

MAURITIUS CANE INDUSTRY AUTHORITY

MAURITIUS SUGARCANE INDUSTRY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Ref A 1/2024

22 March 2024

SUGAR CANE CROP 2024

Status: February 2024

1. CLIMATE

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

In February 2024, rainfall recorded over the island was 216 mm which represented 64% of the long-term mean (LTM, 336 mm) for the month. Below normal rainfall was recorded in all sectors, particularly in the West with 33 mm and in the North with 88 mm. In the other sectors, rainfall recorded was over 240 mm and can be considered sufficient for the crop water requirement. The passage of tropical cyclone *Eleanor* in the vicinity of the island on 21 February 2024 did not bring much rainfall.

Cumulative rainfall from October 2023 to February 2024 amounted to 1492 mm for the island, i.e. 154% of the LTM. During that period, 824 mm were recorded in the North, 1721 mm in the East, 1866 mm in the South, 839 mm in the West and 1744 mm in the Centre. These figures were higher than their respective LTM in all sectors.

Table 1a. Rainfall (mm) for the month of February for crop 2023, 2024 and the long term mean (LTM)

Crop	North	East	South	West	Centre	Island
2023	30 (14)	156 (39)	181 (48)	138 (68)	257 (61)	143 (43)
2024	88 (40)	242 (61)	303 (81)	33 (16)	315 (75)	216 (64)
LTM	218	400	374	202	420	336

figures in brackets are % of LTM (1991-2020)

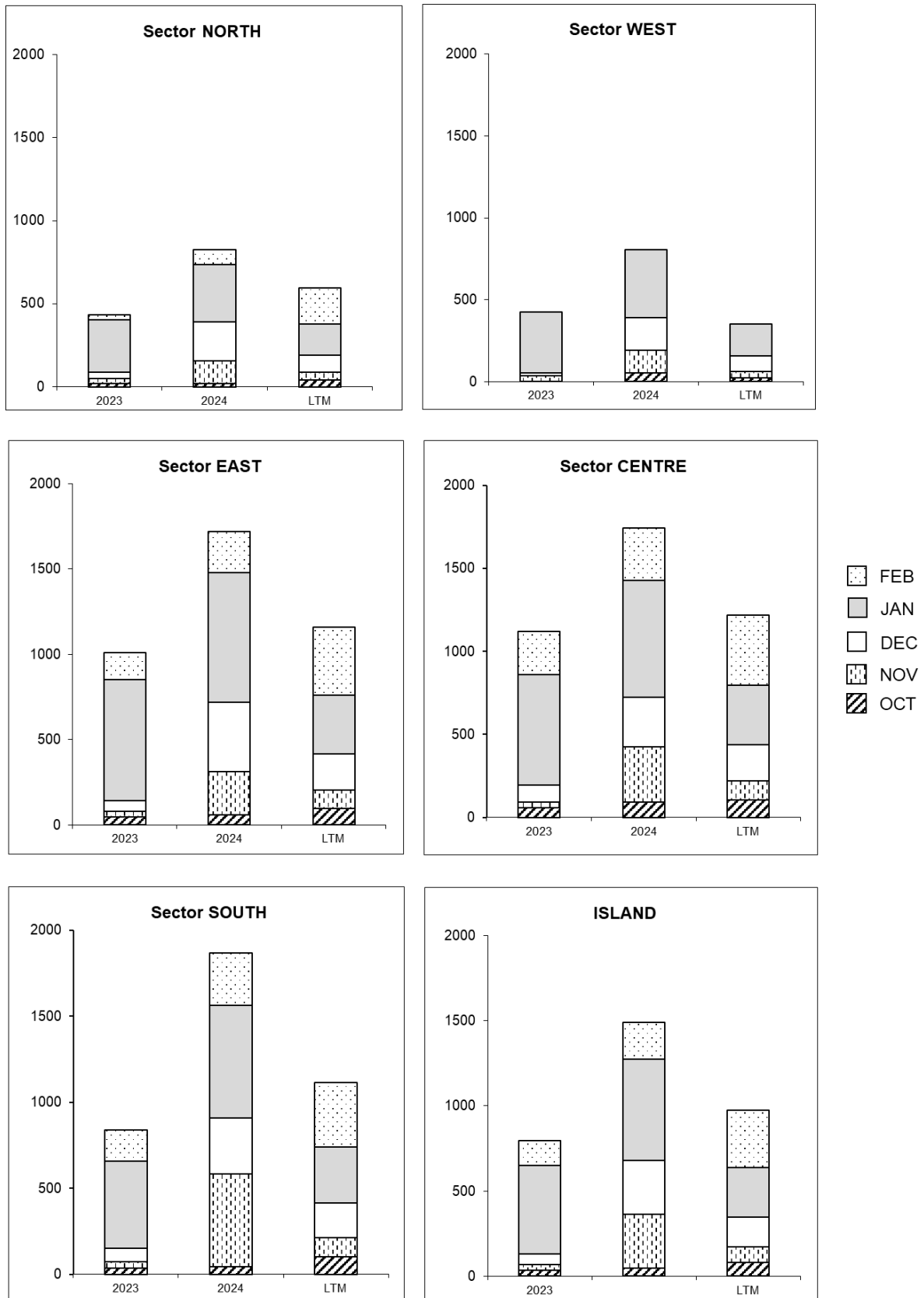
Table 1b. Cumulative rainfall (mm) from October 2023 to February 2024 for crop 2024 compared to that of crop 2023 and the LTM

