

MAURITIUS CANE INDUSTRY AUTHORITY

MAURITIUS SUGARCANE INDUSTRY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Ref A 1/2024

15 April 2024

SUGAR CANE CROP 2024

Status: March 2024

1. CLIMATE

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

Rainfall recorded over the sugar cane growing areas of the island during March 2024 was 308 mm which represented 99% of the long-term mean (LTM, 313 mm) for the month. Above normal rainfall was recorded in sectors North and Centre while in the other sectors the amount of rainfall received 96% of the normal in the East, 87 % in the South and 68% in the West. Generally, these rainfall amounts were considered sufficient for the crop water requirement except for the West.

Cumulative rainfall from October 2023 to March 2024 amounted to 1801 mm for the island, i.e. 140% of the LTM. During that period, 1091 mm were recorded in the North, 2089 mm in the East, 2172 mm in the South, 943 mm in the West and 2165 mm in the Centre. These figures were higher than their respective LTM in all sectors.

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

| Crop | North | East | South | West | Centre | Island |
|-------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 2023 | 197 (96) | 399 (104) | 339 (96) | 256 (166) | 443 (118) | 326 (104) |
| 2024 | 267 (130) | 368 (96) | 306 (87) | 104 (68) | 421 (112) | 308 (99) |
| LTM | 206 | 382 | 352 | 154 | 376 | 313 |

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

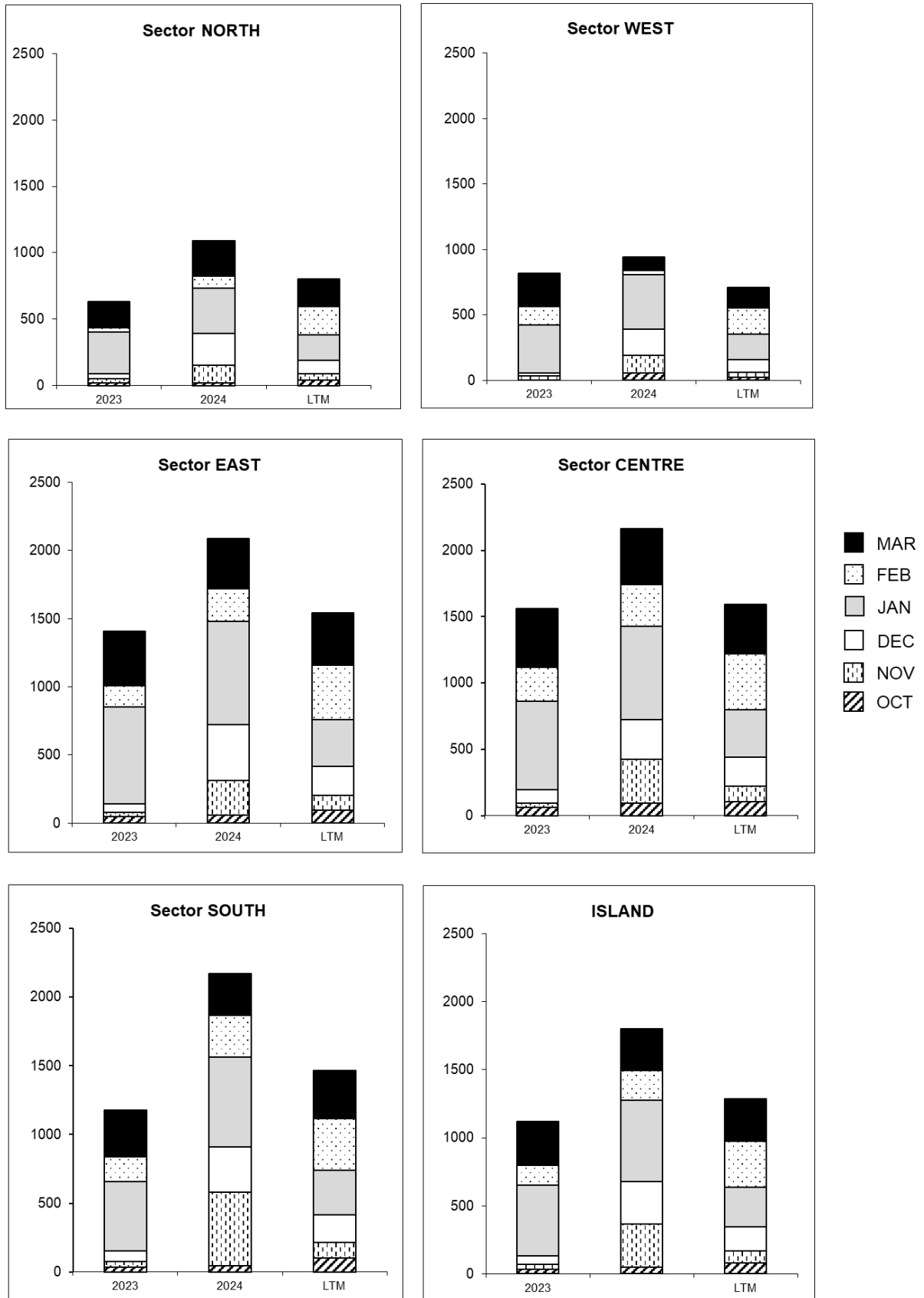
Table 1b. Cumulative rainfall (mm) from October 2023 to March 2024 for crop 2024 compared to that of crop 2023 and the LTM

