MAURITIUS SUGAR INDUSTRY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

3 December 2008

SUGAR CANE CROP 2008

Status: End November 2008

1. CLIMATE

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

The island's average rainfall over the sugar cane areas for November was 164 mm and represented 198% of the long term mean (83 mm). Rainfall recorded was above the long-term mean in all sectors, with 57 mm, 200 mm, 236 mm, 76 mm and 154 mm in the North, East, South, West and Centre respectively. These amounts represented 121%, 233%, 215%, 245% and 147% of the respective long-term mean.

Cumulative rainfall for October and November 2008 amounted to 231 mm for the island, i.e. 148% of the long-term mean of 156 mm. During the same period, 86 mm were recorded in the North, 282 mm in the East, 325 mm in the South, 84 mm in the West and 242 mm in the Centre. These cumulated rainfall represented 98%, 176%, 158%, 171% and 117% of the respective long-term mean.

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

	North	East	South	West	Centre	Island
2008	35 *(74)*	69 *(80)*	49 *(45)*	14 *(45)*	56 *(53)*	49 *(59)*
2009	**57** *(121)*	**200** *(233)*	**236** *(215)*	**76** *(245)*	**154** *(147)*	**164** *(198)*
LTM	47	86	110	31	105	83

* figures in brackets are % of LTM

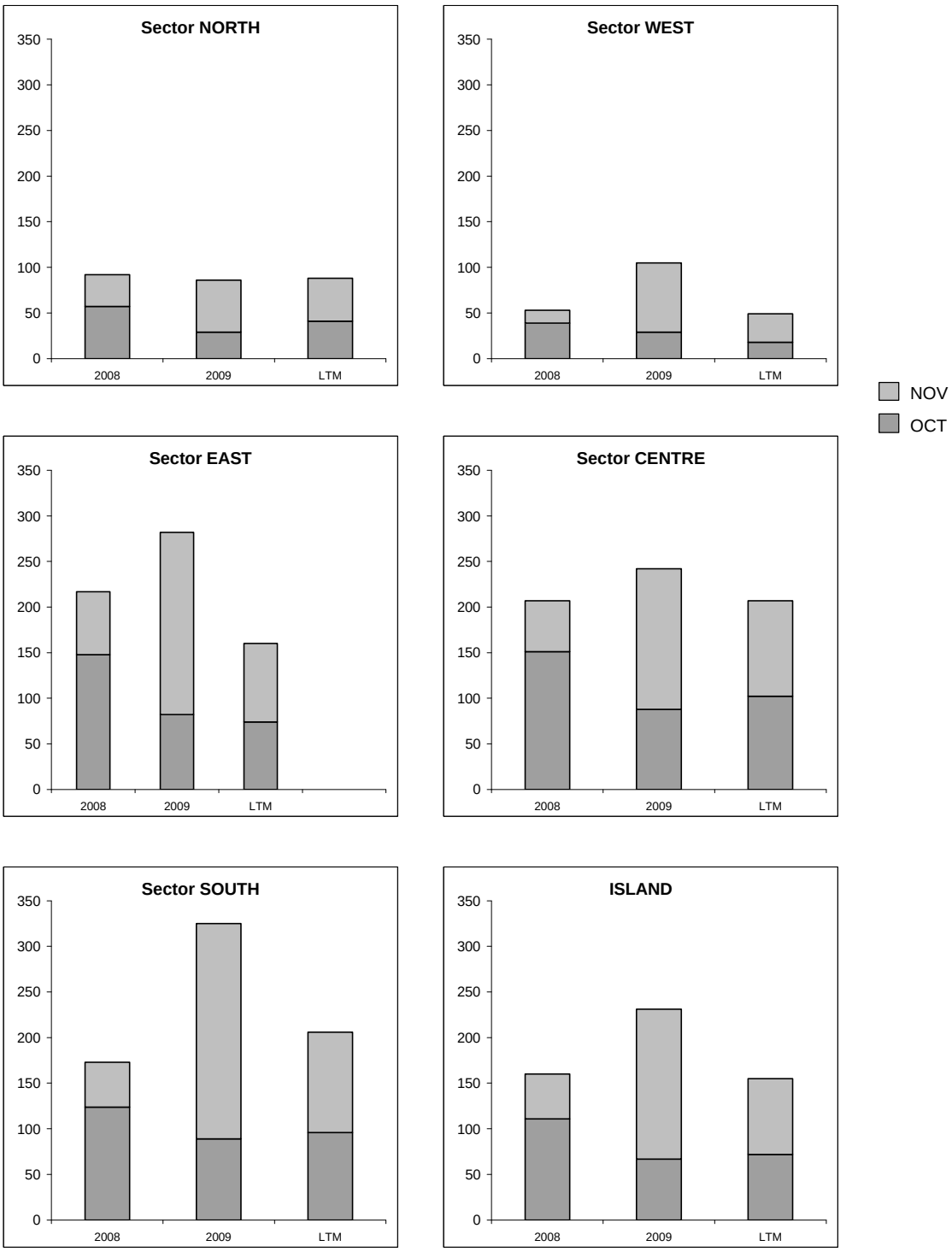
Table 1b Cumulative rainfall (mm) from October to November 2008 for crop 2009 compared to that of crop 2008 and the long term mean (LTM)

