHORITY

MAURITIUS SUGARCANE INDUSTRY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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SUGAR CANE CROP 2015

Status: End February 2015

1. CLIMATE

1.1 Rainfall (Tables 1a and 1b, Figure 1)

The island's average rainfall for the month of February 2015 was 275 mm. It lagged behind the long-term mean (LTM) by 52 mm (16%). Sector-wise, rainfall for February 2015 was below the long-term mean by 71 mm (31%) in the North, 21 mm (6%) in the East, 64 mm (17%) in the South, 43 mm (22%) in the West and 62 mm (14%) in the Centre.

Rainfall for the period October 2014 to February 2015 amounted to 1257 mm for the island. This is 34% higher than the island's long-term mean of 937 mm for that period. During that same period, a total of 756 mm was recorded in the North, 1575 mm in the East, 1377 mm in the South, 673 mm in the West and 1654 mm in the Centre. Compared to the respective long-term mean of these sectors, cumulative rainfall represented 118% in the North, 161% in the East, 123% in the South, 127% in the West and 130% in the Centre.

Table 1a. Rainfall (mm) for the month of February for crops 2014, 2015 and the long term mean (LTM)

	North	East	South	West	Centre	Island
2014	127 (55)	250 (71)	237 (64)	101 (51)	203 (45)	199 (61)
2015	161 (69)*	330 (94)	308 (83)	155 (78)	390 (86)	275 (84)
LTM	232	351	372	198	452	328

* figures in brackets are % of LTM (1981-2010)

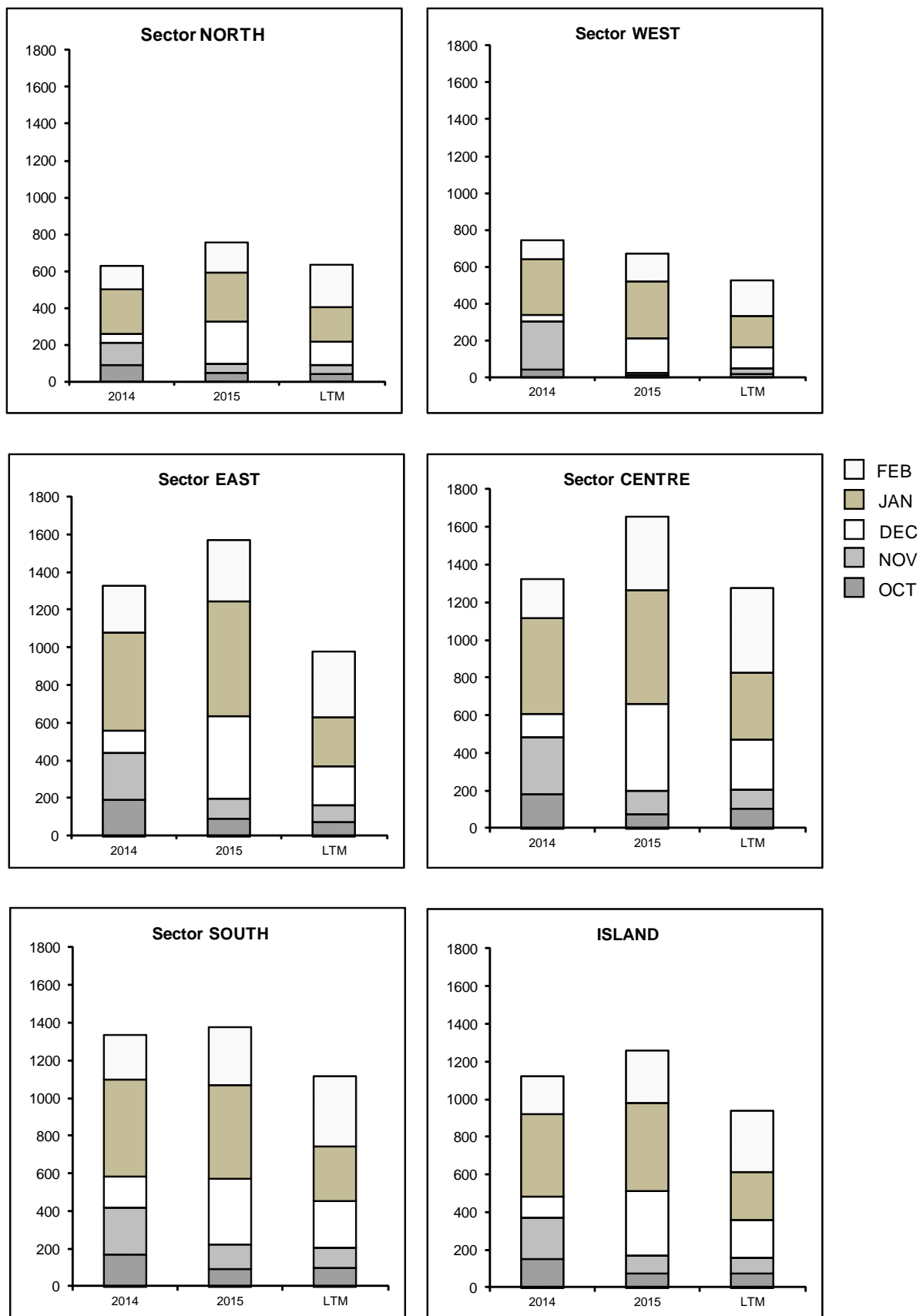
Table 1b. Cumulative rainfall (mm) from October 2014 to February 2015 for crop 2015 compared to that of crop 2014 and the long term mean (LTM)

