

ICAR- Sugarcane Breeding Institute, Coimbatore - 641 007.

Research Highlights

National Hybridization Garden at ICAR – Sugarcane Breeding Institute: Five Decades of Driving India's Sugarcane Varietal Development!

National Hybridization Garden (NHG) at the ICAR-Sugarcane Breeding Institute (SBI), Coimbatore, completes 50 years of service and it continues to stand at the centre of India's sugarcane breeding enterprise. Established in 1974 to strengthen true seed ("fluff") production and enhance breeder participation, the NHG has grown into the country's primary engine for generating genetic variability required for developing superior, region-specific sugarcane varieties.

A Central Facility Supporting a National Network

Before the NHG was created, limited quantities of hybrid seed produced had restricted sugarcane improvement efforts across India. With the establishment of the NHG, breeders from participating centres gained the opportunity to directly choose parents and make crosses at a single, well-managed facility. This centralised hybridisation model soon became an integral component of the All India Coordinated Research Project on Sugarcane (AICRP-S), which aimed to develop climate- and location-specific varieties across India's diverse agro-ecologies.

Over time, 24 sugarcane research centres—spread across all major cane-growing states - had utilized the NHG facility the NHG for getting hybrid true seed. The generated fluff is used to



raise millions of seedlings, which are then subjected to rigorous multi-stage selection under agro-climatic field conditions.

Highlights of the 2024–25 Hybridization Season

The 2024–25 flowering season reaffirmed the NHG's national significance. A total of 470 biparental crosses, along with general collections and polycrosses, were facilitated for 22 participating centres, generating 24.56 kg of fluff. The North West Zone made the highest number of crosses (159), followed by the Peninsular Zone (151), North Central–North East Zone (95), and the East Coast Zone (65). This broad-based participation illustrates the varying varietal demands across India's subtropical and tropical cane belts. Once the centres receive their allotted fluff, they raise seedlings in ground nurseries, screen early-generation populations, and advance superior clones through clonal trials. The most promising selections enter Initial Varietal Trials (IVT), further evaluated in Advanced Varietal Trials Advanced Varietal Trials (AVT) under the AICRP(S) framework. Successful clones will be recommended for commercial cultivation by the Central Varietal Release Committee (CVRC).

Impact of ICAR-SBI's NHG on India's Varietal Landscape

Over the last two decades alone, dozens of nationally released sugarcane varieties—across the Peninsular, East Coast, North West and North Central/North East Zones—have originated from crosses effected at the NHG. These include high-yielding and widely cultivated varieties such as CoM 88121, CoPant



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84211, CoH 119, CoSe 92423, CoLk 94184 and CoLk 14201 among many others.

In addition to nationally notified varieties, participating centres have independently developed a large number of state-specific varieties using the fluff supplied through the NHG. These lines have become mainstays in states such as Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Bihar and Assam—demonstrating the programme's relevance to region-specific breeding priorities.

A Repository of National Genetic Wealth

The NHG maintains over 650 genetic stocks, enabling breeders to design crosses targeting key traits such as high yield, improved juice recovery, stress tolerance, and suitability for diversified uses like ethanol and co-products. This broad-based genetic reservoir has allowed India to follow a hybrid breeding model—centralised generation of variation at Coimbatore and decentralised clonal selection at state centres—ensuring both genetic diversity and local adaptability.

A Programme that Sustains the Nation's Cane Productivity

Today, the NHG supports about 500 biparental crosses, 20 polycrosses and nearly 200 general collections every year,

generating 25–35 kg of fluff. This volume is sufficient to produce millions of seedlings annually. As a result, more than 99% of the sugarcane area in India is planted with varieties developed either by ICAR-SBI or the state centres supported through NHG's hybridisation and fluff supply programme.

Looking Forward

With rising climatic challenges and increasing demand for high-recovery and high-fibre varieties, the NHG's strategic role is expanding. Continued integration of advanced breeding tools—such as molecular markers, genomic selection and precision phenotyping—could further enhance the efficiency of the national programme. Yet the original vision that guided its establishment remains unchanged: a robust, collaborative, central hybridisation system that fuels location-specific varietal development across India.

For over five decades, the NHG has powered India's sugarcane improvement efforts. As it enters its next half-century, the facility continues to strengthen the country's agricultural resilience and productivity.

A. Anna Durai & Adhini S. Pazhany
ICAR – Sugarcane Breeding Institute, Coimbatore - 7

Outreach

Workshop on 'Management of Crown Mealybug and Pokkah Boeng' organized at ICAR – SBI !

