



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Various sugar related articles

The Executive Director would like to draw your attention to the articles below all of which are relevant to the sugar sector.

Sugaronline Ebriefing

GUATEMALA: Pantaleon expands use of AI technologies to optimize operations

Sugar producer Pantaleon has expanded its use of AI technologies provided by California-based software company C3 AI to optimize operations, reports Sugaronline.

C3 AI said in a statement on Sept. 18 that Pantaleon has recently deployed its C3 Generative AI technology to manage and analyze documents for information retrieval and analysis, and to optimize the process to develop pricing outlooks.

Earlier in 2023, Pantaleon had already purchased two pilot applications from C3 AI to plan sugarcane harvesting and maximize sugar production. All the applications are running on Google Cloud and leveraging Google Cloud's services and solutions at scale, according to C3 AI.

"Our people's deep industry understanding, combined with C3 AI's expertise that can frame the problem and abstract operations into a computable form, allows us to transition to a new operational paradigm," said Pantaleon's chief financial officer (CFO) and AI strategy leader, Guillermo Medina.

"We're not only employing our advanced proprietary predictive models but also optimizing our operations, reimagining our approach to value creation."

C3 AI said that, by using C3 Generative AI, Pantaleon employees can swiftly find precise answers to their questions and pinpoint the originating document, even among multiple contracts with varied terms from a single vendor.

"It's clear that Pantaleon is leading innovation in this industry by recognizing how AI, and more recently as an early adopter of generative AI, can transform the inner workings of a traditional industry and allow leadership to make smarter and faster decisions — and by using C3 AI as an experienced partner, do it quickly and efficiently," said C3 AI chief executive officer (CEO), Thomas M. Siebel.

REPORTS FROM THE ISO-ISMA CONFERENCE IN INDIA FROM 21 SEPTEMBER**INDIA: sugar industry insiders see no export prospects till Feb-March**

Amidst mounting concerns over the likelihood of a sharp decline in the country's sugar output and the impending general election, India's once-thriving sugar export industry now stands at a critical juncture, reports *Prerna Sharma Singh* for Sugaronline.

Despite a staggering 300% surge in exports between 2013/14 and 2021/22, rising food inflation and dwindling sugar output in the states of Maharashtra and Karnataka cast an ominous shadow over the nation's sugar export prospects for the upcoming 2023/24 sugar season. Leading experts in the sugar industry have sounded the alarm on these pressing issues during a high-profile panel discussion at the **India Sugar and Bio-energy Conference in New Delhi organised by ISMA and ISO.**

Atul Chaturvedi, the executive chairman of Shree Renuka Sugars Limited, expressed doubts about the government's willingness to prioritize exports in the current scenario, pointing to a clear shift towards promoting domestic self-sufficiency. He voiced concerns over lower output expectation from Maharashtra and Karnataka which have suffered due to adverse weather conditions and the prevalence of ratoon crops, he said.

Thus, between July and August, the Indian government imposed a ban on the export of non-basmati rice. Additionally, India imposed a 20% import duty on parboiled rice exports and established a minimum export price of \$1200 per ton for basmati rice shipments. These policy measures underscore the government's commitment to ensuring domestic availability of food items.

Vivek M. Pittie, Director, Harinagar Sugar Mills, echoed the sentiment that government deliberations on sugar export policy appearing unlikely, especially with the impending 2024 elections and the daunting battle against inflation.

The panelists emphasized the need for the country to prioritize meeting local demand over exports. Vivek Saraogi, the Chairman and Managing Director of Balrampur Chini Mills Limited underscored the importance of social responsibility by saying that "as responsible citizens, we have an obligation not to prioritize business when we are unable to meet our own needs."

On a more optimistic note, Prakash P. Naiknavare, the Managing Director of National Federation of Co-operative Sugar Factories remained hopeful. He envisioned making a persuasive case to the government in February-March, once stock figures become evident, and India finds itself with surplus sugar. Naiknavare emphasized the importance of proactive measures, stating, "We should exert our best efforts to convince the government to export the surplus, regardless of the quantity, rather than letting it languish idle in our warehouses."

To sum up, most experts believe that as of now, there is no way the government will allow sugar exports. However, it can be persuaded to change its mind if production outlook improves and food inflation cools down.

INDIA: Government orders weekly disclosure of sugar stocks

India's Department of Food and Public Distribution on Sept. 21 issued an order directing all sugar traders, wholesalers, retailers and processors to provide information on their sugar stock position weekly, in an effort to curb hoarding and speculation in the market, reports Sugaronline.

Data on sugar stocks should be updated "immediately" on the Department's Sugar Stock Monitoring System portal and then every Monday.

"This mandatory weekly stock disclosure for these entities is another proactive step in the Government of India's (GOI) efforts to maintain a balanced and fair sugar market. By preventing hoarding and speculation, GoI is aiming to ensure that sugar remains affordable for all consumers", the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution said in a statement.

