

MAURITIUS SUGAR INDUSTRY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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SUGAR CANE CROP 2008

Status: End August 2008

1. CLIMATE

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

Rainfall, recorded over the sugar cane areas in August 2008 was on average 82 mm and was below the long-term mean of 128 mm by 36%. Sector-wise rainfall for the month was below normal in all sectors with 37 mm in the North, 104 mm in the East, 109 mm in the South, 13 mm in the West and 95 mm in the Centre, representing 54%, 91%, 61%, 50% and 49% of the long-term mean respectively.

Rainfall for the period October 2007 to August 2008 for the island amounted to 2064 mm and was 104% of the long-term mean of 1977 mm. During that same period 1348 mm were recorded in the North, 2439 mm in the East, 2421 mm in the South, 869 mm in the West and 2537 mm in the Centre. They represented 104%, 123%, 99%, 97% and 95% of the respective long-term mean for that period which stood at 1297 mm, 1986 mm, 2445 mm, 898 mm and 2664 mm.

1.2 *Temperature*

Data on maximum and minimum temperatures recorded during the month of August 2008 on MSIRI agro-meteorological stations are given below.

The mean maximum temperature was above normal by 0.7 °C at Réduit, 1.0 °C at Union Park and 1.5 °C at Belle Rive but was the normal at Pamplemousses. The mean minimum temperature was at all stations above normal by 0.5 °C at Réduit to 1.1 °C at Union Park. The resulting mean amplitude was above normal at Réduit (0.2 °C) and Belle Rive (0.5 °C) but was below normal at Union Park (0.1 °C) and at Pamplemousses (0.8 °C). Above normal temperature amplitudes are usually conducive to ripening.

| Station | Maximum (°C) | Minimum (°C) | Amplitude (°C) |
|---------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Pamplemousses | 25.9 (25.9) * | 17.0 (16.2) | 8.9 (9.7) |
| Réduit | 23.1 (22.4) | 15.8 (15.3) | 7.3 (7.1) |
| Belle Rive | 23.3 (21.8) | 14.9 (13.9) | 8.4 (7.9) |
| Union Park | 22.4 (21.4) | 16.2 (15.1) | 6.2 (6.3) |

* figures in brackets are the Normal (1971-00)

1.3 Sunshine

Data from the MSIRI agro-meteorological stations showed that sunshine hours during August 2008 were close to normal at Réduit, Belle Rive and Pamplemousses but were below normal at Union Park. Recorded bright sunshine as a percentage of the normal amounted to 101 at Réduit, 82 at Union Park, 96 at Pamplemousses, and 102 at Belle Rive.

| | August 2008 | Normal | % of Normal |
|---------------|-------------|--------|-------------|
| Réduit | 225 | 223 | 101 |
| Union Park | 118 | 144 | 82 |
| Pamplemousses | 228 | 238 | 96 |
| Belle Rive | 198 | 193 | 102 |

2. SUCROSE ACCUMULATION (TABLES 2A AND 2B)

Cane samples from miller-planters' land in all factory areas and covering the main cultivated varieties were analyzed for sucrose content. The average pol % cane (*richesse*) was calculated on the basis of area under cultivation of each variety in the different factory areas of each sector. The results are compared to those of last year and to those of the reference year 2001.

The *richesse* at end-August 2008 was 13.7% in the North, 14.8% in the East, 14.3% in the South, 14.9% in the West and 13.8% in the Centre compared to 14.6%, 14.3%, 14.1%, 14.5% and 13.7% respectively for the corresponding period in 2007. In the North, *richesse* was below that of the corresponding period in 2007 by 0.9°, whereas it was higher by 0.5° in the East, 0.2° in the South, 0.4° in the West and 0.1° in the Centre. Compared to the corresponding period in 2001, the reference crop, *richesse* at the end of August 2008 was slightly higher in the East (0.1°) but lagged behind by 2.4° in the North, 0.9° in the South, 0.4° in the West and 1.5° in the Centre.

During the month of August, *richesse* for the present crop increased by 0.7° in sectors North and West, and by 0.6° in sectors East, South and Centre. For the corresponding period last year, the increases were 1.8° in the North, 0.6° in the East, 0.4° in the South, 0.7° in the West and 0.8° in the Centre.