The ICAR – Sugarcane Breeding Institute in Coimbatore, in collaboration with the Society for Sugarcane Research & Development (SSRD), hosted a dedicated workshop focused on Management of Crown Mealy Bug (CMB) and Pokkah boeng (PB) in sugarcane cultivation. This event took place at the Centenary Seminar Hall on November 12, 2024, and brought together a sizeable group of sugarcane development professionals from several districts in Tamil Nadu, including Villupuram, Cuddalore, Kallakurichi, Ariyalur, Perambalur, Namakkal, Thanjavur, Tiruchirappalli, Tiruvannamalai, Dharmapuri and Erode.

The workshop was specifically organized in response to a noticeable rise in cases of Crown Mealy Bug and Pokkah Boeng affecting sugarcane in these regions. Its main objective was to provide timely expertise and practical solutions for those directly involved in the industry, aiming to protect and sustain sugarcane farming in affected districts. At the event's commencement, Dr. P. Govindaraj, Director of ICAR-SBI, in his Presidential speech, expressed concern about the shrinking area for cane cultivation within Tamil Nadu. He highlighted several long-standing challenges faced by farmers, noting in particular that there has been little improvement in net income from sugarcane for more than a decade and a half. He stressed that recurring pest and disease problems threaten to diminish farmers' interest and engagement in this essential crop.



Participants at the Workshop

During the inauguration, Mr. M. Silvester Goldwin, President of SISMA-TN and Whole-Time Director of Kothari Sugars and Chemicals Ltd, officially released publications on combating Pokkah Boeng and Crown Mealy Bug. In his inaugural address, Mr. Silvester described the difficult situation faced by the Tamil Nadu sugar industry since 2018. He explained that both the area under sugarcane cultivation and overall production have declined in recent years, partly due to reduced factory capacity utilization and increased pest and disease pressure. He emphasized that factories in Central and Coastal Tamil Nadu are particularly vulnerable, commending ICAR-SBI for arranging the workshop and expressing hope for practical solutions that would restore the sector's vitality.

Earlier, while welcoming the gathering, Dr. D. Puthira Prathap, Principal Scientist, mentioned that the event drew participation from 65 development professionals representing a broad spectrum of private and public sector sugar factories operating across the region. Among the private sector, notable companies included EID Parry (I) Ltd., Kothari Sugars & Chemicals Ltd., Dhanalakshmi Srinivasan Sugars (W Sugars), Rajshree Sugars and Chemicals Ltd., Dharani Sugars & Chemicals, Shri Ambiga Sugars, Ponni Sugars, Bannari Amman Sugars, Sakthi Sugars Ltd., and Thiru

Arooran Sugars. Public and cooperative factories such as Chengalrayan Co-op Sugar Mills, MRK Co-op Sugar Mills, Kallakurichi Co-op Sugar Mills, Perambalur Sugars Ltd., Salem Co-op Sugar Mills, Arignar Anna Sugars Ltd., Subramaniya Siva Co-op Sugar Mills Ltd, and Dharmapuri District Co-op Sugar Mills also sent representatives, he added.

The technical session of the workshop featured scientists discussing key topics related to pest and disease management. Dr. T. Ramasubramanian detailed approaches for controlling Crown Mealy Bug, Dr. R. Selvakumar focused on the management of Pokkah Boeng, Dr. R. M. Shanthi spoke about selecting sugarcane varieties resilient to biotic stress, while Dr. P. Malathi presented on the effective use of sett treatment device to minimize the disease.

An interactive session followed, which allowed attendees to raise questions and seek clarifications on sugarcane pest and disease management. The workshop concluded with Dr. P. Govindaraj outlining the recommendations established during the day for more effective management of both Crown Mealy Bug and Pokkah Boeng. Dr. A Ramesh Sundar, Head of the Crop Protection division, offered a formal vote of thanks to round off the proceedings.



Release of publications at the workshop

Capacity building programmes for farmers

ICAR-SBI organizes Field Day of New Sugarcane Variety 'Co 14012'!

A Field Day showcasing the newly released sugarcane variety 'Co 14012' was organized by the ICAR-SBI, Coimbatore, in collaboration with Sakthi Sugars Ltd., Appakudal. The event was held on December 17, 2024, at Mathur village in Anthiyur, Erode district. The programme aimed to introduce the new high-yielding variety Co 14012 to farmers and extension officials, providing them with practical exposure and opportunities for direct interaction with scientists and fellow cane cultivators.