The Ministry reaffirmed that India has sufficient stocks for domestic consumption, and that the government has released the first tranche of the domestic sales quota of 1.3 million metric tonnes, which sugar mills can start selling with immediate effect. "More quota will be released in due course in view of market conditions."

By the end of August, 8.3 million tonnes of sugar stocks were available in the country, according to the Ministry.

INDIA: Food secretary says sugar production expected to improve

Food secretary Sanjeev Chopra said on Sept. 21 that no shortage of sugar was expected in the country as output will be higher than domestic consumption, according to Reuters.

He said sugar production is expected to improve due to good rains in September and that mills will be requested by the government to sell extra stocks in local markets.

EUROPE: Crop monitor increases forecast for EU sugarbeet yield in 2023

The European Union crop monitor increased its estimate for Europe's average sugarbeet yield in 2023 to 74.5 tonnes per hectare (t/ha) from 73.7 t/ha estimated in August, with upward revisions for productivity in France and Belgium, reports Sugaronline.

The update was published in the most recent bulletin released by the European Union's crop monitoring unit JRC MARS on Sept. 18.

In France, sugarbeet yield is now estimated at 85 t/ha, from 81 t/ha in August, due to favorable conditions, with no significant concerns regarding yellowing disease. The yield expected for 2023 is above the five-year average of 78.6 t/ha.

Belgium's sugarbeet yield forecast was also increased to 85 t/ha from 83.5 t/ha estimated in August. The updated forecast is below the five-year average of 85.3 t/ha.

In the Netherlands, the estimated yield was increased to 83 t/ha from 82 t/ha in August.

In Poland, the forecast was slightly reduced to 62.8 t/ha from 62.9 t/ha in August.

The EU crop monitor kept the forecasts for 2023 sugarbeet yields in Spain and Germany unchanged from last month.

In Spain, the sugarbeet yield estimate is 87.1 t/ha, 2% above the five-year average, and in Germany, 74.6 t/ha, above the five-year average of 72.5 t/ha.

NETHERLANDS: Cosun Beet starts beet campaign

Cosun Beet Company's factories have started the sugarbeet processing season, with yields expected to be better than earlier estimates, the company announced on Sept. 20, reports Sugaronline.

Cosun estimates production of 84 tonnes of beet per hectare, with a sugar yield of 14 tonnes per hectare, slightly higher than the five-year average but lower than last year.

"After a chilly spring, a somewhat wet summer and plenty of sunshine in September, the beet fields are looking good at the moment. Crop damage due to beet western yellows virus and leaf mould has also been limited so far this year. The forecast for the total amount of sugar to be produced is slightly lower than in 2022, though," the company said in a statement.

Cosun said the start date of the Dutch beet campaign this year is a week later than last year.

"Wet and cold weather conditions meant growers could not sow until three weeks later than normal. This is also part of the reason why we expect a shorter campaign period than last year, of 124 days, or just under 18 weeks. Last year, the number was 137 days."

Mike McDougall Paragon Global Markets
Global View Sugar "Flash" (Modi Seeks Global Initiative for 20% Ethanol Blending)

We know that President Modi is really enamored with India's ethanol program, partly because it lowers the import fuel bill (Actually Russia's troubles with sanctions has had a much bigger positive impact for India), but also because it was a way to lower excess sugar production which was requiring export subsidies for sugar, which was/is a WTO no-no.

But each country of the G-20 has their own specifics with what crops they do or do not grow and how much crude oil they produce or import. Each country as well has to deal with their own fossil fuel industry, which will fight tooth and nail to avoid losing mkt share to a product they don't control. Look at Australia, which is stuck at E-10, just like the United States (for the most part). The limit of E-10 is even though Brazil is E-27 and could go to E-30. (Same cars as the US and Australia has.)

The other issue is what feedstock for ethanol would a country like Japan, South Korea, and Saudi Arabia use? Those countries import wheat, corn and sugar so they would have to import ethanol most likely. Can anyone see Saudi Arabia importing ethanol? Highly unlikely.

So why did Modi suggest a global usage of E-20? Is he hoping to build up the ethanol production of his own country enough to be able to export? They are on the way to exceed E-20 within two years, but the El Nino impact on their monsoon may trip them up and then push the government into making a decision to either produce ethanol or sugar. The old food or fuel argument comes back.

FoodNavigator.Com

The impact of reformulation: producer's nightmare or brand boost?



Industry leaders take the Bakery&Snacks' podium to discuss the movement that is increasingly impacting all areas when it comes to creating stand out snacks, from trickier better-for-you formulations that do not compromise on indulgence, to simpler labels and being as good for the planet as they are for the body.

<https://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/article/2023/09/21/the-impact-of-reformulation-producer-s-nightmare-or-brand-boost>
