



World Association of
Beet and Cane Growers



NEWS FROM WABCG

MARCH 2025

EDITORIAL

The news is turbulent and geopolitical tensions are extreme. All we hear about is uncertainty, conflict and fear. Markets have not been spared, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to predict the future - even in the very short term!



Often at times like this, our reaction is to isolate ourselves and not try to understand others positions. But, it is during these times and events, we need to reach out and communicate with each other, in order to

understand the different points of views. Without good and open two way communication, we cannot move forward to solve our problems.

And I'm proud that our association, the WABCG, embodies this: a force for discussion. Whatever is going on around us, we are happy to debate, to confront our ideas, our points of view, to share our thoughts, to try to understand each other: in mutual listening and respect.

More than ever, we need to feel part of the same family! And so it is with great pleasure that I encourage you all to register by the end of the month for our next meeting in Australia next June!

See you soon, dear colleagues!

**David Thompson, President
WABCG**



Save the dates!

WABCG Council

23-26 June 2025

Cairns, Australia

Contact us to register!

WABCG/ISO Consultation

1st December 2025

London, United-Kingdom



Check our website!





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NEWS FROM MAURITIUS

In a landmark achievement, “Mauritius Unrefined Sugar” has recently been awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) recognition by the Industrial Property Office of Mauritius. This accolade highlights the exceptional quality and distinctiveness of these wholesome sugars, positioning their origin as pioneers in the global sugar industry. These unrefined sugars for direct consumption, commonly referred to as special sugars, have in fact been developed and produced in Mauritius since the 1970s. They have been carefully crafted over the years to meet the needs of discerning consumers and industrial users constantly developing their product range, thereby resulting in over 20 varieties of such sugars being presently produced.



More than just a label, GI recognition is a testament to the unique characteristics of a product that are intrinsically linked to its geographic origin. For the “Mauritius Unrefined Sugar”, this means that its unparalleled quality is a direct result of the unique environmental conditions, traditional production methods, and the island’s rich cultural heritage. The special sugars stands out for their distinctive flavour profiles, superior quality, and sustainable production practices. The singular volcanic soil composition, tropical maritime climate, and traditional techniques employed contribute to creating sugars that are truly unique. Each granule carries with it the essence of the land, making it a cherished ingredient in kitchens worldwide.

The meticulous and thorough process leading to this prestigious recognition involved stringent criteria and rigorous evaluation. Led by the Mauritius Sugar Syndicate, this journey began with extensive research and documentation to demonstrate the special attributes of the special sugars, followed by multiple rounds of validation and verification by experts from the EU. This achievement was made possible by the collective and dedicated efforts of the local team of seasoned experts. Their deep knowledge of the land, innovative cultural practices and production techniques, and

dedication to quality and sustainability were instrumental in securing this recognition.

The GI recognition not only enhances the value and marketability of the “Mauritius Unrefined Sugar” but also promotes its agricultural heritage on the international stage. It opens up new opportunities for collaboration and growth within the global sugar community, fostering a deeper appreciation for the diversity and richness of cane sugar production.

As it celebrates this momentous achievement, the Mauritius sugar industry remains dedicated to upholding the legacy of quality, sustainability, and tradition that has earned it this recognition. This milestone is a reflection of our unwavering commitment to maintaining the highest standards of quality and authenticity. It also serves as a beacon for other producers, showcasing the potential for excellence within the global sugar industry.

With its presence in over 60 countries worldwide, the objective of the Mauritius Sugar Syndicate is now to seek protection of the “Mauritius Unrefined Sugar” under Geographical Indication in each of these destinations, wherever it is recognized under the relevant legislations. The enhanced Economic Partnership Agreement under discussion between the EU and the group of Eastern and Southern African countries (which comprises Mauritius) already makes provision to facilitate the mutual recognition of GIs, which should therefore allow protection of the “Mauritius Unrefined Sugar” in the EU market once it is finalized.

Devesh Dukhira, CEO
Mauritius Sugar Syndicate, Mauritius





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NEWS FROM NORTHERN GERMANY

In North Germany, the longest campaign ever came to its end mid of February. Looking back on about 170 days it was in total a very successful period of beet processing. Weather conditions had a great part on it as well for harvesting and transport. For the whole season beet material was entirely of good processing quality so that all factories could run at high capacity. Remunerative temperatures and moderate rainfall during storage in fleece covered clamps kept the beet mostly fresh. Harvest result was a beet yield of 85 t/ha with a sugar content on 16,9 % which was better than in the previous year (82,1 t/ha * 16,6 %). In 2024 beet sowing lasted from end of march until beginning of May due to wet soil conditions in some areas. During growing season, remunerative rainfall and warm weather favoured the development of the beet crop, but also infections with leaf diseases. In many regions, Cercospora was a huge problem despite multiple spraying. Few fields in our eastern growing regions also were infested by rubbery taproot disease and syndrome basses richesses. Both are triggered by bacteria which are spread by cicadas. Field trials in cooperation with colleagues all over Germany have been started to find out more about life cycles and control. As well, on political level beet growers and sugar industry are lobbying for emergency approvals of appropriate pesticides.