To begin the event, farmers were guided through the Frontline Demonstration (FLD) plot of the Co 14012 variety grown in the field of Shri T. Thirukumaran. Sharing his experience, the farmer expressed great satisfaction with his 11-month-old crop, emphasizing the superior traits of the new variety such

as drought tolerance, non-flowering nature, high tillering ability, and resistance to pests and diseases.

Sakthi Sugars Ltd. complemented the event by organizing an exhibition featuring promising new cane varieties and agricultural inputs.

Addressing the gathering of farmers and extension personnel, Dr. P. Govindaraj, Director of ICAR-SBI, Coimbatore, highlighted that for sugarcane cultivation to remain profitable, farmers must achieve yields of at least 60 tonnes per acre. He identified major challenges currently confronting the sugarcane sector in Tamil Nadu, including the significant reduction in cultivation area, mills operating below capacity, and the stagnation of farmers' income over recent years. Expressing optimism, he stated that Co 14012 could serve as a promising alternative to the long-standing variety Co 86032, which dates back to the year 2000. To encourage adoption,

Dr. Govindaraj distributed seed material of Co 14012 to all participants. In his remarks, Shri V. Thiruvengadam, Vice-President of Sakthi Sugars Ltd., praised ICAR-SBI for organizing the event at a crucial juncture. He underlined the importance of developing sugarcane varieties well-suited to local agro-climatic conditions, capable of ensuring higher and more stable incomes for farmers.

Earlier, welcoming the participants, Dr. D. Puthira Prathap, Principal Scientist and Head of Agricultural Extension at ICAR-SBI, explained that the Field Day was designed to gather direct feedback from regional farmers about the new variety demonstrated over a 1.5-hectare plot. Emphasizing the philosophy of "seeing is believing," he noted that allowing farmers to observe the crop firsthand and interact with the demonstration farmer would greatly aid in the dissemination and wider adoption of Co 14012 across Tamil Nadu.

Other notable speakers included Dr. K. Mohanraj, one of the developers of the variety; Shri P. Ashokumar, General Manager of Sakthi Sugars Ltd.; the host farmer, Shri T. Thirukumaran; and Assistant Directors of Agriculture, Shri R. Bhavani and Shri R. Saravanan, from Ammapettai and Anthiyur, respectively. During the interactive Q&A session, facilitated by Dr. R. Gopi, Dr. P. Mahesh, and Dr. P. Geetha of ICAR-SBI, participants raised questions related to cultivation



Distribution of Co 14012 seed material during the Field Day

practices, disease & pest management, which were addressed comprehensively by the experts. The event concluded with a vote of thanks proposed by Shri V. Sridhar, Senior Manager of Sakthi Sugars Ltd. The Field Day was attended by senior officials from Sakthi Sugars Ltd., staff members from Kumaraguru Institute of Agriculture and Akashvani, and over 80 enthusiastic farmers, marking it as a successful and enlightening event for all participants.



Five one-day Training cum demonstrations on "Mechanized priming Technology for Healthy Nursery Programme and Disease Management through Sett Treatment Device" were organized from 25th to 29th November 2024 in UP Sugar Mills and UPCSR, Uttar Pradesh



Participated in the 'KVK Golden Jubilee Torch' relay event organized by ICAR-KVK, Coimbatore at Vadapudur village of Kinathudadavu block in Coimbatore district on 4.10.2024. During the occasion, Dr A. Anna Durai, Principal Scientist (Plant Breeding) spoke on the new and popular sugarcane varieties developed by ICAR-SBI.



A two-day funded-training on 'Sugarcane Production' (TSP-2024) for the sugarcane farmers of Palus Taluk, Sangli district, Maharashtra was organized during 19-20, December 2024.



As part of DAPSTC (Development Action Plan for Scheduled Tribe Component) project, ICAR-SBI conducted needs assessment and organized awareness campaigns in the adopted tribal settlements of Karumutti, Karattupathy and Thippipaarai of Anamalai Tiger Reserve, Tiruppur district on 26.11.2024.



A one-day farmers training programme on "Savasth Beej Prabandhan" was organized at ICAR-SBIRC, Karnal on 10 December 2024.



ICAR-SBI at ICAR-KVK Golden Jubilee Torch' relay event

ICAR-SBI celebrates 'World Soil Day' with Sugarcane Farmers!

