



World Association of Beet and Cane Growers



NEWS FROM WABCG

EDITO

What a rollercoaster ride the sugar markets are on! Every passing day brings its share of uncertainties, and hardly a day goes by without a surprise on the markets. **It is important, going forward for sugar prices, that the world maximises its use of sugarcane ethanol.** I have been working with Brazil to help them stimulate local cane ethanol use.



For farmers like us, the war in the Middle East may seem far away. But its impact on fuel prices is very real, as is its effect on the cost of fertilisers, which are essential to our crops. These can have a lasting negative impact on

our farms' cash flow, and even on yields in the medium term. **Fuel and fertiliser availability is a major worry for farmers around the world.** Given the low-price environment, we need to stay calm and look out for each other.

Even sugar prices are affected by these events. More than ever, it is vital that we stand together, and I look forward to seeing you all next month in Helsingborg, Sweden. There, we will be able to share our solutions to this new storm.

We will also take the opportunity to compare our approaches to intensifying the discussions we can have within our respective industry. Now more than ever, we need strong, united sectors that are ready to engage in value sharing, in a spirit of transparency.

Indeed, faced with rising costs and volatile sugar prices, **it is essential that every link in the supply chain is convinced that the sharing of value is clear and fair!** This is what enables us, as farmers, to stay the course day after day, come what may. For we are certain of one thing, being so close to nature: every cloud has a silver lining!

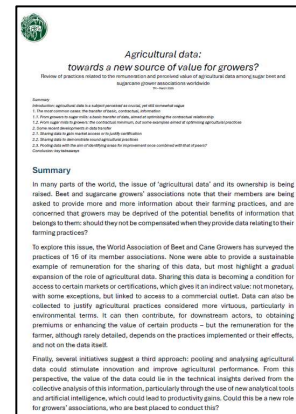
I look forward to seeing you in Sweden,

**Owen Menkens, President
WABCG**

MAY 2026



Agricultural data: towards a new source of value for growers?



The issue of 'agricultural data' and its ownership is being raised: should growers be compensated when they provide data relating to their farming practices? To explore this issue, the WABCG has surveyed the practices of 16 of its member associations – and here are the results!

Ask the Secretariat to receive a copy of our study!



Next WABCG meeting
16-18 June 2026
Helsingborg, Sweden



NEWS FROM MEXICO

The Zafra 25/26 reached 4.207 million tonnes as of April 18th, representing a 3.82% increase over the previous season. Cane crushed neared thirty-nine million tonnes. Eighty percent of the estimated cane harvest and sugar production has been processed, and two of the forty-seven mills operating this year have concluded their operations.



The official Third Estimate Z-25/26 projects 49.827 million tons of cane to be harvested from 762,102 hectares, with an average yield of 65.38 TCH. Expected Factory Yield stands at 10.85%, with sugar production estimated at 5.406 million tons and an average of 7.094 tons of sugar per hectare. These upward revisions came as a welcome surprise, driven by a favorable rain season last summer and sustained rainfall during winter and spring — conditions that complicated harvest operations but significantly benefited cane growth across the main producing regions.

Mexico's sugarcane is cultivated under highly varied weather and production conditions. The country's approximately 180,000 canegrowers hold small-size properties, with an average production unit of 4 hectares.

The central concern for this season, as in the previous one, remains the cane price. During Zafra 2024/25, the sugarcane price fell by 30%; this season an additional reduction of 6 to 10% is anticipated. The cane price is set at 57% of the average sugar price across domestic and export markets. With the United States reducing Mexico's sugar quota —

a consequence of receiving imports while applying High Tier tariffs — Mexico is compelled to export its surplus to the world market under unfavorable conditions.

A weak tariff framework and an adverse exchange rate have further exposed the sector to import competition and sugar smuggling from Central America. In response, the Mexican government adjusted the tariff on sugar imports to 156% ad valorem last November, a measure that has helped stabilize the domestic market.

According to the Sugar Balance presented by CONADESUCA, of the estimated 5.406 million tons of sugar produced this season, 71.74% will be consumed domestically and 28.26% exported. Mexican sugar export destinations include the USA (3.46%), IMMEX (7.40%), and the World Market (17.44%).