	North	East	South	West	Centre	Island
2008	92 *(105)*	217 *(136)*	173 *(84)*	53 *(108)*	207 *(100)*	160 *(103)*
2009	**86** *(98)*	**282** *(176)*	**325** *(158)*	**84** *(171)*	**242** *(117)*	**231** *(148)*
LTM	88	160	206	49	207	156

* figures in brackets are % of LTM

[Source : raw provisional data from Meteorological Services]

Figure 1 Monthly rainfall (mm) for the period October to November 2008 for the 2009 crop compared to the corresponding period of the long term mean (LTM) and of the 2008 crop



2. CROP 2008

As at 22 November 2008, about 84% (29 380 ha) of miller-planters' land had been harvested compared with 93% (33 158 ha) at the corresponding period last year. Sector-wise and again for miller-planters only, harvest reached 71% in the North, 86% in the East, 91% in the South, 79% in the West and 81% in the Centre. An analysis of cane and sugar productivity based on harvest statistics for miller-planters is given below. However, it should be noted that following centralization of milling activities and the transfer of canes from one factory area to another, the comparisons made are not strictly comparable with those of 2007 except for the West and South sectors where data for the same factory areas are presented. Since all the cane from the Centre sector is being sent to the East, harvest statistics in terms of extraction rate and sugar productivity have been combined for these two sectors. In the case of the North sector, part of the cane is being sent to FUEL.

2.1 Cane productivity (Table 2)

Cane productivity for the island as at 22 November 2008 amounted to 79.5 TCH compared to 72.4 TCH in 2007. Sector-wise to-date, the best cane productivity was again recorded in the West with 88.8 TCH, followed by the South (83.0 TCH), the East (77.0 TCH), the Centre (75.4 TCH) and the North (71.6 TCH). Cane productivity to-date is higher in all sectors when compared to the corresponding period in 2007, the advantage being 10.0 TCH in the North, 9.6 TCH in the East, 3.6 TCH in the South, 5.4 TCH in the West and 8.3 TCH in the Centre.

Table 2. Cane productivity (TCH) as at end October and November for the 2007 and 2008 crops

	End October		End November	
Sectors	**2007**	**2008**	**2007**	**2008**
North	60.4	70.0	61.6	71.6
East	66.8	77.0	67.4	77.0
South	79.4	83.3	79.4	83.0
West	82.3	89.1	83.4	88.8
Centre	68.8	79.5	67.1	75.4
Island	**71.9**	**79.8**	**72.4**	**79.5**

2.2 Extraction (Table 3 and Figure 2)

The recorded island extraction rate of 9.97% was lower than that of the corresponding period in 2007 (10.30%). Sector-wise, extraction rates recorded until 22 November 2008 were 10.47% in the West followed by 10.21% in the East/Centre, 9.85% in the South and 9.42% in the North. Compared with the corresponding period last year, extraction rate till 22 November 2008 was lagging by 0.27^{o} in the North, 0.26^{o} in the East/Centre, 0.17^{o} in the South and 0.39^{o} in the West.

Since end October, an increase of 0.08^{o} in extraction rate has been recorded for the island this year compared to 0.05^{o} over the same period last year.