ICAR-SBI celebrated the World Soil Day-2024 on the theme "Caring for Soils: Measure, Monitor, Manage". at Erode in collaboration with Ponni Sugars (Erode) Ltd., on 05 December 2024, during which lectures were delivered and sugarcane farmers were honoured. Dr C. Palaniswami and Dr A. Vennila interacted with the farmers emphasizing the importance of recycling crop residues, especially sugarcane trash. Highlighting the harmful effects of trash-burning, they advised the farmers not to burn the trash to protect the soil's organic matter and organisms. Dr. V Kasthuri Thilagam, demonstrated the procedure for collecting representative soil samples in the field. Altogether, 72 soil health cards and brochures on "A field guide on soil sampling and ready reckoner for sugarcane nutrient management" were distributed.



A field demonstration in progress during the World Soil Day Celebrations

During the occasion, four farmers viz., Shri. R. Prakash, Devanampalayam & Shri. R. Balamurugan, Manjakkalpatti, registered growers of Ponni Sugars (Erode) Ltd., and Shri. M. Kumar, Ariappampalayam & Shri K. M. Palanisamy, Kenjanur, registered growers of Bannari Amman Sugars Ltd., were bestowed with 'Best Farmer Awards' for following best practices of sustainable soil health management in sugarcane cultivation. Shri. Nallasivam, an organic farmer, shared his experience of organic sugarcane cultivation with the gathering. The winners of the drawing competition held for the school students on 'World Soil day' theme, received certificates and mementos. Shri. T. Balakrishnan, Shri. K. Gopinath and Shri. Selvakumar of Ponni Sugars (Erode) Ltd. spoke on the occasion. Altogether, 100 participants, including farmers, cane development officers, students and scientists, participated in the World Soil Day celebrations.



Participating farmers getting their doubts on Soil Health Cards clarified

Academics

Thirty one students from various colleges of Tamil Nadu and Kerala were joined for 15/21/30 days exposure training (Internship) and project work at ICAR-SBI during the period.

Events Organized by/at the Institute

ICAR – Sugarcane Breeding Institute celebrates its 113th Foundation Day!

ICAR-Sugarcane Breeding Institute celebrated its 113th Foundation Day on 25 October 2024. Dr. Major Singh, Member (Plant Science), Agricultural Scientists Recruitment Board, New Delhi, who delivered the Foundation Day address appreciated the Institute for sustaining its glory for the past 112 years, since 1912.

Giving away the Sir T.S. Venkatraman awards for outstanding research in sugarcane and the Foundation Day Certificates of Appreciation, Dr Singh recalled the contributions of ICAR-Sugarcane Breeding Institute to the growth of the nation. He mentioned that the 'Co' varieties still maintain their supremacy in several foreign countries.

Earlier, in his Presidential address, Dr. P. Govindaraj, Director, of ICAR-Sugarcane Breeding Institute recalled the contributions of his predecessors since Dr C.A. Barber, the Founder-Director of the Institute, to sugarcane agriculture. Dr. R. Viswanathan, Director, ICAR-Indian Institute of Sugarcane Research, Lucknow and Dr. V. Venkatasubramanian, Director, ICAR-ATARI Zone 11, Bengaluru, the guests of honour, and the retired staff of the Institute offered felicitations.

The following ICAR-SBI officials received the Certificates of Appreciation during the 113th Foundation Day Celebrations:

Dr.R.Arunkumar,SS	Smt.R.Mahalakshmi, LDC
Dr.Pooja,SS	Sh.S.Shanmugam, SSS
Smt.P.Amshaveni, TO	Sh.M.Subramanian, SSS
Sh.Malakappa B Medegar, ST	Smt. Eswari, SSS



Dr Major Singh speaking at the Foundation day Celebrations



ICAR-SBI provided teaching and learning aids to the Government Adi Dravidar Welfare Primary School located at Sankarayapuram village in Kinathukadavu Taluk of Coimbatore district under DAPSC (Development Action Plan for Scheduled Caste) programme. Dr. P. Govindaraj, Director, ICAR-SBI distributed the goods and delivered the Chief guest address wherein he expressed hope that this material supplied under DAPSC would improve the teaching and learning environment of the school. Dr. A. Anna Durai, Dr. R. Arunkumar, Dr. P.T. Prathima and several ICAR-SBI staff interacted with the students.



Director, ICAR-SBI distributing learning aids to school children

Vigilance Awareness Week at ICAR – Sugarcane Breeding Institute!

ICAR- Sugarcane Breeding Institute observed the Vigilance Awareness Week during 28 October - 3 November, 2024 under the theme 'Culture of Integrity for Nation's Prosperity'. The observance of Vigilance Awareness Week, commenced with the taking of integrity pledge by the Institute staff on 28 October 2024. A rally was taken up and a vendor meet was organized at the Institute to sensitize the employees and other stakeholders on the theme.

