

ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF LOUISIANA SUGARCANE PRODUCTION IN 2020

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Overview

In 2020, sugarcane was grown on 496,258 acres in 24 Louisiana parishes. An estimated 461,520 acres were available for harvest for sugar, assuming that nine percent of the total acres were used for seed cane. The 11 operating raw sugar factories in the state processed 16,600,000 tons of cane, which was a significant increase from the 13,588,003 million tons of cane processed in 2019. In total, the 11 factories produced 1.927 million short tons of sugar (96° pol), a 28% increase in the amount of sugar produced. The average sugar recovery at the 11 raw sugar factories was 232 pounds of sugar (96° pol) per ton of cane. The average yield of cane produced from each harvested acre amounted to 35.97 tons per acre. The yield of commercially recoverable sugar produced per harvested acre was approximately 8,352 pounds.

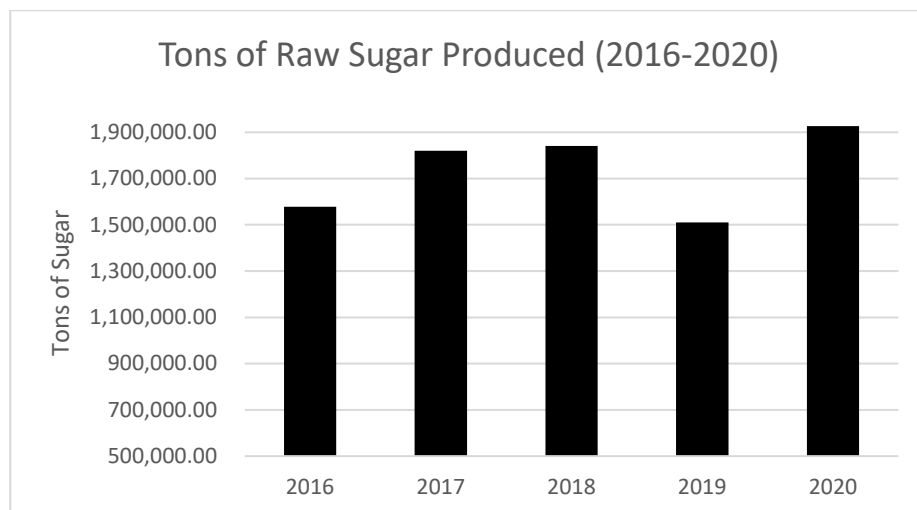
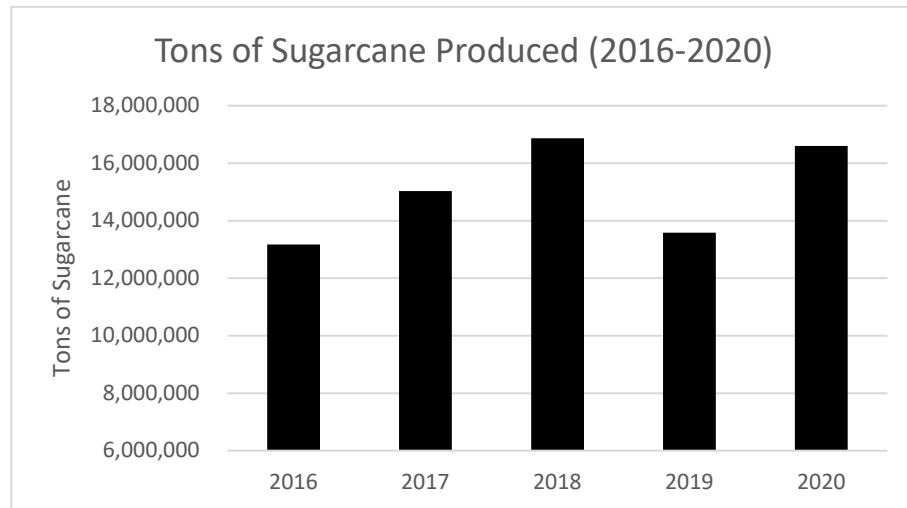
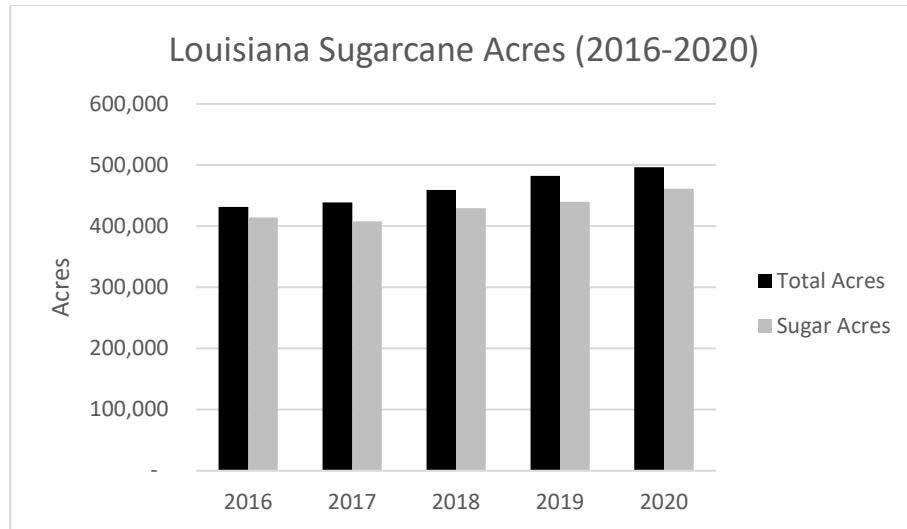
Louisiana's Rank in Total U.S. Sugar Production

