

MAURITIUS CANE INDUSTRY AUTHORITY

MAURITIUS SUGARCANE INDUSTRY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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SUGAR CANE CROP 2017 Status: End December 2016

1. CLIMATE

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

The island's average rainfall over the sugar cane areas for December was 153 mm and represented 87% of the long term mean (176 mm). December rainfall was below the long-term mean (LTM) by 45 mm in the North, 94 mm in the South, 24 mm in the West and 75 mm in the Centre. In the East it exceeded the long-term mean by 100 mm.

Cumulative rainfall for the period October to December 2016 reached 133 mm in the North, 435 mm in the East, 260 mm in the South, 96 mm in the West and 339 mm in the Centre. These cumulated rainfall represented 63%, 122%, 63%, 62% and 76% of the respective long-term mean. The island average of 272 mm for this period represented 82% of the long-term mean (333 mm).

Table 1a. Rainfall (mm) for the month of December for crops 2016, 2017⁺ and the long term mean (LTM)

	North	East	South	West	Centre	Island
2016	81 (68)	121 (64)	208 (100)	110 (115)	202 (87)	147 (83)
2017	75 (63)*	288 (153)	115 (55)	72 (75)	156 (68)	153 (87)
LTM	120	188	209	96	231	176

⁺ Crop year is from October to September

* figures in brackets are % of LTM (1981-10)

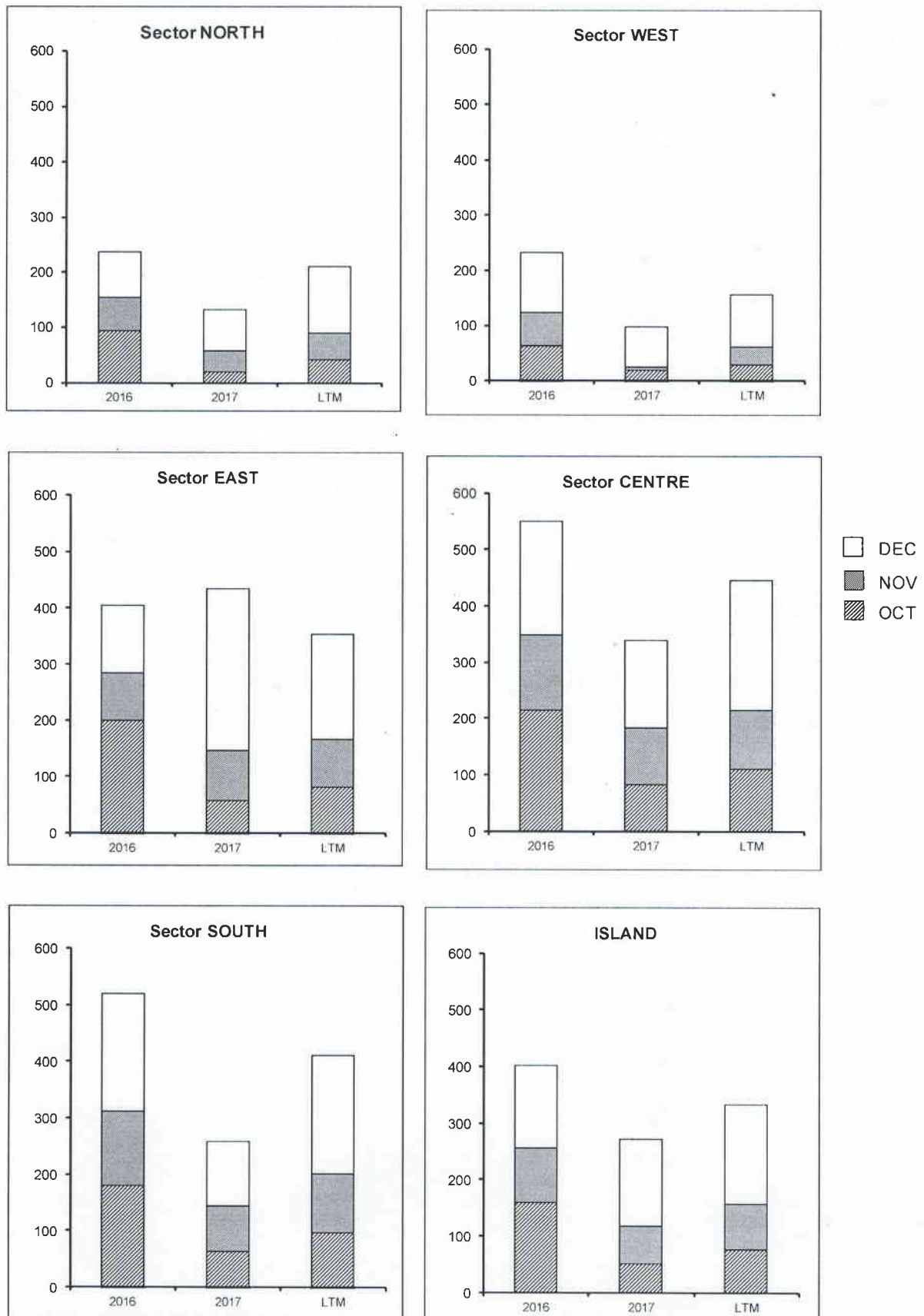
Table 1b. Cumulative rainfall (mm) from October to December 2016 for crop 2017 compared to that of crop 2016 and the long term mean (LTM)

