



MAURITIUS SUGAR INDUSTRY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Recommendation Sheet

May 2010, No. 169*

FERTILIZATION OF PLANT AND RATOON CANE

The aim of a good fertilization plan is to supply the sugar cane crop with the right quantities of the right nutrient elements so as to maximize net returns from investment on fertilizers. With the recent drop in both the price of fertilizers and revenue from sugar, there is a need to revisit current recommendations for sugar cane production, particularly for nitrogen (N).

Recommendations for phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) will continue to be based on soil analysis performed before planting.

Recommendations for N are based on the achievable yield potential i.e. the best possible yield averaged over a period of 3 years and the cost of N fertilizers and sugar price.

Recommendations

- *For soils testing more than 80 ppm P and 0.50 m.e. % K, no P and K are recommended for plant cane and ratoon crops.*
- *Based on current prices of fertilizer N and sugar, 1.4 kg of N is recommended for every tonne of millable cane expected.*
- *For plant cane and irrigated ratoons, urea-based formulations are recommended.*
- *For non-irrigated ratoons, nitrate-based formulations should be applied whenever possible. In the event of non-availability of nitrate-based formulations, urea-based formulations may be applied in non-irrigated ratoons but an extra 20% of N is recommended to allow for gaseous losses.*

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