| Crop | North | East | South | West | Centre | Island |
|-------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 2023 | 630 (78) | 1408 (91) | 1178 (80) | 819 (116) | 1562 (98) | 1121 (87) |
| 2024 | 1091 (136) | 2089 (135) | 2172 (148) | 943 (133) | 2165 (136) | 1801 (140) |
| LTM | 803 | 1543 | 1466 | 708 | 1593 | 1285 |

figures in brackets are % of LTM

[Source: Mauritius Meteorological Services]

Figure 1. Monthly rainfall (mm) for the period October 2023 to March 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 and sunshine duration (Table 2)

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

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

| Stations | Maximum (°C) | | Minimum (°C) | | Sunshine hours | |
|------------|--------------|-------|--------------|-------|----------------|----------|
| | Mar 2024 | + / - | Mar 2024 | + / - | Mar 2024 | % Normal |
| Ferret | 30.0 | -0.6 | 22.7 | +0.5 | 232 | 103 |
| Réduit | 28.5 | +0.3 | 21.4 | -0.4 | 221 | 100 |
| Union Park | 27.2 | -0.2 | 20.9 | +0.1 | 109 | 67 |

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

The mean maximum temperature during March 2024 was above normal at Réduit but lower than the normal at Ferret and Union Park. The mean minimum temperature was comparable at Union Park, above normal at Ferret but lagged behind the normal at Réduit. Sunshine duration recorded during that period exceeded the normal at Ferret only, was comparable to the normal at Réduit but was well below 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 March 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 March 2024 was 51.4 cm in the North, 53.3 cm in the East, 47.2 cm in the South, 34.4 cm in the West and 32.3 cm in the Centre. These growth values were higher to those recorded at the same period in 2023 in sectors North and East but was inferior in the other sectors. Compared to the normal for the corresponding period, cane growth in March 2024 was higher by 3.7 cm in the North, 8.4 cm in the East and 1.5 cm in the South but lagged behind by 10.3 cm in the West and 7.6 cm in the Centre.

The island stalk elongation of 47.4 cm in March 2024 was slightly higher than that of March 2023 and exceeded the normal by 4%.

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

| Sectors | Stalk elongation (cm) | | | March 2024 as % of | |
|---------------|-----------------------|----------|--------|--------------------|--------|
| | Mar 2024 | Mar 2023 | Normal | 2023 | Normal |
| North | 51.4 | 43.4 | 47.7 | 119 | 108 |
| East | 53.3 | 49.3 | 44.9 | 108 | 119 |
| South | 47.2 | 49.9 | 45.6 | 95 | 103 |
| West | 34.4 | 46.8 | 44.7 | 73 | 77 |
| Centre | 32.3 | 37.9 | 39.9 | 85 | 81 |
| Island | 47.4 | 47.0 | 45.5 | 101 | 104 |