Refined white sugar in the United States is produced from two sources. Sugarbeets are processed directly into refined sugar, while sugarcane is first processed into raw sugar before being refined into white sugar. In 2019/20, 53.39 percent of total U.S. sugar production came from sugar beets and 46.60 percent came from sugarcane. For the 2019/20 fiscal year, Louisiana accounted for approximately 41.33 percent of total U.S. cane sugar production and 19.21 percent of total U.S. sugar production.

U.S. Sugar Production, 2019/20 and 2020/21

	2019/20	2020/21
	(1,000 short tons, raw value)	(1,000 short tons, raw value)
Beet sugar production	4,351	5,401
Cane sugar production	3,798	4,041
Florida	2,106	2,005
Louisiana	1,566	1,906
Texas	126	130
Total U.S. sugar production	8,149	9,442

Source: World Agricultural Outlook Board, U.S. Department of Agriculture, WASDE 621-16, February 2022.



2020 Louisiana Agricultural Summary Data for Sugarcane

Parish	Sugarcane Products	Total Producers	Units of Production (Yield per acre)	Total Production	Total Acres	Total Crop Value ¹
Acadia	Raw sugar (lbs)	*	7,000	38,164,000	5,800	\$11,056,822
	Molasses (gal)		153	836,238		
Ascension	Raw sugar (lbs)	10	8,350	140,792,690	17,938	\$40,790,265
	Molasses (gal)		183	3,085,007		
Assumption	Raw sugar (lbs)	34	8,550	265,198,770	32,997	\$76,833,024
	Molasses (gal)		187	5,810,955		
Avoyelles	Raw sugar (lbs)	22	8,000	138,522,400	18,421	\$40,132,520
	Molasses (gal)		175	3,035,261		
Calcasieu	Raw sugar (lbs)	*	6,300	651,420	*	\$188,729
	Molasses (gal)		138	14,274		
Cameron	Raw sugar (lbs)	*	*	*	*	*
	Molasses (gal)		*	*		
Concordia	Raw sugar (lbs)	*	*	*	*	*
	Molasses (gal)		*	*		
Evangeline	Raw sugar (lbs)	*	8,000	7,535,200	*	\$2,183,088
	Molasses (gal)		175	165,109		
Iberia	Raw sugar (lbs)	84	8,135	431,346,173	56,408	\$124,969,021
	Molasses (gal)		178	9,451,528		
Iberville	Raw sugar (lbs)	30	8,125	296,296,813	38,795	\$85,842,706
	Molasses (gal)		178	6,492,367		
Jefferson Davis	Raw sugar (lbs)	*	7,100	4,691,680	*	\$1,359,267
	Molasses (gal)		156	102,803		
Lafayette	Raw sugar (lbs)	13	8,210	67,187,356	8,706	\$19,465,429
	Molasses (gal)		180	1,472,189		
Lafourche	Raw sugar (lbs)	20	8,350	194,920,730	24,834	\$56,472,166
	Molasses (gal)		183	4,271,044		
Pointe Coupee	Raw sugar (lbs)	48	9,018	562,480,616	66,354	\$162,961,112
	Molasses (gal)		198	12,324,907		
Rapides	Raw sugar (lbs)	17	8,000	142,428,800	18,940	\$41,264,276
	Molasses (gal)		175	3,120,857		
St. Charles	Raw sugar (lbs)	*	8,350	10,044,215	1,280	\$2,909,996
	Molasses (gal)		183	220,086		
St. James	Raw sugar (lbs)	22	8,350	198,590,555	25,301	\$57,535,383
	Molasses (gal)		183	4,351,457		
St. John	Raw sugar (lbs)	*	8,350	50,499,130	6,434	\$14,630,539
	Molasses (gal)		183	1,106,522		
St. Landry	Raw sugar (lbs)	25	7,900	189,707,440	25,546	\$54,961,779
	Molasses (gal)		173	4,156,813		
St. Martin	Raw sugar (lbs)	19	7,900	236,950,230	31,908	\$68,648,895
	Molasses (gal)		173	5,191,982		
St. Mary	Raw sugar (lbs)	24	7,900	340,219,820	45,815	\$98,568,019
	Molasses (gal)		173	7,454,795		
Terrebonne	Raw sugar (lbs)	*	8,350	65,544,160	8,351	\$18,989,364
	Molasses (gal)		183	1,436,184		
Vermilion	Raw sugar (lbs)	41	8,150	345,718,110	45,127	\$100,160,976
	Molasses (gal)		179	7,575,272		
West Baton Rouge	Raw sugar (lbs)	15	8,800	126,174,400	15,253	\$36,555,074
	Molasses (gal)		193	2,764,696		
Total Sugarcane Crop Value ¹						\$1,116,478,450