	North	East	South	West	Centre	Island
2014	628 (98)	1331 (136)	1333 (119)	743 (141)	1322 (104)	1120 (119)
2015	756 (118)*	1575 (161)	1377 (123)	673 (127)	1654 (130)	1257 (134)
LTM	638	980	1117	528	1276	937

* figures in brackets are % of LTM

[Source : raw provisional data from Meteorological Services]

Figure 1. Monthly rainfall (mm) for the period October 2014 to February 2015 for the 2015 crop compared to the corresponding period of the 2014 crop and to the long term mean (LTM).



1.2 Air temperature and sunshine duration (Table 2)

Data on maximum and minimum temperatures together with sunshine duration recorded during the month of February 2015 on the four MSIRI agro-meteorological stations are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Air temperature and sunshine duration recorded on MSIRI agro-meteorological stations in February 2015

Stations	Maximum Temp (°C)		Minimum Temp (°C)		Sunshine hour	
	Feb 2015	DevN*	Feb 2015	DevN*	Feb 2015	% Normal
Pamplemousses	30.8	-0.1	22.5	0.0	214	100
Réduit	28.4	+0.2	21.0	-0.9	193	93
Belle Rive	27.4	0.0	20.1	+0.1	182	110
Union Park	28.0	+0.6	21.2	+0.2	165	108

* Deviation from the Normal (1981-2010)

Mean monthly maximum temperature during February 2015 was above normal at Union Park and close to normal at all other stations whereas the mean monthly minimum temperature lagged behind at Réduit but was near normal at the other three stations. Moreover, sunshine hours recorded during February 2015 was below normal at Réduit, comparable at Pamplemousses but exceeded the normal at Belle Rive and Union Park. Bright sunshine as a percentage of the normal reached 100 at Pamplemousses, 93 at Réduit, 110 at Belle Rive and 108 at Union Park.

2. STALK HEIGHT

Stalk height measurements were done during the last week of February 2015 at 53 sites in the five sugar cane sectors of the island. The selected sites cover the various agro-climatic zones, varieties and crop categories. The measurements were compared to those of the corresponding period in February 2014 and to the mean of the five best cane yielding crops of the period 2005 to 2014 in each sector (referred to as normal).

2.1 Stalk elongation (Table 3a)

Stalk elongation during the month of February 2015 was higher than that of the same period in 2014 in the Centre, comparable in the North but lagged behind in the other sectors. During February 2015, the highest stalk growth was observed in the North with 45.3 cm followed by the East (42.8 cm), South (41.7 cm), West (34.7 cm) and the Centre (33.5 cm). Compared to the normal for the corresponding period, growth exceeded the normal by 1.2 cm in the North and 2.0 cm in the East, was close to the normal in the Centre but lagged behind by 3.0 cm in the South and 11.9 cm in the West. The island stalk elongation of 41.6 cm was below that for both the corresponding period in 2014 by 2.2 cm (5%) and the normal by 3.0 cm (6.8%).

