

MAURITIUS SUGAR INDUSTRY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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SUGAR CANE CROP 2009

Status: End March 2009

1. CLIMATE

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

The island's average rainfall of 376 mm over the sugar cane areas for the month of March 2009 represented 149% of the long-term mean (252 mm). Sector-wise, rainfall was well above the respective long-term mean of the month with 243 mm in the North, 544 mm in the East, 367 mm in the South, 154 mm in the West and 445 mm in the Centre. These records represented 151%, 224%, 113%, 138% and 132% of the long-term mean of the sectors, i.e. 161 mm, 243 mm, 325 mm, 112 mm and 337 mm respectively.

Cumulative rainfall for the period October 2008 to March 2009 amounted to 1241 mm. This is slightly higher than the long-term mean (1200 mm) of the island for that period. During that same period, a total of 812 mm were recorded in the North, 1535 mm in the East, 1352 mm in the South, 632 mm in the West and 1589 mm in the Centre. Compared to the respective long-term mean of these sectors, cumulative rainfall represented 100% in the North, 127% in the East, 94% in the South, 96% in the West and 98% in the Centre.

Table 1a. Rainfall (mm) of March for crops 2008, 2009 and the long term mean (LTM)

	North	East	South	West	Centre	Island
2008	461 (286)	714 (294)	477 (147)	272 (243)	663 (197)	538 (213)
2009	243 (151)	544 (224)	367 (113)	154 (138)	445 (132)	376 (149)
LTM	161	243	325	112	337	252

* figures in brackets are % of LTM

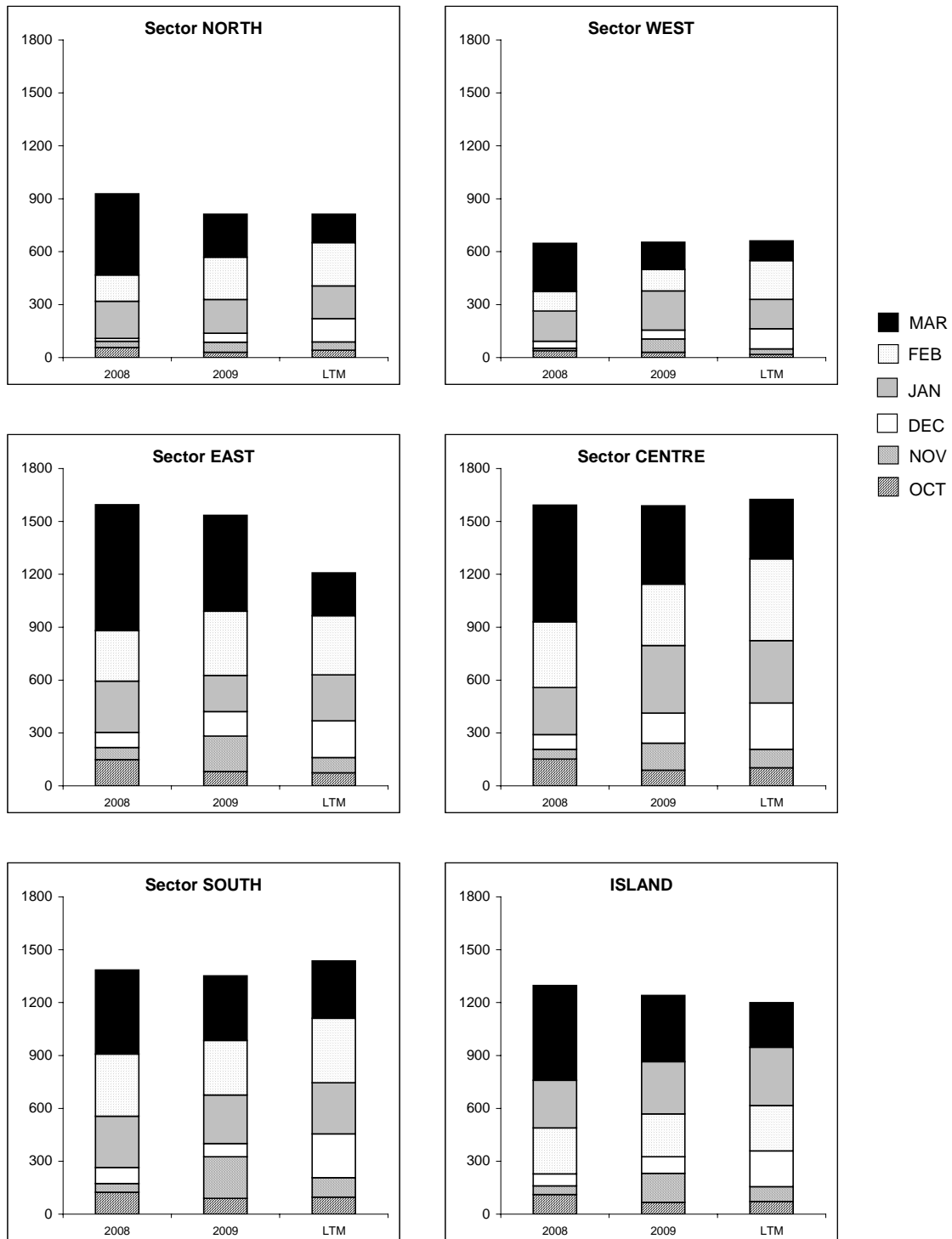
Table 1b. Cumulative rainfall (mm) from Oct 2008 to Mar 2009 for crop 2009 compared to that of crop 2008 and the long term mean (LTM)

	North	East	South	West	Centre	Island
2008	928 (114)	1595 (132)	1385 (96)	647 (98)	1593 (98)	1297 (108)
2009	812 (100)	1535 (127)	1352 (94)	632 (96)	1589 (98)	1241 (103)
LTM	812	1208	1436	661	1625	1200

* figures in brackets are % of LTM

[Source : raw provisional data from Meteorological Services]

Figure 1. Monthly rainfall (mm) for period Oct 2008 to Mar 2009 of the 2009 crop compared to the same period for crop 2008 and the long-term mean (LTM).