¹Total Sugar Value (Raw + Molasses)

SUGARCANE SUMMARY FOR CROP YEAR 2020

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In 2020, sugarcane was grown on 496,258 acres in 24 Louisiana parishes. An estimated 461,520 acres were available for harvest for sugar. The 11 operating raw sugar factories in the state processed 16,600,000 tons of sugarcane. In total, the 11 factories produced 1.927 million short tons of sugar (96° pol). The average yield of cane produced from each harvested acre amounted to 36.0 tons/acre. The average sugar recovery at the 11 raw sugar factories was 11.65 percent or 233 pounds of sugar (96° pol) per ton of cane. The yield of commercially recoverable sugar produced per harvested acre was approximately 8,352 pounds.

Although the pricing period is not complete for the 2020 crop, the average predicted price for raw sugar is \$0.273 per pound. Molasses price is estimated at \$130 per short ton at 79.5° Brix.

The gross farm value of the 2020 sugarcane crop was \$663 million for sugar and molasses. The gross farm value represents 60 percent of the value of the sugar and 50 percent of the value of molasses produced. The remaining percentages are for processing and marketing, which amounted to \$452.6 million. Total value of the sugarcane crop to Louisiana producers, processors, and landlords at the first processing level was \$1,116 million.

The 2020 sugarcane crop had an early spring start due to warm February temperatures. Much of the 2019 harvest season was dry, which had a beneficial effect for the next growing season in 2020. Rainfall was near average throughout the growing season (Tables 1-3). Many would describe 2020 as nearly ideal growing conditions.

Sugarcane brown rust levels were moderate because of the mild 2019-20 winter. Fungicide usage in 2019 was moderate, mainly applied to HoCP 96-540 and L 01-283. Brown stripe disease and other cool weather stressors were a problem early in the season for L 01-299, with seed cane fields affected the worse. Other varieties were affected, but not to the extent of L 01-299. As spring temperature warmed, the crop grew out of these stresses. The mild winter also increased infestations of the West Indian cane fly and sugarcane borer. Populations of the Mexican rice borer continued to move eastward, with some insecticide applications being used for its control.

Summer growth was good, and the planting season began in late July because of excellent growing conditions. About 85% of the fallow fields were planted before the arrival of Hurricane Laura, which made landfall on August 26, 2021 south of Lake Charles. Much of the sugarcane acreage in the western and northern most parishes lodged because of high rainfall and winds. Some of the remaining fallow ground was planted with billets. Sugarcane growth was especially good during September and early October because of warm summer-like temperatures.

