



World Association of Beet and Cane Growers



NEWS FROM WABCG

EDITORIAL

In few days we will all meet together in Europe, together with the International Sugar Organisation, for our annual autumn meeting in the United Kingdom.

Registration is still open, and you are already 85 participants from 22 countries to have reserved their place: I look forward to welcoming you to London on 25 November!



By attending our meeting, often after a long journey, you are showing your attachment to the WABCG, and to what the spirit of this association is all about:

being part of a family, that of independent sugar beet and sugar cane growers from all over the world.

But, by attending this meeting, you are also showing your interest in learning, and learning again, from experts. Expertise that we all have in our sector, but also expertise that we need to learn from the others.

This year, we will have three economists from the ISO and four renowned analysts who will tell us about the world sugar situation. And this is also another mission of our association, we try to share our knowledge and learn from each other – and from experts.

And I am really pleased to see that the rigour of WABCG studies has once again been recognised, with the publication of our 'Carbon Farming' study in this month's Sugar Industry International – so read it, if you haven't already!

See you soon in London!

**David Thompson, President
WABCG**

NOVEMBER 2024

Few days left to register!

WABCG/ISO Consultation

25 November 2024

London, United-Kingdom



Read our latest study!

'Carbon farming': what are the challenges for sugar beet and sugar cane growers?

Farmers are fully aware of climate change: they are the first to suffer its effects. As citizens and producers, they are also mindful that they have a role in reducing their greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions. To this end, an increasing number of agricultural practices aimed at reducing these emissions or storing carbon have been identified and recently grouped under the term 'carbon farming'. Through this survey of 21 members, the World Association of Sugar Beet and Cane Growers (WABCG) sheds light on its vision of carbon farming. What techniques are available? What funding is available? What are the hopes and fears of independent growers? 'Carbon farming' is gaining traction amongst sugar beet and cane growers because it is perceived as a potential source of additional income for the grower. With a few exceptions, this rarely proves to be the case, especially as there seems to be a movement afoot to implement certain crop production practices compulsory (not just legally but also commercially). Yet these practices come with costs, not only in terms of production, but also reduced productivity, impacting competitiveness.

Sugar Industry

'Carbon farming': what are the challenges for sugar beet and sugarcane growers?

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Abstract: Farmers are fully aware of climate change: they are the first to suffer its effects. As citizens and producers, they are also mindful that they have a role in reducing their greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions. To this end, an increasing number of agricultural practices aimed at reducing these emissions or storing carbon have been identified and recently grouped under the term 'carbon farming'. Through this survey of 21 members, the World Association of Sugar Beet and Cane Growers (WABCG) sheds light on its vision of carbon farming. What techniques are available? What funding is available? What are the hopes and fears of independent growers? 'Carbon farming' is gaining traction amongst

sugar beet and cane growers because it is perceived as a potential source of additional income for the grower. With a few exceptions, this rarely proves to be the case, especially as there seems to be a movement afoot to implement certain crop production practices compulsory (not just legally but also commercially). Yet these practices come with costs, not only in terms of production, but also reduced productivity, impacting competitiveness.

1 Introduction: what is 'Carbon Farming' and why are growers interested?

1.1 'Carbon Farming': definition and scope of the study

Agriculture is perceived as a source, a sink, and a sink to greenhouse gases (GHG). On the one hand, the GHG emissions from the production of agricultural products are a source of GHG emissions. On the other hand, the agricultural practices aimed at reducing these emissions or storing carbon have been identified and recently grouped under the term 'carbon farming'. Through this survey of 21 members, the World Association of Sugar Beet and Cane Growers (WABCG) sheds light on its vision of carbon farming. What techniques are available? What funding is available? What are the hopes and fears of independent growers? 'Carbon farming' is gaining traction amongst

1.2 Why are growers' associations interested in 'Carbon Farming'?

Associations are interested in carbon farming, according to their members' requests. This interest is linked to the fact that carbon farming is perceived as a potential source of additional income for the grower. With a few exceptions, this rarely proves to be the case, especially as there seems to be a movement afoot to implement certain crop production practices compulsory (not just legally but also commercially). Yet these practices come with costs, not only in terms of production, but also reduced productivity, impacting competitiveness.

2 Technical premises: how can growers reduce their emissions & how much carbon can be stored?

Members have already identified which practices can be implemented to store and sequester carbon in the soil and in the plants.



World Association of
Beet and Cane Growers



NEWS FROM UNITED KINGDOM

Following a general election which saw the first change of Government in the UK for 14 years it has been all systems go meeting new and returning beet growing constituency MPs to (re)introduce them to the homegrown sugar beet sector and highlight the continued importance of beet within the wider rotation.



We are urging MPs to support our continued push for clarification of the legislation which underpins NFU Sugar's role to negotiate collectively and oversee beet sampling and testing procedures on behalf of growers. This is to ensure that British Sugar, the sole processor of sugar beet in the UK, isn't able to attempt to circumvent NFU Sugar and the vital role it performs again, as it did in 2023. We are also asking MPs to champion a proportionate, science-based approach to plant protection regulation, ensuring growers retain access to a plant protection toolbox which is fit for purpose. This applies especially to control of Virus Yellows disease which remains the greatest single threat to the UK sugar beet sector as we look ahead to 2025.

The positive news is that we have had a relatively healthy crop to display, and at time of writing there is

optimism regarding yields for 2024/25. Despite high forecast aphid pressure in 2024, Cruiser seed treatment and exceptional weather conditions through Spring have functioned effectively to suppress plant infection. National incidence is estimated to sit between 4-5%. Overall, pest and disease pressure has been low, though a dry summer has left root weights slightly below average.

On another positive note, we are nearing completion of our 2024 Landscape Enterprise Network (LENs) pilot trade. The LENs project represents our first attempt to unlock access to private environmental markets for the benefit of growers. It distributed Nestle funding directly to growers to support fertiliser placement at drilling in Spring this year, delivering carbon reductions both in soil-based emissions and total fertiliser applied, and ultimately production of lower carbon sugar. The ambition is to expand the trade for 2025, encouraging more funders to support a broader range of farming practices which allow growers to improve the environmental footprint of the sugar beet crop. We will continue to explore further opportunities to unlock funding to support growers on their journey towards net zero.



Samuel Williamson, Sugar Adviser
NFU Sugar, United Kingdom



NEWS FROM INDIA

In India, the crushing season 2023-24 started with an opening stock of 4.95 million tonnes of sugar. In 2023-24, the country produced 417.3 million tonnes of sugarcane on an area of 5.56 million hectares.



The sugarcane production decreased by 6.64% as the area under sugarcane in 2023-24 dropped significantly from 5.91 million hectares in 2022-23. Total 534 sugar mills in India produced 32.04 million tonnes of sugar (white value), a drop of 2.33% over previous production of 32.80 million tonnes. In 2024-25, the Indian sugar production has been estimated at 32.30 million tonnes, after the diversion to ethanol production. On an average, India contributes around 17.5 to 18% of world sugar production.

Drop in sugar production was observed in major states viz. Tamil Nadu (26.25%), Haryana (20.27%), Gujarat (8.91%), Karnataka (6.90%) and Punjab (6.06%).

It is expected that the net sugar production will also decline by around 2 million tonnes due to more diversion of B-heavy molasses and sugarcane juice for ethanol production.

The Indian sugar consumption in 2023-24 estimated around 28.15 million tonnes, a rise of 1.65 million tonnes than that of 2022-23. The closing stock of sugar in India would be 7.79 million tonnes for 2023-24.

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