Vigilance Awareness Quiz: As part of Vigilance Awareness Week, a 'Vigilance Awareness Quiz' for the contractual staff of the Institute was conducted. The competition was hosted by Dr. D. Puthira Prathap, Principal Scientist, who served as the Quiz Master. Participants answered questions with enthusiasm, including those on the expansion of BNS and the committee responsible for appointing the Central Vigilance Commissioner. However, more challenging questions—such as identifying the ministry that oversees the CVC and the protocol for handling anonymous or pseudonymous complaints—were answered incorrectly by many. After a closely contested final round, Team Pristine Cultivators secured first place. The event was observed by Dr. A. Ramesh Sundar, Head, Division of Crop Protection, and Dr. V. Jayakumar, Principal Scientist and Vigilance Officer. Dr. R. Gobi and Dr. Kona Praveen served as scorers, while Shri K. Kaverinathan and Shri S. Mutharasu performed timekeeping duties.

Shri. C. Mohan Gopu IRS., Additional Commissioner, CGST, Govt. of India, Coimbatore participated as the Chief Guest of the Valedictory of Observance of 'Vigilance Awareness Week'.



Shri C Mohan Gopu, IRS., addressing the staff during the Vigilance Awareness Week



Vigilance Awareness Quiz in Progress

- ICAR-Sugarcane Breeding Institute (ICAR-SBI) organized World Soil Day lecture by Dr G. Byju, Director, ICAR-Central Tuber Crops Research Institute, Thiruvananthapuram on "Role of Plant Nutrition in Food Security - Achievements, Aspirations and Action Plan" on 29 November 2024 at the Institute.
- ICAR-SBI conducted an Essay Competition for the first- and second-year students of BSc (Agriculture) course of Kumaraguru Institute of Agriculture (KIA), Erode District, Tamil Nadu, to create awareness on soil health and related issues on 23.11.24

Technology commercialization

- An MoU was signed for Licensing of Liquid Jaggery Production technology to M/s Kalai Exim, Tindivanam, Villupuram District on 19th November 2024
- An MoU was signed for Transfer of *Cotesia flavipes* and *Telenomus dignus* multiplication technology against internode borer to Bannari Amman Sugars Ltd., Sathyamangalam, Erode on 22.11.2024

Awards and Recognitions

- Sir TS Venkatraman Award for Outstanding Research in Sugarcane was conferred on Dr. C. Sankaranarayanan, Principal Scientist.
- Sir TS Venkatraman Award for Best Thesis was conferred on Dr.M.Nandakumar, Research Associate, Ganga Hospital, Coimbatore, a student of ICAR-SBI
- Dr. A. Suganya, PS and Dr.R. Karuppaiyan, PS received the Fellow Awards from the Society for Sugarcane Research & Development (SSRD), Coimbatore.
- Dr.V.Krishnapriya, Scientist, received the R.H.Dastur Gold Medal Award 2024 for outstanding contributions in the field of plant physiology & Cognate sciences, conferred by the /Indian society for Plant Physiology on 17 December 2024.
- Dr. S. Alarmelu, PS received the Best researcher award 2024 from Society for Sugarcane Research & Development (SSRD), Coimbatore.



Dr C Sankaranarayanan receiving the Sir TS Venkataraman award

Media efforts

ICAR-SBI has been organizing the 'Farm School on AIR (FSA)' on 'Sugarcane farming for prosperity' (வளமான வாழ்விற்கு கருப்பு சாருப்பு) in Tamil for the benefit of the farmers to gain the latest technical knowledge and information on scientific sugarcane cultivation in collaboration with Akashwani, Coimbatore. The following classes were aired during the period

- Dr. A.Ramesh Sundar, Head, Division of Crop Protection – Integrated Disease Management in Sugarcane (Interview mode) on 2.10.2024
- Dr.B.Singaravelu, PS – Integrated Insect Management in Sugarcane on 9.10.2024
- Dr.D.Puthira Prathap, PS – ICT sources of sugarcane information for sugarcane farmers on 16.10.2024
- Dr P.Murali, PS – Entrepreneurship development in Sugarcane on 23.10.2024
- Dr.A.Vennila, PS & Dr.V.Kasthuri Thilagam, SS delivered a talk on 'Caring for Soil: Measure, Monitor, Manage' which was broadcast on 05 December 2024 through All India Radio, Coimbatore
- ICAR-SBI's message on National Farmers' Day by Dr. P.Govindaraj, the Director, was broadcast through Akashvani, Coimbatore on 23.12.24
- Dr. D.Puthira Prathap, Officer i/c, - Extension-Extension initiatives of ICAR-Sugarcane Breeding Institute, Coimbatore on 9-10-2024