Looking on the EU market, prices for white sugar dropped about 300 €/t within recent ten months. On the other hand, production costs for beets have been increased of about 20 % comparing to some years ago. For 2024 beet price is still on a satisfying level, but for 2025 it is expected to become much lower. Among others this was only one important issue when almost 2.000 beet growers met at 34 locations with their representatives from grower's associations and sugar companies on the traditional annual winter assemblies.

On the political level, there are ongoing discussions about the trade agreement with MERCOSUR and further market access for Ukraine. Beet growers in North Germany and as well in other member countries of the EU are still afraid of market destabilisations due

to increasing sugar imports. Another risk is additional bureaucracy for sustainability standards on farm level driven by political institutions and private companies as well. Growers are on alert if that becomes standard without being paid for additional efforts and drives the domestic beet sugar production to become less competitive.

Right now, we are looking forward to the 2025 sugar beet growing season. North German beet growers will reduce the area of about 10 %. Hopefully it will bring the right signs for the market.

Dr. Heinrich-Hubertus Helmke
General Secretary

Head Association of North German Sugar Beet Growers (DNZ)



Winter assembly



Covering clamp



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NEWS FROM BRAZIL

The sugarcane producer in Brazil faces a series of pressing challenges that affect both their profitability and the sustainability of their operations. One of the primary concerns is the recent revision of the Consecana-SP (the sugarcane price settlement system in São Paulo). This revision introduces a greater share of by-products in the pricing mechanism, benefitting producers but also revealing a gap that has developed over the past five years. Although these changes aim to better reflect the value of sub-products like electricity, ethanol, and bagasse, producers have experienced a delay in these adjustments, leading to discrepancies between the prices they receive and the market realities.



Additionally, one of the most critical issues for Brazilian producers is the price they are currently receiving for their sugarcane. On average, producers are receiving about R\$ 160.00 per ton when the grower delivered to the mill or R\$ 125.00 per ton when the mill harvested directly on the farm, depends who take the harvest. When converted into dollars, this amount is among the lowest in the world, the conversion is on R\$ 5,80 reais for 1 us dollar. This starkly highlights the misalignment of Brazil's sugarcane pricing with global market trends. The gap in pricing becomes even more evident when considering the strong financial results posted by sugar mills in recent months. Mill reports from the past 12 months show that they are earning an average of R\$ 330.00 per ton of cane processed, underscoring the significant disparity between what mills are making and what producers are receiving. This price discrepancy calls for urgent adjustments in the pricing model to ensure that farmers are fairly compensated in line with both national and global market conditions.

Another key challenge lies in the tax incentives received by sugar mills. As a country with a strong agricultural sector, Brazil offers tax benefits to encourage the production of sugarcane. However, these incentives are often concentrated in the mills rather than being passed on to the producers. This creates an imbalance in the sector, where the mills benefit from these tax reliefs, but the producers, who are at the core of the industry, do not see an equitable share of the benefits, affecting their financial health and their ability to grow their businesses.

Lastly, RenovaBio, the program aimed at promoting biofuels and reducing Brazil's carbon emissions, presents both an opportunity and a challenge for producers. Under this program, farmers can receive payments for the sugarcane they grow and convert into ethanol, in the form of carbon credits. However, to qualify for the program, producers must meet certain sustainability criteria, which can be a barrier for smaller farmers. While RenovaBio presents significant potential for boosting farmers' incomes, its implementation remains in progress, and many producers are still not fully benefiting from it.

In conclusion, Brazilian sugarcane producers are grappling with a range of issues, from the outdated Consecana-SP pricing system and the uneven distribution of tax benefits to the low prices they are currently receiving compared to global standards. The financial statements of sugar mills in recent months further highlight the urgent need for price adjustments. The current gap between the prices received by producers and those earned by mills reflects a structural issue in the sector that must be addressed to ensure a more balanced and sustainable future for sugarcane farming in Brazil.

José Guilherme Ambrósio Nogueira, CEO
ORPLANA, Brazil