

MAURITIUS SUGAR INDUSTRY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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10 January 2011

SUGAR CANE CROP 2011

Status: End December 2010

1. CLIMATE

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

Rainfall recorded during December 2010 was well below the long-term mean in all sectors of the island. The island average of 16 mm represented only 8% of the long-term mean (204 mm) for the sugar cane areas. Rainfall recorded in December was 11 mm in the North, 19 mm in the East, 18 mm in the South, 7 mm in the West and 19 mm in the Centre. These amounts represented 8%, 9%, 7%, 6% and 7% of the long-term mean for these sectors, respectively.

Cumulative rainfall for the period October to December 2010 reached 103 mm in the North, 224 mm in the East, 203 mm in the South, 19 mm in the West and 184 mm in the Centre, which represented 47%, 61%, 45%, 12% and 39% of the respective long-term mean. The island average of 169 mm for this period represented 47% of the long-term mean (359 mm).

Rainfall has been insufficient to meet the water requirements of rainfed crops in all sectors during the month of December.

Table 1a Rainfall (mm) of December for crops 2010, 2011 and the long term mean (LTM)

	North	East	South	West	Centre	Island
2010	233 (177)	253 (121)	208 (84)	107 (94)	241 (92)	221 (108)
2011	11 (8)	19 (9)	18 (7)	7 (6)	19 (7)	16 (8)
LTM	132	209	249	114	263	204

* figures in brackets are % of LTM

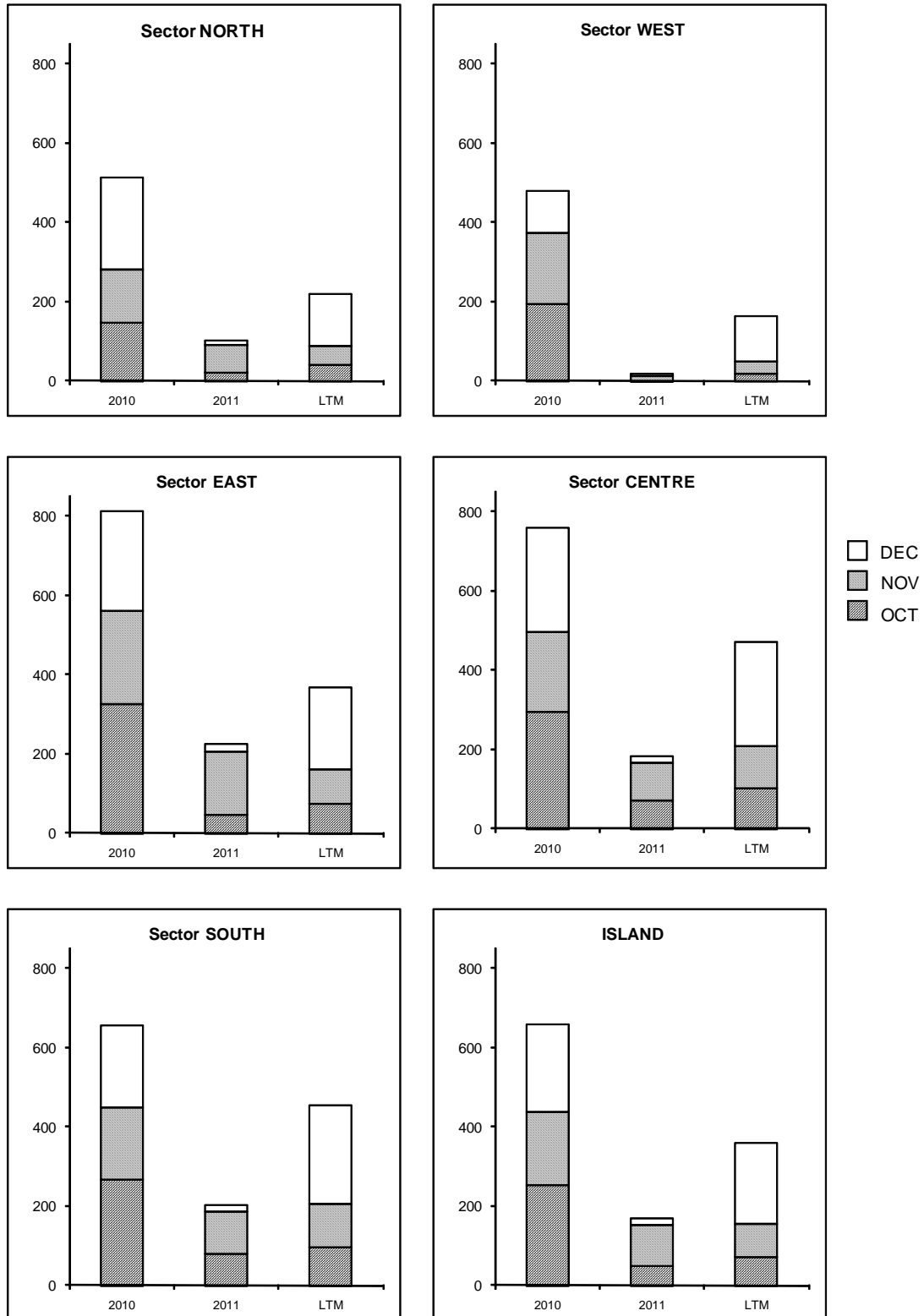
Table 1b Cumulative rainfall (mm) from October to December 2010 for crop 2011 compared to that of crop 2010 and the long term mean (LTM)