Table 3a. Stalk elongation during the month of February 2015

Sectors	Stalk elongation (cm) during Feb			Feb. 2015 as % of	
	2015	2014	Normal	2014	Normal
North	45.3	45.6	44.1	99.3	102.6
East	42.8	44.0	40.8	97.3	104.8
South	41.7	43.4	44.7	96.1	93.2
West	34.7	51.0	46.6	68.0	74.4
Centre	33.5	32.3	33.8	103.7	99.2
Island	41.6	43.8	44.6	95.0	93.2

2.2 Cumulative Elongation (Table 3b)

Cumulative growth from end-December 2014 to end-February 2015 amounted to 90.2 cm in the North, 82.3 cm in the East, 82.8 cm in the South, 87.3 cm in the West and 69.0 cm in the Centre. These cumulative growths lagged behind those of 2014 by 13.1 cm in the East, 10.1 cm in the West and 1.4 cm in the Centre. In the South, it was comparable to that in 2014 whereas in the North it exceeded that of 2014 by 5.6 cm. For the same period, growth was comparable to the normal in the East, higher than the normal in the North and Centre whereas in the other two sectors, it was below the normal. Island-wise the cumulative elongation of 83.7 cm was lower than that of the 2014 crop (87.0 cm) by 3.8% but was equal to the normal.

Table 3b. Cumulative elongation at end-February.

Sectors	Cumulative elongation (cm) at end- Feb			End-Feb 2015 as % of	
	2015	2014	Normal	2014	Normal
North	90.2	84.6	76.1	106.6	118.5
East	82.3	95.4	82.4	86.3	99.9
South	82.8	83.1	88.3	99.6	93.8
West	87.3	97.4	88.1	89.7	99.1
Centre	69.0	70.4	67.0	98.0	102.9
Island	83.7	87.0	83.7	96.2	100.1

2.3 Total stalk height (Table 3c and Figure 2)

Total stalk height at end February 2015 stood at 114.2 cm in the North, 126.6 cm in the East, 132.9 cm in the South, 127.1 cm in the West and 118.0 cm in the Centre giving an island average of 125.6 cm. Compared to end-February 2014, stalk height was taller by 5.2 cm in the North and 17.3 cm in the South. In the other three sectors, it lagged behind that of the corresponding period last year by 25.0 cm in the East, 4.1 cm in the West and 4.4 cm in the Centre. Total stalk height at end-February 2015 was below normal by 3.6 cm in the East and 2.6 cm in the South but exceeded the normal in the other sectors by 12.2 cm in the North, 3.8 cm in the West and 8.0 cm in the Centre.

At island level, the total stalk height of 125.6 cm at the end of February 2015 was comparable to both the corresponding period in 2014 and the normal.

Table 3c. Stalk height at end-February.

Sectors	Stalk height (cm) at end-Feb			End-Feb 2015 as % of	
	2015	2014	Normal	2014	Normal
North	114.2	109.0	102.0	104.8	112.0
East	126.6	151.6	130.2	83.5	97.2
South	132.9	115.6	135.5	115.0	98.1
West	127.1	131.2	123.3	96.9	103.1
Centre	118.0	122.4	110.0	96.4	107.3
Island	125.6	126.2	125.2	99.6	100.4

3. CROP 2015

Weather conditions in terms of rainfall, temperature and solar radiation during February 2015 have, on overall, been rather favourable for growth and development of the crop. Apart from the West sector, stalk elongation in the other sectors is considered satisfactory when compared to February 2014 and the normal. With a total cumulative elongation and total stalk height over the island which are close to those of last year at the same period, a normal crop is expected provided favourable weather conditions are experienced until the end of the growth season.

A close follow-up on sucrose accumulation and yield determinant is being monitored in those fields that have not been harvested during crop 2014 in the North, East and South. The assessment results will be communicated to the stakeholders to enable them to decide on the optimum period to harvest these fields.

Figure 2. Stalk height at end- February 2015.

