



World Association of
Beet and Cane Growers



NEWS FROM WABCG

FEBRUARY 2025

EDITORIAL

Next month, in many of the beet-growing countries that are members of our association, it will be time to sow.

Sowing is a bit like projecting into the future: it's an exciting job, all the more so when the situation is as uncertain as it is at the moment! The sugar market has rarely been so volatile, geopolitical tensions are at their height, and it's good to



calmly rediscover the rhythm of the seasons and the call of nature to carry out the eternal act of sowing.

Looking ahead to the year also means preparing for our next meeting, in June, in Cairns, Australia.

The WABCG and our Australian colleagues from Canegrowers are preparing an exciting programme for you. It will be ready in a few days' time and we will send it to you for registration.

We've also moved ahead with the bookings for our autumn meeting in London: the date to remember is Monday, December 1st. Please mark your calendars!

I'm looking forward to it!

**David Thompson, President
WABCG**



Save the dates!

WABCG Council

23-26 June 2025

Cairns, Australia

Registration will open soon!

WABCG/ISO Consultation

1st December 2025

London, United-Kingdom



Check our website!





NEWS FROM COLOMBIA

In 2024, the sugarcane agroindustrial sector in Colombia recorded improvements in some productivity indicators that was affected by the 25% above-average rainfall in 2021 and 2022, which reduced, at that time, production in tonnes of cane per hectare and sugar yields.

In addition, the increase in rainfall during these years had short and medium terms effects, preventing the crop from reaching its true potential, preventing vine renewal, increasing the cutting age and also causing cost overruns in harvesting, road maintenance and other areas.

In 2024, cane tonnes per hectare and tonnes per hectare per month increased by 11%, milled cane and total sugar production increased by 4%, while the cutting age decreased by 2%.

However, productivity indicators remain below historical averages, which merits a detailed analysis of the causes and the implementation of action plans to mitigate them due to the impact they have on the long-term sustainability of the business, especially at a time when the price of granulated sugar is falling after almost 4 years of good prices. Indeed, the drop in international and domestic sugar prices with respect to 2023 is a cause for concern, even more so when international analysts expect a sugar surplus for the next two harvests, which could keep the price down, putting the profitability of sugarcane growers at risk.

Other points affected our activities and, amongst others:

- **Security:** The delicate public order situation in the country and in our region is one of the main concerns of the agricultural sector, which is why PROCAÑA is working with departmental and municipal authorities and senior military and police officers to restore public order.
- **Legal instability:** in the last two years the government has presented a significant number of initiatives and legislative acts in order to implement the reforms proposed during the presidential campaign, many of which threaten

the legal stability of private property and investment in the agricultural sector. In this sense, with the support of legal experts and in coordination with other guilds, we have presented proposals supported with technical rigor. Despite those challenges, PROCAÑA is working to generate better conditions for sugarcane growers. We have strengthened social programs with the communities, and we continue to support sugarcane growers in implementing new agricultural practices and adopting available technologies with the support of our research center CENICAÑA, amongst others:

- **Training and technology transfer:** we remain committed to knowledge as a transforming tool and a fundamental basis for strengthening the sustainability of sugarcane growers, which is why we offer our affiliates various event formats to support the strengthening of competencies and capabilities of growers and their workers: more than 1,785 people assisted our 12 events in 2024.

- **Social and environmental programs:** we remain committed to programs that strengthen our relationship with communities, such as Tree Planting, Family Orchards, Civic Commitment, New Generations and the Social Fund.

- **“Corazón de Caña” Foundation:** we highlight the investment made in 2024, which exceeded \$6.3 billion pesos, thanks to voluntary contributions from sugarcane growers and sugar mills, plus \$3.1 billion pesos from the regional government, which allowed us to allocate a total of \$9.4 billion pesos to strengthen educational and

community infrastructure in various municipalities in the region. The project has benefited 7,000 students who also receive school meals, 21 schools with improved infrastructure, and more than 180 teachers and administrators have been trained with support from the Inter-American Development Bank.

**Martha Betancourt, CEO
Procaña, Colombia**

Detalle	2022	2023	2024	Variación 2023-2024
Area Sembrada (ha)	241.500	241.500	237.169	-2%
Area Cosechada (ha)	175.096	186.501	180.222	-3%
Corte Mecánico %	67%	70%	77%	9%
Corte Manual %	33%	30%	23%	-30%
Caña Molida (ton)	22.372.630	20.885.961	21.691.624	4%
Azúcar producida (ton)	2.380.347	2.195.484	2.283.674	4%
TCH	118	102	114	11%
TCHM	8,7	8,2	9,2	11%
Rendimiento promedio	10,60	10,57	10,59	0,2%
Edad corte (meses)	13,9	12,63	12,37	-2%
Etanol (millones de lt)	347	328	323	-2%