	North	East	South	West	Centre	Island
2010	513 (233)	813 (220)	656 (144)	479 (295)	738 (157)	659 (184)
2011	103 (47)	224 (61)	203 (45)	19 (12)	184 (39)	169 (47)
LTM	220	369	455	163	470	359

* figures in brackets are % of LTM

[Source : raw provisional data from Meteorological Services]

Figure 1 Monthly rainfall (mm) for the period Oct to Dec 2010 for the 2011 crop compared to the corresponding period of the 2010 crop and to the long term mean (LTM).



2. STALK HEIGHT (*Table 2*)

Initial measurements of stalk height had been carried out during the last week of December 2010 at 60 sites in the five sugar cane growing sectors of the island. These sites are representative of the various agro-climatic zones, varieties, and crop categories. The measurements are compared to those of the corresponding period in December 2009 and to the mean of the five best cane yielding crops of the period 2001 to 2010 in each sector (referred to as normal).

Stalk height at end-December 2010 averaged 21.0 cm in the North, 32.5 cm in the East, 39.9 cm in the South, 24.8 cm in the West and 30.1 cm in the Centre. These figures are lagging behind those of last year in all sectors, the difference being 15.0% in the North, 17.9% in the East, 22.2% in the South, 42.6% in the West and 36.8% in the Centre.

Cane height in December 2010 was also below the normal in all sectors. It was lagging by 23.1% (6.3 cm) in the North, 24.5% (10.6 cm) in the East, 23.3% (12.1 cm) in the South, 24.5% (8.1 cm) in the West and 38.7% (19.0 cm) in the Centre.

At island level, the cane height of 31.3 cm as at end-December 2010 was inferior to that at end-December 2009 by 9.7 cm (23.8%) and the normal by 12.1 cm (27.9%)

Table 2. Stalk height at end-December

Sectors	Stalk height (cm) at end-Dec			End-Dec 2010 as % of	
	2010	2009	Normal	2009	Normal
North	21.0	24.7	27.3	85.0	76.9
East	32.5	39.6	43.1	82.1	75.5
South	39.9	51.3	52.0	77.8	76.7
West	24.8	43.2	32.9	57.4	75.5
Centre	30.1	47.6	49.1	63.2	61.3
Island	31.3	41.0	43.4	76.2	72.1

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December weather, particularly the prolonged drought, had continued to be unfavourable, to cane growth and development. This is clearly seen in the cane height being below that of last year and of the normal in all sectors. At end-December the difference island-wide was 9.7 cm (23.8%) compared to that at end-December 2009 and 12.1 cm (27.9%) compared to the normal. It is improbable that the 2011 crop will be able to recover fully when normal climatic conditions return in January 2011.