	North	East	South	West	Centre	Island
2016	237 (112)	406 (114)	521 (126)	232 (149)	550 (123)	404 (121)
2017	133 (63)*	435 (122)	260 (63)	96 (62)	339 (76)	272 (82)
LTM	211	355	412	156	446	333

* figures in brackets are % of LTM

[Source : raw provisional data from Meteorological Services]

Figure 1. Monthly rainfall (mm) for the period October to December 2016 for the 2017 crop compared to the corresponding period of the 2016 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 December 2016 on the four MSIRI agro-meteorological stations are given below.

Table 2. Air temperature and sunshine duration recorded on MSIRI agro-meteorological stations in December 2016

Stations	Maximum Temp (°C)		Minimum Temp (°C)		Sunshine hour	
	Dec 2016	DevN*	Dec 2016	DevN	Dec 2016	% Normal
Pamplemousses	30.9	+0.1	20.9	-0.1	283	112
Réduit	28.4	+0.6	19.8	-0.5	264	115
Belle Rive	26.4	-0.5	18.2	-0.2	246	119
Union Park	27.7	+0.9	19.6	+0.1	242	122

* Deviation from the Normal (1981-2010)

The mean monthly maximum temperature exceeded the normal at Réduit and at Union Park, but was comparable to the normal at Pamplemousses and lagged behind the normal at Belle Rive. As for the mean monthly minimum temperature, it was close to the normal at all stations except at Réduit where it was below normal. Sunshine hours during December 2016 exceeded the normal at all stations. Recorded bright sunshine as a percentage of the normal was 112 at Pamplemousses, 115 at Réduit, 119 at Belle Rive and 122 at Union Park. Above normal temperature and solar radiation are generally conducive to growth of the crop.

2. STALK HEIGHT (Table 3)

Stalk height measurements were initially made during the last week of December 2016 at 48 sites in the five sugar cane sectors of the island. These selected sites are representative of the various agro-climatic zones, varieties and crop categories. The measurements are compared to those of the corresponding period in December 2015 and to the mean of the five best cane yielding crops for the period 2007 to 2016 in each sector (referred to as normal).

Table 3. Stalk height at end-December

Sectors	Stalk height (cm) at end-Dec			End-Dec 2016 as % of	
	2016	2015	Normal	2015	Normal
North	19.4	24.1	25.6	80.5	75.7
East	45.6	45.1	47.4	101.1	96.2
South	40.4	41.4	45.2	97.6	89.4
West	28.9	38.1	38.4	75.9	75.3
Centre	42.9	49.0	42.9	87.6	99.9
Island	36.7	38.9	41.0	94.4	89.4

Stalk height at end-December 2016 averaged 19.4 cm in the North, 45.6 cm in the East, 40.4 cm in the South, 28.9 cm in the West and 42.9 cm in the Centre. Sector-wise except for the East, these figures are inferior to those recorded during the corresponding period in December 2015 by 19.5% in the North, 2.4% in the South, 24.1% in the West and 12.4% in the Centre.

Stalk height in December 2016 was also below the normal in all sectors except in the Centre where it was comparable. It was lagging by 24.3% (6.2 cm) in the North, 3.8% (1.8 cm) in the East, 10.6% (4.8 cm) in the South and 24.7% (9.5 cm) in the West.

At island level, the cane height of 36.7 cm, as at end-December 2016, was shorter than that at the corresponding period in December 2015 by 2.2 cm (5.6%) and to the normal by 4.3 cm (10.6%).

3. CROP 2017

Weather in terms of cumulative rainfall during the initial part of the growth period has been less favourable for the 2017 crop as compared to that experienced by the 2016 crop. The initial island stalk height for the 2017 crop is lower to both, the 2016 crop and the normal. However, this delayed growth can still be compensated for if weather conducive to growth prevails in the coming months and that no extreme climatic conditions are experienced.