Fuente: Asocaña - Cenicaja

Preparó: PROCAÑA

Promedio AÑO	2022	2023	2024
Libra azúcar NY (ctvs dólar)	18,8	24,1	20,8
Ton azúcar Londres (US\$/Ton)	538	665	575
Kg. azúcar Londres (\$/Kilo)	2.292	2.876	2.343
Kg. Azúcar NY (\$/Kilo)	1.762	2.289	1.860
Kg. azúcar Nacional (\$/Kilo)	3.678	3.727	3.257
Kg. Azúcar PPP (\$/Kilo)	2.737	3.009	2.708
Tasa Representativa Merc.	4.256	4.326	4.073
Exportación azúcar	59%	60%	60%
Alcohol Carburante \$/Litro	3.447	3.694	4.177



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NEWS FROM AUSTRIA

In Austria, 44,200 hectares of sugar beet were grown, 880 of which were organic beets. The pest infestation by the weevil was significantly lower than in previous years, so that 43,400 hectares - of which 770 hectares were organic beets - could be harvested.



The cultivation took place under optimal conditions

from the end of March to the beginning of April.

The fields emerged quickly and the water supply was also excellent until mid-June, resulting in a vegetation lead of around 14 days compared to a normal year.

The prospects for very good yields were given, but were completely destroyed by the extreme drought and heat waves in July and August.

Daily highs of over

30 degrees Celsius were measured

on 35 days and was no much-desired rainfall. The year 2024 was the warmest year in the history of weather measurements to date.

It was not until mid-September that rainfall finally arrived, but it was so heavy - up to 400 mm in three days - that flooding occurred in some regions and 500 hectares of sugar beet were destroyed.

The sugar beet campaign had to be postponed by a week due to the flood situation and is expected to last until February 10th. The sugar content is extremely poor due to the rainfall and also due to heavy *Cercospora* infestation and new growth of the beet leaves, averaging 15.0%. The beet yield reached 79 tonnes per hectare.

The price drop on the European market, together with the poor quality of beets, will lead to beet prices of around €35.00 per tonne of sugar beet, which is half the level of the previous year.

Due to the poor price situation and the surplus quantities on the European sugar market, reinforced by the EU free trade agreement with Ukraine, the area under cultivation in Austria will have to be significantly reduced in 2025.

Until now, Austrian sugar was sold to Eastern European countries, where our domestic sugar company

AGRANA also operates sugar factories, in order to cover the missing quantity for local self-sufficiency. This is now mainly done with sugar imports from Ukraine, displacing our sugar from these markets. As a result, Austrian sugar production is essentially reduced to domestic demand. For this reason, the cultivation area has to be reduced to a maximum of 30,000 hectares in 2025.

Hopefully the European Commission will accept the arguments of beet farmers and the sugar industry and reconsider the free trade agreement with Ukraine and under no circumstances expand it. This free trade

agreement only helps a few agro-holdings, but not the population or farmers suffering from the war.

Market disruptions caused by free trade agreements of any kind constantly bring the European market into imbalance with falling prices and endanger self-sufficiency from domestic production, and this is exactly the opposite of what the European Commission always emphasizes as being particularly important in Europe!

Markus SCHÖBERL, Director
Association of Austrian beet growers
Austria



500 hectares of sugar beet were destroyed



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NEWS FROM TÜRKIYE

Our 2023/24 sugar campaign period began on 11 September 2023 and ended on 12 March 2024 (183 days). 24.250 million tonnes of beet were processed and 3.335 million tonnes of sugar were produced. 36% of the A quota sugar was produced by the cooperative sugar factories during the sugar campaign period.

As we mentioned in the previous article, this is a record in the history of the Republic of Türkiye.



2024/25 Sugar Campaign Period; with almost 94,000 growers, 22.9 million tonnes of sugar beet were committed in 3.33 million decares. Based on yield expectations to date, 23 million tonnes of sugar beet are expected to be produced. As of December 2024, 2.340 million tonnes of sugar have been produced by processing 18 million tonnes of beet. At the end of the 2024/25 sugar campaign period, 2.820 million tonnes of sugar are expected to be produced.

As The Union of Beet Growers Cooperatives (PANKOBİRLİK), the largest agricultural organisation in Turkey with over 1 million partners, has made a great contribution to the continuation of the project by joining the hybrid sugar beet seed development project carried out by Konya Selcuk University since 2004. Five sugar beet seeds have been developed, including resistance to one fusarium disease, one nematode disease and three rhizomania diseases, and these varieties are in the process of registration.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a good season in 2025.

Ramazan Erkoyuncu, General President
Pankobirlik, Türkiye