The current scenario of reduced profitability — driven by weak sugar prices alongside rising costs for fertilizers and diesel — makes it imperative to adopt practices that lower production costs and improve efficiency. The Unión Nacional de Cañeros and its member associations are actively promoting the production and use of biofertilizers and biological soil enhancers as a practical and sustainable alternative to expensive chemical fertilizers, an initiative that is already gaining traction across the sector.





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On the policy front, UNC is actively engaged in trade policy discussions within the USMCA review process, advocating for fair and reciprocal treatment of Mexican cane sugar in the North American market.

You can follow us at www.caneros.org.mx Facebook: caneros.org.mx YouTube @canerosCNPR

**Carlos BLACKALLER, President
Unión Nacional de Cañeros, Mexico**

NEWS FROM FINLAND

The sugar market has experienced significant changes over the past year, characterized by global geopolitical uncertainty, production fluctuations, and a drive to adapt to higher costs.

Strong Interest in Cultivation

In Finland, sugar beet cultivation has remained relatively attractive, even though the market environment has become more challenging. This is mainly because of the low cereal prices, giving no economically reasonable alternatives to sugar beet growing. The price of sugar beet has been on a downward trend compared to previous peak years, but the price level has remained competitive for farmers. The 2026 IPA agreement was concluded in the autumn of 2025 and reflects a more moderate market situation. Sugar beet acreage has remained high, and interest in cultivation has been strong, highlighting the role of sugar beet as a stable part of Finnish crop rotation. Sugar beet performs also well in varying weather conditions.

Growing uncertainty and production costs

The sugar sector has been struggling with stricter environmental requirements, limited availability of plant protection products, and increased production costs. Meanwhile, consumer demand has remained stable, even though the long-term trend in Europe is a moderate decrease in sugar consumption due to health concerns and alternative sweeteners. The conflict in the Middle East that began in the spring of 2026 has increased concerns regarding the rising costs and availability of production inputs (such as fuel and fertilizers), which is putting pressure on farmers' margins. Everything is on top of the nearly 30 % cost increases, which have stayed after the 2022 cost hike.





While the period between 2023 and 2024 was characterized by discussions about high prices, the focus at the beginning of 2026 has turned to how farmers and industry can cope with rising energy and logistics costs in a situation where the market price of sugar has leveled off or turned downward.

Impacts at the Farm Level

Sugar beet growers are in a situation where they have limited opportunities to adjust their costs in the short term. Due to the rising costs, some farms have been forced to consider reducing fertilization or decreasing the area under cultivation.

Conviso Smart varieties have been one of the means to reduce and simplify crop protection. The market share of Conviso Smart seems now to level around 60 %. Although the method is popular, its use is subject to strict sustainability requirements; a precise crop rotation and ensure the removal of bolters. This regulation partly dictates what proportion of the acreage can be used for the method sustainably.

Finnish sugar beet cultivation is centralized, and cultivation advisory services (provided by industry) are intensive. New varieties are adopted quickly once they are proven to be competitive with traditional varieties in terms of yield and resilience.

Short season

Finland's short and intensive growing season creates specific demands on machinery costs and investments in sugar beet cultivation. With limited time from sowing to harvest and significant weather risks, the machinery must be extremely efficient and reliable. Sowing must be done as soon as the soil has warmed up and dried out to ensure the longest possible growing period. This requires high machinery capacity relative to the farm size. Autumn rains and the threat of freezing soil set a strict deadline for the harvest. Many farmers invest in machinery through co-ownership or rely heavily on contract services.

Farmers must invest in preventative maintenance and ensure the availability of spare parts, as a machine breakdown during the peak season could mean losing the entire crop to autumn rains. This is reflected in continuous maintenance costs.

The sustainability of Finnish sugar beet production in 2026 rests on high technology, professional advisory services, and strict agrotechnical discipline. Although

the sector is struggling with geopolitical disruptions and high production costs, it has maintained its position as a stable and important part of the Finnish crop rotation.

**Juha Wikström, President
MTK's Sugar Beet Committee, Finland**