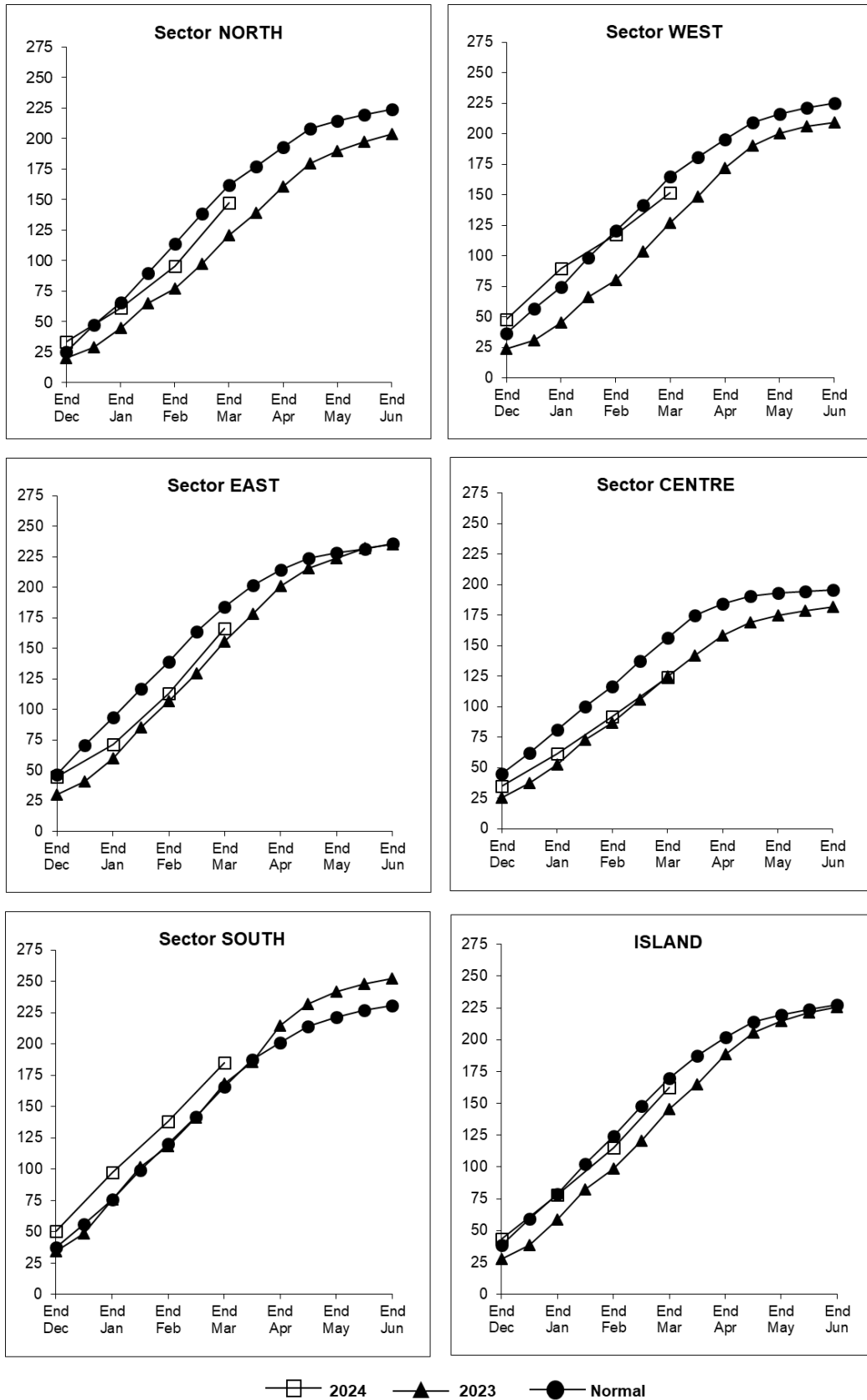
2.2 Total stalk height

At end-March 2024, total stalk height amounted to 147.2 cm in the North, 166.3 cm in the East, 185.4 cm in the South, 151.7 cm in the West and 124.2 cm in the Centre giving an island average of 162.7 cm. These figures were higher than those recorded at the corresponding period in 2023 in all sectors except in the Centre where it was comparable. Stalk height at end-March 2024 lagged behind the normal in all sectors except in the South. At island level, the total stalk height of 162.7 cm at end-March 2024 was higher than the corresponding period in 2023 by 12% but slightly lagged the normal by 4%.

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

| Sectors | Stalk height (cm) at end-February | | | End-February 2024 as % of | |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|-------|--------|---------------------------|--------|
| | 2024 | 2023 | Normal | 2023 | Normal |
| North | 147.2 | 120.5 | 161.7 | 122 | 91 |
| East | 166.3 | 155.7 | 184.0 | 107 | 90 |
| South | 185.4 | 168.7 | 165.9 | 110 | 112 |
| West | 151.7 | 127.2 | 165.2 | 119 | 92 |
| Centre | 124.2 | 124.8 | 156.5 | 99 | 79 |
| Island | 162.7 | 145.5 | 170.0 | 112 | 96 |

Figure 2. Stalk height at end-March 2024



3.0 CROP 2024

Rainfall during the month of March 2024 was sufficient to meet the crop water requirement in all sectors except for the West sector. The maximum temperature was above normal only at Réduit while sunshine duration exceeded the normal at Ferret. These conditions were conducive for stalk elongation though not to the optimal level. This is reflected on stalk elongation recorded for the month which was higher than the normal over the island. The deficit in total stalk height for the island which was 7% in February 2024 is now at 4% of the normal. The latter can be further reduced provided the favourable weather conditions are sustained during the remaining months of the growth period.