Island-wise, the *richesse* of 14.3% recorded at the end of August 2008 is similar to that of the corresponding period in 2007 but lower than that of crop 2001 (15.1%). Compared to end-July 2008, *richesse* for the island has increased by 0.6° compared to 0.9° and 1.2° for the corresponding period in 2007 and 2001.

3. CROP 2008

As at 23 August 2008, about 34% (11 817 ha) of miller-planters' land had been harvested compared to 35% (12 350 ha) at the corresponding period last year. Sector-wise and again for miller-planters only, harvest reached 27% in the North, 38% in the East, 36% in the South, 26% in the West and 34% in the Centre. An analysis of cane and sugar productivity based on the harvest statistics for miller-planters is given below. However, it should be noted that following centralization of milling activities and the transfer of canes from one factory area to another, the comparisons made are not strictly comparable with those of 2007 except for the West and South sectors where data for the same factory areas are presented. Since all the canes from the Centre sector is being sent to the East, harvest statistics in terms of extraction rate and sugar productivity have been combined for these two sectors. In the case of the North sector, part of the cane is being channeled to FUEL.

3.1 Cane productivity

Cane productivity for the island as at 23 August 2008 amounted to 79.3 TCH compared to 72.5 TCH in 2007. Sector-wise, to-date the best cane productivity had been recorded in the West with 86.7 TCH, followed by the South (83.9 TCH), the Centre (80.1 TCH), the East (76.1 TCH) and the North (67.8 TCH). Cane productivity observed to-date was higher in all sectors compared to the corresponding period in 2007. Productivity was higher by 8.9 TCH in the North, 8.4 TCH in the East, 2.6 TCH in the South, 2.0 TCH in the West and 9.5 TCH in the Centre.

Cane productivity (TCH) as at end July and August for the 2007 and 2008 crops

| Sectors | End July | | End August | |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 2007 | 2008 | 2007 | 2008 |
| North | 61.4 | 67.1 | 58.9 | 67.8 |
| East | 67.0 | 75.2 | 67.7 | 76.1 |
| South | 79.4 | 82.6 | 81.3 | 83.9 |
| West | 94.9 | 79.6 | 84.7 | 86.7 |
| Centre | 68.1 | 78.7 | 70.6 | 80.1 |
| Island | 71.2 | 78.1 | 72.5 | 79.3 |

3.2 Extraction (Figure 2)

The recorded island extraction rate of 9.67% was slightly lower than that of the corresponding period in 2007 (9.71%). Sector-wise, extraction rates recorded to-date were 10.44% in the West followed by 9.86% in the East-Centre, 9.60% in the South and 8.90% in the North. Compared to the corresponding period last year, extraction rate to-date is higher by 0.23° in the South and 0.11° in the West but is lower in the North and East/Centre by 0.33° and 0.16° respectively.

Extraction rate (%) as at end July and August for the 2007 and 2008 crops

| Sectors | End July | | End August | |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 2007 | 2008 | 2007 | 2008 |
| North | 8.66 | 8.65 | 9.23 | 8.90 |
| East /Centre | 9.66 | 9.46 | 10.02 | 9.86 |
| South | 8.84 | 9.24 | 9.37 | 9.60 |
| West | 10.30 | 10.14 | 10.33 | 10.44 |
| Island | 9.35 | 9.33 | 9.71 | 9.67 |

3.3 Sugar productivity

Island-wise, the recorded sugar productivity of 7.67 TSH was higher than at the corresponding period in 2007 (7.04 TSH) by 0.63 tonne. Sector-wise sugar productivity was 6.03 TSH in the North, 7.60 TSH in the East/Centre, 8.05 TSH in the South and 9.05 TSH in the West. Sugar productivity was higher than that of the corresponding period last year in all sectors.

Sugar productivity (TSH) as at end July and August for the 2007 and 2008 crops

| Sectors | End July | | End August | |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 2007 | 2008 | 2007 | 2008 |
| North | 5.32 | 5.80 | 5.44 | 6.03 |
| East /Centre | 6.49 | 7.19 | 6.85 | 7.60 |
| South | 7.01 | 7.63 | 7.62 | 8.05 |
| West | 9.77 | 8.07 | 8.75 | 9.05 |
| Island | 6.66 | 7.29 | 7.04 | 7.67 |

4. CROP ESTIMATE

Weather during the month of August had not been to the detriment of cane productivity and ripening. Harvest results have been so far in line with official estimates of the 2008 crop.