Other tropical systems affected the Louisiana sugarcane harvest. Hurricane Sally made landfall near Mobile on September 16, 2020. The earlier projected path was more westward, which caused some raw sugar factories to delay the start of the grinding season. Hurricane Delta made landfall on October 9, 2020, once again forcing some raw sugar factories to stop processing. Hurricane Zeta made landfall in Terrebonne parish on October 28, 2020, again forcing some factories to stop processing yet again. Although the crop lodged because of these tropical systems, early-season harvest weather was dry, allowing for harvest in heavy clay areas.

Harvest began on September 16, 2020 at the Alma mill and concluded at LASUCA raw sugar factory on January 28, 2021. The 2020 harvest was marked by a dry first half and a wetter second half. The Louisiana sugar industry did not experience any severe freezes during the grinding season, which was fortunate because of the very high tonnage crop. Sugar recoveries were moderately high for the 2020 crop. The total amount of sugar produced in 2020 was a record for the Louisiana sugar industry.

The 2020 sugarcane variety census showed that the most widely grown variety was L 01-299, grown on 59 percent of the production acres. This was followed by HoCP 96-540 (12%), L 01-283 (10%), HoCP 09-804 (9%), and HoCP 04-838 (3%). All other varieties each occupied 1% or less of the state's acreage. The two new sugarcane varieties, L 12-201 and Ho 12-615, that were released to sugarcane growers in 2019 were expanded during the 2020 planting season. In the spring of 2020, sugarcane variety Ho 13-739 was released to Louisiana sugarcane growers. Seed cane was made available by the American Sugar Cane League.

Table 1. 2020 monthly weather summary for Baton Rouge from data obtained at Ryan Airport

Month	Maximum Temperature	Minimum Temperature	Average Temperature	High Temperature	High Temp Date	Low Temperature	Low Temp. Date	Monthly Rainfall	Rain Days
January	66	47	56	81	15	30	21	5.17	17
February	67	47	57	80	12	31	22	6.21	13
March	80	61	70	89	28	41	7	2.20	9
April	80	58	69	87	19	43	16	7.23	10
May	85	65	75	91	28	52	11	4.90	9
June	90	71	81	94	19	64	17	8.74	9
July	91	76	83	97	11	72	27	8.91	14
August	93	74	84	97	16	69	22	4.61	9
September	87	70	79	97	4	50	30	1.81	7
October	82	61	72	90	7	44	31	9.93	5
November	75	52	64	83	14	34	30	3.99	7
December	65	41	53	76	31	29	26	4.21	11
Annual	80	60	70	97		29		67.91	120

Table 2. 2020 monthly weather summary for New Orleans from data obtained at the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport

Month	Maximum Temperature	Minimum Temperature	Average Temperature	High Temperature	High Temp Date	Low Temperature	Low Temp Date	Monthly Rainfall	Rain Days
January	67	53	60	82	14	39	21	4.41	12
February	70	52	61	81	18	37	7	3.94	9
March	81	65	73	89	25	45	1	1.06	9
April	81	64	73	90	9	53	2	5.41	10
May	86	70	78	93	30	56	11	8.36	10
June	91	77	84	95	30	71	17	10.16	12
July	93	79	86	99	13	75	15	15.22	17
August	92	76	84	98	4	73	22	6.28	17
September	86	73	80	96	5	56	30	1.78	9
October	82	66	74	89	12	52	31	4.68	5
November	75	59	67	83	15	45	30	6.39	8
December	66	47	57	79	30	35	26	4.06	10
Annual	81	65	73	99		35		71.75	128

Table 3. 2020 monthly weather summary for Lafayette from data obtained at the Lafayette Regional Airport

Month	Maximum Temperature	Minimum Temperature	Average Temperature	High Temperature	High Temp Date	Low Temperature	Low Temp Date	Monthly Rainfall	Rain Days
January	66	48	57	79	15	33	21	6.46	13
February	66	47	57	78	18	32	22	3.71	13
March	78	62	70	86	25	41	7	3.09	9
April	80	58	69	88	9	43	16	3.85	12
May	84	66	75	89	30	54	11	8.17	11
June	90	72	81	94	21	64	13	4.98	10
July	91	76	83	97	11	72	4	7.68	14
August	93	74	84	98	15	68	21	11.67	11
September	87	71	79	95	5	53	30	4.79	7
October	81	61	71	88	12	45	31	5.26	5
November	75	53	64	84	11	35	30	3.8	7
December	64	43	54	75	31	30	1	4.15	11
Annual	80	61	70	98		30		67.61	123