Figure 2. Evolution of extraction rate (%) for the 2007 and 2008 crops

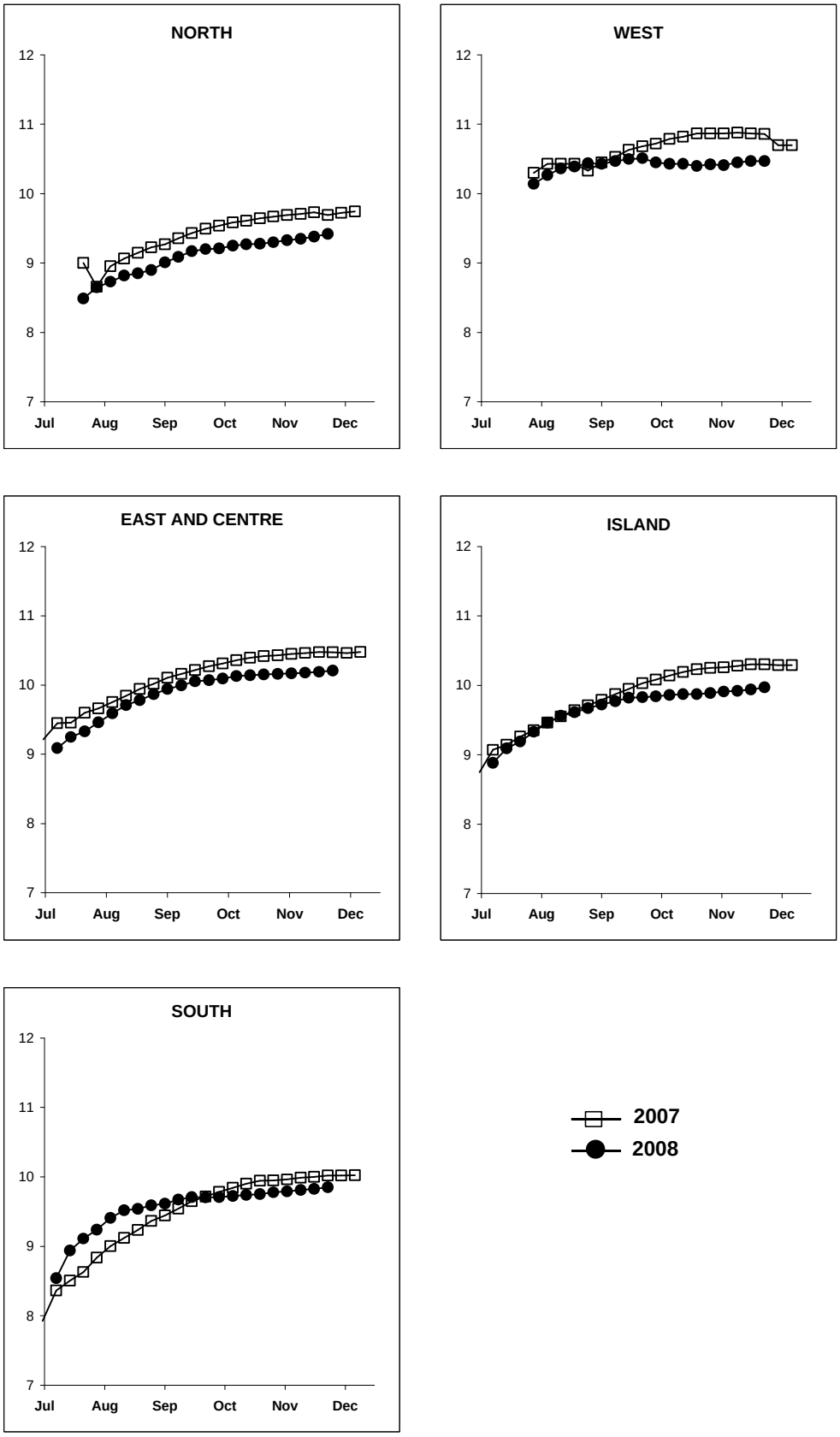


Table 3. Extraction rate (%) as at end October and November for the 2007 and 2008 crops

	End October		End November	
Sectors	**2007**	**2008**	**2007**	**2008**
North	9.67	9.30	9.69	9.42
East /Centre	10.43	10.16	10.47	10.21
South	9.95	9.78	10.02	9.85
West	10.87	10.42	10.86	10.47
Island	**10.25**	**9.89**	**10.30**	**9.97**

2.3 Sugar productivity (Table 4)

Island-wise, the recorded sugar productivity of 7.93 TSH for this year was higher than that of the corresponding period in 2007 (7.46 TSH) by 6.3%. Sector-wise sugar productivity was 6.74 TSH in the North, 7.82 TSH in the East/Centre, 8.18 TSH in the South and 9.30 TSH in the West. Sugar productivity was higher than that of the corresponding period last year in all sectors with an increase of 0.77 TSH in the North and the East/Centre, 0.22 TSH in the South and 0.24 TSH in the West.

Table 4. Sugar productivity (TSH) as at end October and November for the 2007 and 2008 crops

	End October		End November	
Sectors	**2007**	**2008**	**2007**	**2008**
North	5.84	6.51	5.97	6.74
East /Centre	7.01	7.88	7.05	7.82
South	7.90	8.15	7.96	8.18
West	8.95	9.28	9.06	9.30
Island	**7.37**	**7.89**	**7.46**	**7.93**

3. CROP ESTIMATE

The generally rainy weather experienced during the month of November had prevented cane desiccation but had hampered ripening. No major change has been observed in cane productivity apart from a slight drop in the Centre and a slight increase in extraction. Thus sugar productivity progressed only marginally, by 0.04 TSH since end-October. This trend is expected to maintain itself until the end of the crop season with sugar production close to the estimated 460 000 tonnes.

4. CROP 2009

Weather since the start of the crop season has been generally favourable for good regrowth of harvested fields. The rainfall recorded, particularly during September and November coupled

with overall higher temperatures and a good solar radiation regime have been very beneficial to the crop. However, in the North and West, water requirements of all crops have definitely not been met except for areas provided with sufficient irrigation. Taking into consideration that cumulative rainfall recorded to-date is above the long-term mean in all sectors except for the North, the initial conditions for the 2009 crop are considered to be better than those of last year.