



World Association of  
Beet and Cane Growers



## NEWS FROM WABCG

### BACK FROM CAIRNS, AUSTRALIA!

*The World Association of Sugar Beet and Sugarcane Growers, which brings together 36 sugar beet and sugar cane growers' associations from 34 countries, met in Cairns, Australia, on 25th June at the kind invitation of CANEGROWERS, and concluded its work with the following final statement.*

In an unstable world plagued by major geopolitical tensions and economic uncertainties, the members of the WABCG are keen to emphasise the importance of maintaining respectful dialogue between nations. **They are proud to represent this commitment in their respective sectors.** Encouraging the exchange of information and the sharing of practical solutions is crucial to building a better future that allows for **diverse agricultural models, each of which is trying to optimise its economic, social and environmental sustainability.**

**These models must be based on independent, robust and recognised growers' organisations that are recognised by governments and industrial partners.** These organisations must be supported in their **efforts to limit the volatility of farm incomes.** Innovative technologies that **ensure profitable yields** should be encouraged, as should measures to **control and mitigate price risks.** In addition to the production of sugar, bioethanol, electricity and biogas, sugar cane and sugar beet have **exceptional diversification potential** that should be promoted, especially when considering their co-products, such as bagasse and pulp, **which should be taken into account when calculating growers' revenue.**

## JULY-AUGUST 2025

In this context, members of WABCG unanimously elected a new Executive Board during this meeting, of which **Owen Menkens, cane grower from Australia, was elected President** to lead the World Association from 2025 to 2028. He will be helped by three Vice-Presidents, and 12 representatives, all of them composing the Executive Board of the WABCG:

|                                                |                                 |
|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>President</b>                               | Owen Menkens (Australia)        |
| <b>Vice-Presidents</b>                         | Bruno Rangel (Brazil)           |
|                                                | Ulf Wegener (Germany)           |
|                                                | Guillaume Gandon (France)       |
| <b>Cane representatives (&amp; substitute)</b> | Carlos Blackaller (Mexico)      |
|                                                | Martha Betancourt (Colombia)    |
|                                                | Thomas Funke (South Africa)     |
|                                                | Clovis Bony (Ivory Coast)       |
|                                                | José Mayorga-Sirera (Nicaragua) |
|                                                | Jacqueline Sauzier (Mauritius)  |
| <b>Beet representatives (&amp; substitute)</b> | Lars Bäckstedt (Sweden)         |
|                                                | Arwin Bos (Netherlands)         |
|                                                | Markus Schoeberl (Austria)      |
|                                                | Hiroyuki Hashimoto (Japan)      |
|                                                | Ramazan Erkoyuncu (Turkiye)     |
|                                                | Troels Frandsen (Denmark)       |

They also scheduled their next Spring meetings for the three years to come:

- **Sweden**, from 15 to 18 June 2026,
- **Mauritius**, in 2027,
- And **Germany**, in 2028.



*The World Association of Beet and Cane Growers (WABCG) is the international organisation which groups together the national and regional associations of sugar beet and sugar cane growers at international level. WABCG has 36 member associations and unites over 5 million sugar beet and sugar cane growers from the five continents. WABCG is present in over 30 countries, producing 60% of world sugar production.*



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#### FROM OWEN MENKENS, ELECTED PRESIDENT IN 2025

It is a great honour to be elected as president of the WABCG. I look forward to working with all of your organisations for the betterment of growers around the world. **I would also like to thank David Thompson for the work he has done over the past three years.** Our industry faced many challenges in that period including issues around the covid pandemic and the resulting increases in input costs. Also we had huge fluctuations in the world price as well as sugar production around the world. We did studies into carbon farming as well as launching an exchange program for young growers. We also travelled to Cali Columbia and David's home area of Fargo USA as well as a trip to a sugarbeet farm in Norfolk in the UK. These trips gave us an understanding of the issues facing growers in those regions and the practices used to manage them.

David leadership has been an essential part of our organisation being successful in the last 3 years. His hosting of the WABCG and visiting his farm were definitely highlights in the last 3 years. I wish David and wife Jill all the best in their future endeavours, and I hope the Beet campaign is a good one this year.

We enjoyed hosting you all in Cairns last week. I would like to thank Dan and his team for the work put in to preparing the conference. I would especially like to thank Timothé for all the work he does in organising the conference and making sure the association achieves its goals.

**Owen Menkens**

#### FROM DAVID THOMPSON, PRESIDENT WABCG 2022-2025

As I prepare to step down as your President and from the Association, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to each and everyone of you. Serving this diverse and dynamic group from around the world has been an incredible honor and an enriching experience.