2. STALK HEIGHT (TABLE 2)

Cane growth was assessed during the last week of March 2009 in the 59 sites representative of the five sugar cane sectors of the island. These sites cover the various agro-climatic zones, varieties under cultivation and the stages of development of the crop. Data collected are compared with those of March 2008 and with the mean for that month of the five best cane yielding crops of the last ten years in each sector (referred to as normal).

2.1 Stalk elongation (Table 2a)

Growth during the month of March exceeded that recorded during the corresponding period in 2008. Elongation amounted to 56.9 cm in the North, 51.9 cm in the East, 54.9 cm in the South, 53.9 cm in the West and 44.4 cm in the Centre and represented 5.8 cm, 6.9 cm, 6.7 cm, 5.0 cm and 3.9 cm more in the respective sector. Compared to the normal for the same period, growth was also superior in all sectors, the advantage amounting to 10.8 cm in the North, 8.7 cm in the East, 8.3 cm in the South, 7.4 cm in the West and 5.1 cm in the Centre. The island average of 53.5 cm was 13.1% above that of 2008 (47.3 cm) and 20.0% above the normal (44.6 cm).

Table 2a. Stalk elongation during the month of March.

Sectors	Stalk elongation (cm) during Mar			Mar 2009 as % of	
	2009	2008	Normal	2008	Normal
North	56.9	51.1	46.1	111.4	123.4
East	51.9	45.0	43.2	115.3	120.1
South	54.9	48.2	46.6	113.9	117.8
West	53.9	48.9	46.5	110.2	115.9
Centre	44.4	40.5	39.3	109.6	113.0
Island	53.5	47.3	44.6	113.1	120.0

2.2 Cumulative Elongation (Table 2b)

Cumulative growth from end-December 2008 to end-March 2009 reached 133.5 cm in the North, 127.9 cm in the East, 146.0 cm in the South, 137.2 cm in the West and 112.9 cm in the Centre. These cumulative growths exceeded those of 2008 by 14.5 cm (12.2%) in the North, 13.3 cm (10.0%) in the South and 16.5 cm (13.7%) in the West. In the East, cumulative growth still lagged by 3.5 cm (2.7%) whereas in the Centre it was comparable to that at end March 2008. For the same period, cumulative elongation was below normal in sectors East, South and Centre by 11.1 cm, 5.2 cm and 5.1 cm respectively. In the West growth was comparable to the normal while in the North it was slightly better by 1.0 cm. Island-wise the cumulative elongation of 134.3 cm exceeded that of the 2008 crop (126.2 cm) by 6.4% but lagged behind the normal (137.7 cm) by 2.5%.

Table 2b. Cumulative elongation at end-March.

Sectors	Cumulative elongation (cm) at end- Mar			Mar 2009 as % of	
	2009	2008	Normal	2008	Normal
North	133.5	119.0	132.5	112.2	100.8
East	127.9	131.4	139.0	97.3	92.0
South	146.0	132.7	151.2	110.0	96.6
West	137.2	120.7	137.0	113.7	100.1
Centre	112.9	113.3	118.0	99.6	95.7
Island	134.3	126.2	137.7	106.4	97.5

2.3 Total cane height (Table 2c and Figure 2)

Total stalk height at end-March 2009 was 167.9 cm in the North, 174.2 cm in the East, 207.0 cm in the South, 178.7 cm in the West and 164.1 cm in the Centre. Compared to the same period in 2008, cane was taller by 27.0 cm in the North, 33.0 cm in the South, 24.5 cm in the West and 7.7 cm in the Centre but was 3.5 cm shorter in the East. Total cane height at the end of March 2009 exceeded the normal by 5.4 cm (3.3%) in the North, 4.1 cm (2.0%) in the South and 14.3 cm (8.7%) in the West but was below the normal by 7.2 cm (4.0%) in the East and 1.6 cm (1.0%) in the Centre.

Island-wise the total cane height of 182.5 cm at end-March 2009 was higher than at end-March 2008 by 18.6 cm (11.3%) and the normal by 4.8 cm (2.7%).

Table 2c. Stalk height at end-March

Sectors	Stalk height (cm) at end-Mar			End-Mar 2009 as % of	
	2009	2008	Normal	2008	Normal
North	167.9	140.9	162.5	119.2	103.3
East	174.2	177.7	181.4	98.0	96.0
South	207.0	174.0	202.9	119.0	102.0
West	178.7	154.2	164.4	115.9	108.7
Centre	164.1	156.4	165.7	104.9	99.0
Island	182.5	163.9	177.7	111.3	102.7

3. CROP 2009

Weather during March has favoured good elongation in all sectors and has resulted islandwise in the total cane height to exceed that of the 2008 crop and also that of the normal. The overall stand of the 2009 crop is therefore good and is indicative of a normal crop.

Figure 2. Stalk height at end- March 2009.