Appointment / Transfer / Retirement

- Ms. N.Deepa appointed to the post of Assistant w.e.f. 13.09.2024
- Ms. K.S.Tharani appointed to the post of Assistant w.e.f. 13.09.2024
- Shri V.Sridhar appointed to the post of Assistant w.e.f. 20.09.2024
- Ms. Sushma Preetha appointed to the post of Assistant w.e.f. 02.12.2024
- Dr.R.Maruthadurai, Senior Scientist (Agricultural Entomology) transferred from ICAR-Central Coastal Agricultural Research Institute, Goa and joined ICAR-SBI, Coimbatore on 04.12.2024
- Dr.E.K.Saneera, Scientist (Agricultural Entomology) transferred from ICAR-Central Plantation Crops Research Institute, Regional Station, Vittal and joined ICAR-SBI, RC, Kannur on 09.12.2024
- Shri P.Ajayan, Private Secretary relieved upon his transfer to ICAR-IIHR, Bengaluru on 04.11.2024
- Dr.B.Mahendran, Scientist (Agricultural Entomology), ICAR-SBI, RC, Kannur transferred to ICAR-Central Plantation Crops Research Institute, Regional Station, Vittal on 06.12.2024
- Sh.R.Selvaraj, Skilled Support Staff, retired on Superannuation on 30.11.2024 (AN).

Trends in India's Sugar Production and Stock Management

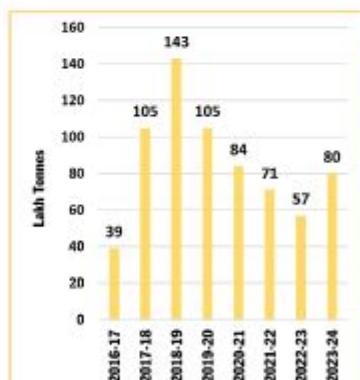
India, the world's second-largest producer of white sugar after Brazil, has seen notable variations in sugar output over the past decade. Production rose rapidly from 20.26 million tonnes in 2016-17 to a record 35.92 million tonnes in 2021-22, mainly due to the adoption of high-yield sugarcane varieties such as Co 0238 and Co 86032, which boosted productivity and recovery rates. However, output slightly declined after 2021-22 because of red rot disease affecting Co 0238 in sub-tropical regions and the growing diversion of sugarcane juice and B-heavy molasses towards ethanol production under India's biofuel policy.

Unlike production, sugar consumption in India has followed a steady upward trend. As consumers and industries shifted from traditional sweeteners like jaggery and khandsari to refined white sugar, demand increased from 244.48 lakh tonnes in 2016-17 to 295 lakh tonnes in 2023-24. Population growth, higher incomes, and expanding food and beverage industries have supported this rise.

Despite occasional production-consumption imbalances, India avoided supply shortages and price surges due to substantial carry-over stocks that stabilized availability and prices. The sugar sector remains influenced by varietal innovation, disease management, ethanol blending policies, and careful stock regulation, ensuring continued market resilience and stability as clean energy goals advance.



Sugar Production in India



Carry-over sugar stock in Domestic Market

P. Murali, P. Jagadeshwaran and D Puthira Prathap

Heritage Corner

Weather at ICAR - Sugarcane Breeding Institute : 106 years ago!

4. Weather.—The season during the year was particularly abnormal. Though the total quantity of rain received during the year was 7" more than the average it was badly distributed. The severe drought prevalent at the beginning of the official year was followed by a heavy precipitation of 6.54" in May, which destroyed most of the young cane plants at the Vedapatti area. This was followed by a feeble south-west monsoon which, setting in a month earlier than usual, ultimately failed. A period of drought was experienced till October and November when 5.64" and 18.63" of rain were received. These heavy rains injuriously affected the seed setting of the cholam and the ragi crops on the farm, breached the roads in various places, caused the collapse of the white face walls in well No. 1, delayed the ripening of canes by about four weeks, and greatly delayed and lessened the flowering of canes at the station. A bad attack of shoot-borers was experienced during the year, probably because of the abnormal weather conditions.

Source: Administration report of the Government Sugarcane Expert for the year 1918-19

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