Crop	North	East	South	West	Centre	Island
2022	433 (73)	1009 (87)	839 (75)	563 (102)	1119 (92)	796 (82)
2023	824 (138)	1721 (148)	1866 (168)	839 (151)	1744 (143)	1492 (154)
LTM	597	1161	1114	554	1217	972

figures in brackets are % of LTM

[Source: Mauritius Meteorological Services]

Figure 1. Monthly rainfall (mm) for the period October 2023 to February 2024 for the 2024 crop compared to the corresponding period of the 2023 crop and to the long term mean (LTM).



1.2 Air Temperature (Table 2)

Data on air temperature and sunshine duration recorded during the month of February 2024 on the MSIRI agro-meteorological stations are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Air temperature and sunshine hours recorded on MSIRI agro-meteorological stations in February 2024

Stations	Maximum (°C)		Minimum (°C)		Sunshine hours	
	Feb 2024	+ / -	Feb 2024	+ / -	Feb 2024	% Normal
Ferret	31.7	+0.6	23.3	+0.6	235	113
Réduit	29.0	+0.4	22.1	+0.3	223	110
Union Park	28.2	+0.2	21.4	+0.2	141	90

+ / - Deviation from the Normal (1991-2020)

The mean maximum and minimum temperatures during February 2024 were above normal at all stations. Moreover, sunshine duration recorded during that period exceeded the normal at Ferret by 13% and Redit by 10%, but was inferior to the normal at Union Park.

2. STALK HEIGHT (Table 3a, 3b and Figure 2)

Measurement of stalk height was carried out during the last week of February 2024 at 61 sites in the five sugar cane sectors of the island. These selected sites are representative of the various agro-climatic zones, different varieties and crop categories. Data collected were compared with that of last two years and the mean of the five best cane yielding crops for the period 2014 to 2023 in each sector (referred to as normal).

2.1 Stalk elongation

Stalk elongation recorded during the month of February 2024 was 34.5 cm in the North, 41.8 cm in the East, 40.7 cm in the South, 27.6 cm in the West and 30.2 cm in the Centre. These growth values were inferior to those recorded at the same period in 2023 in all sectors except in the North. Compared to the normal for the corresponding period, cane growth in February 2024 was lagging behind in all sectors by 14.0 cm in the North, 4.2 cm in the East, 3.8 cm in the South, 18.4 cm in the West and 6.3 cm in the Centre.

Islandwise, the stalk elongation of 37.2 cm in February 2024 was lagging to that of February 2023 by 2.6 cm (7%) and the normal by 8.3 cm (18%).

Table 3a. Stalk elongation during the month of February 2024

Sectors	Stalk elongation (cm)			February 2024 as % of	
	Feb 2024	Feb 2023	Normal	2023	Normal
North	34.5	32.2	48.5	107	71
East	41.8	47.0	46.0	89	91
South	40.7	43.1	44.5	94	91
West	27.6	35.1	46.0	79	60
Centre	30.2	34.0	36.5	89	83
Island	37.2	39.8	45.5	93	82

2.2 Total stalk height

At end-February 2024, cumulative stalk height amounted to 95.8 cm in the North, 113.0 cm in the East, 138.2 cm in the South, 117.3 cm in the West and 91.8 cm in the Centre giving an island average of 115.3 cm. When compared to the corresponding period of last year (2023), stalk height at end of February was higher in all sectors. Cumulative stalk height at end-February 2024 lagged behind the normal in all sectors except in the South. At island level, the cumulative stalk height of 115.3 cm at end-February 2024 was higher than the corresponding period in 2023 by 17% but lagged behind the normal by 7%.

Table 3b. Total stalk height at end-February 2024

Sectors	Stalk height (cm) at end-February			End-February 2024 as % of	
	2024	2023	Normal	2023	Normal
North	95.8	77.1	114.0	124	84
East	113.0	106.4	139.1	106	81
South	138.2	118.7	120.3	116	115
West	117.3	80.4	120.5	146	97
Centre	91.8	86.9	116.6	106	79
Island	115.3	98.5	124.5	117	93

3.0 CROP 2024

Although rainfall during the month of February 2024 was inferior to the normal in all sectors of the island despite passage of the tropical cyclone *Eleanor* during the third week of the month, the amount recorded was enough to satisfy the crop water requirement of the plant. Moreover, the cumulative rainfall recorded during the growth period (October 2023 to February 2024) has been well above the normal throughout the island. Both maximum temperature and sunshine duration during February 2024 were above normal at most stations; these conditions are conducive for stalk elongation. Cumulative stalk height over the island at the end of February 2024 was higher than that of February 2023 by 17% but lagged behind the normal by 7%. The latter may be reversed if favourable climatic conditions prevail during the remaining cane growth season.

Figure 2. Stalk height at end-February 2024

