Factors Sustaining a Growing Louisiana Sugar Industry

Kenneth Gravois
Louisiana State University
Agricultural Center
Road to Expansion

Commodity Prices

Weather

Hurricane, flooding and freezes

Price

Better products

Crop Insurance

Equipment

Coordinated and better

Varieties

Genetics lead the way
Legend
- Green: Parishes with Commercial Sugarcane
- White: LA Parishes

PARISHES PRODUCING SUGARCANE
1. Acadia
2. Ascension
3. Assumption
4. Avoyelles
5. Calcasieu
6. Cameron
7. Concordia
8. Evangeline
9. Iberia
10. Iberville
11. Jefferson Davis
12. Lafayette
13. Lafourche
14. Pointe Coupee
15. Rapides
16. St. Charles
17. St. James
18. St. John
19. St. Landry
20. St. Martin
21. St. Mary
22. Terrebonne
23. Vermilion
24. West Baton Rouge
### Louisiana Sugarcane Acreage

![Sugarcane Field](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Acres x 1,000</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>408</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
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<td>2016</td>
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<td>2017</td>
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<td>2018</td>
<td>459</td>
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<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>496</td>
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Weather
August 18, 2016 14-Day Observed Precipitation
Created on: August 19, 2016 - 12:44 UTC
Valid on: August 18, 2016 12:00 UTC
Hurricane Season 2020
Graphic by Dan Swenson
Why is the sugarcane acreage in Louisiana increasing?

• Sugarcane is a resilient crop for a harsh climate
Commodity Prices
Historical U.S. Soybean Prices
2000-2019

Source: NASS, USDA.
Need a good picture

Decent & Stable
Sugar Price
Sugarcane APH Crop Insurance Evaluation Tool for the 2021 CY

Dr. Michael A. Deliberto
Louisiana State University Agricultural Center
Department of Agricultural Economics & Agribusiness
Seed Cane

Water Level

Newly Planted
Harvest Groups
Breeding new sugarcane varieties with enhanced ratooning ability

KA Gravois¹, MM Zhou², HP Hoffmann³, G Piperidis⁴ and G Badaloo⁵
Who doesn’t like improved stubbling ability?

Ho 07-613 vs L 01-283
# Crop Cycles for Different Countries

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
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<th>Third and Older Stubble</th>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>Average crop cycle length is 12 years.</td>
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<td>Varieties that cannot make 10 ratoon crops are not preferred by growers.</td>
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Factors Affecting Stubbleing Ability

- Manual vs. Mechanized Harvest
Factors Affecting Stubbling Ability

- Variety Factor
Breeding Sugarcane for Better Yield and Longer Crop Cycles
Some Facts about Breeding Programs

• The goal of sugarcane breeding programs is to improve yield, protect yield, and solve problems.

• New varieties are outliers, anomalies, genetic exceptions, rogue.

• Selection, within the framework of a variety development program, is the intentional pursuit of the exception.
Breeding Strategies

- Introgression (Basic Breeding)
  - The value of the basic breeding program to Louisiana cannot be overstated.
  - How do we leverage the basic breeding programs for future success?
53 Years of Sugarcane Yields in Louisiana

Year
- 1967
- 1972
- 1977
- 1982
- 1987
- 1992
- 1997
- 2002
- 2007
- 2012
- 2017
- 2022

Sugar Yield (lbs./acre)
- CP 52-68
- CP 65-357
- CP 70-321
- LCP 85-384
- HoCP 96-540
- L 01-299

[Graph showing sugar yield trends over years for different sugarcane varieties]
Final Thoughts

What gives growers confidence to expand acreage?

- Good varieties
- Good price
- Institutions in place to keep it going