**I would like to extend a special "Thank you" to Dan**

**Galligan, Owen Menkens and the entire Sugar Cane Organization of Australia,** for the recent meeting and cultural trip in Australia. My family and I thoroughly enjoyed our time exploring the beautiful landscapes and gaining insights into the sugar cane industry. The warmth of your hospitality and the opportunity to connect with so many of you made this experience truly memorable.

Together, we have worked hard to advance our goals and foster collaboration within the sugar industry. **I am proud of what we have achieved and am confident that the association will continue to thrive under the new leadership of Owen Menkens President, a new Executive Board and Timothé Masson.**

Thank you once again for your support, friendship, and dedication. I look forward to staying connected and hearing about your future successes.

Wishing you all the best!

**David Thompson**



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## NEWS FROM ROMANIA

In Romania the surface fluctuates from year to year as the beet price increases or decreases, and 2025 is no different, the YOY variation is over -35% in both surface and price of beet €/t due to intra-community sugar imports that still affects the price sale of sugar of the two Factories.



After a winter without snow and without significant precipitation, a spring of 2025 followed, which brought rain in most areas of Romania, which led to optimal sowing conditions. May was characterized by an excessive rainfall regime that brought precipitation in 30 days of 150-200 L/m<sup>2</sup>. Beet crops look

in optimal conditions with densities of 85-90000 plants/ha.

June followed with high temperatures of 30-35 degrees, but with a deficient rainfall regime. The excess water in May followed by the deficit and high temperatures created the conditions for the installation of fungi, namely mainly *Rhizoctonia* on certain surfaces.

Due to the high temperatures that continued to manifest themselves, the disease stagnated to some extent. We hope that it will involute so that the beet can have a normal subsequent development. The lack of prec

ipitation, which is known to be crucial for beet production in Romania, is already being felt, especially in July and August, when there is usually a deficit in the Eastern part of Romania.

Farmers have started to monitor beet crops in order to prevent the appearance of *Cercospora*, which is known to wreak havoc in Romania in some favorable years. That is why the first preventive treatments have already been applied in some areas. There is hope for a good harvest, over the 5 year yield but we need to see after the July and August heat domes that are in forecast as of now.

**Mihail Dimitriu, Chief Executive Officer**  
*Federația Cultivatorilor de Sfeclă de Zahăr din România*  
*(FCSZR), Sugarbeet growers' association of Romania*





## NEWS FROM USA

The United States had a fairly “reasonable” spring for sugarbeet planting. We ended ahead of the 5-



year average and generally right in the middle of the 10-year average. Adequate moisture across all the growing regions has set us up for a good crop. Back in the Red River Valley, it was a similar story; however, we faced a lot of unfavorable conditions after planting.

There was a larger-than-average number of beets needing to be replanted due to poor stands.

While spring in the RRV started dry, we quickly received some much-needed rain. However, almost immediately afterward, we faced 100-degree Fahrenheit temperatures (38°C) for 4–5 consecutive days in May, combined with excessive winds. This led to crusting issues for beets that hadn’t emerged yet, and damage to those that had. As I write this today, we remain very optimistic about this crop. An old saying here is that if the “*rows are closed by July 4th, we will have a good crop*”—and most of the rows are indeed closed.

Politics are at the forefront of growers’ minds. President Trump has been encouraging the U.S. House and Senate to pass the “Big Beautiful Bill,” a massive piece of legislation filled with his priorities. Within the bill, there is some really good stuff for farmers—most notably, an improvement to our “Farm Safety Net.”

The U.S. Farm Safety Net is a combination of support mechanisms that kick in when prices fall to a point where it is no longer economical to raise a

crop. As growers around the world have seen commodity prices fall while input costs remain high, the current Farm Safety Net is no longer adequate to help farmers when markets plummet, as they have recently. Nearly all farm groups have been supportive of improving the Farm Safety Net as part of the “Big Beautiful Bill.”

It is not without controversy, however, because the Farm Safety Net is traditionally addressed within the “Farm Bill,” which is usually handled in a bipartisan fashion. Farmers recognize the need to work with urban and rural communities, Republicans and Democrats alike—because agriculture is not a one-party issue. Everyone needs to be fed and clothed.

As I write this on June 30th, the Senate is voting on their version of the bill, which includes slight changes to the already-passed House version. If the Senate passes it with changes, the House will need to decide whether to concur. President Trump has set a goal of signing the entire package by July 4th, but the clock is ticking.

While commodity prices (including sugar) seem to be in free fall, farmers across the United States remain optimistic. Markets, politics, consumer trends, weather, and input costs are all out of our control—but we *can* control our attitude. We can remain positive, continue to get our work done, and take pride in being farmers whose role is vital in feeding, clothing, and powering people in every country.

**David Thompson**

**Red River Valley Sugarbeet Growers Association, USA**