

### 3. SUGAR DEPARTMENT

Sugarcane is one of the most important industrial crops in our state and also emerging as a multi product crop contributing to the production of sugar, jaggery, alcohol, electricity, paper and other allied products. The sustenance of the Sugar mills and well being of the sugarcane growers is mutually interlinked. Hence the major focus is towards enhancing sugarcane productivity and production thereby improving the living standard of the Sugarcane growers.

Around 3.50 Lakh farmers are cultivating sugarcane in Tamil Nadu which is 5% of the total cultivable area. During 2011-12 sugar seasons, the sugarcane crop was cultivated in 3.16 Lakh Hectares in the state and the total estimated sugarcane production was 342.52 L.Mt. During 2012-13, it is programmed to cultivate Sugarcane in 3.60 L.Ha. with a production target of 493.50 L.Mt. Out of the total sugarcane production, 60-70 % of the cane was drawn and crushed by the sugar mills of Tamil Nadu during 2011-12 and this crushing rate is expected to be increased during 2012-13 sugar season.

The sugar industry is one of the largest agro-based industries next to the Textiles. There are 47 Sugar Mills in Tamil Nadu comprising of 16 Sugar Mills under Co-operative Sector, 3 Sugar Mills under Public Sector and 28 Sugar Mills under Private Sector. Of these, presently 44 Sugar mills are functioning, while 3 sugar mills are not functioning viz., Madura Sugars (Public Sector) from 2002-2003 crushing season onwards and a private sugar mills viz. Arunachalam Sugar Mills, Malappampadi, Tiruvannamalai District from 2003-2004 crushing season onwards and a new sugar mills viz., Sri Ambiga Sugar limited, Unit – III , Manjini is under establishment.

The area cultivated, registered, cane crushed, Sugar produced and recovery percentage for the past five years and estimate for 2011-12 in Tamil Nadu are given below:

Crushing season (October – September)	Cane area cultivated (L. Ha.)	Cane area registered (L. Ha.)	Cane crushed (L.Mt)	Sugar Production (L.Mt)	Recovery %
2006-07	3.35	3.00	274.49	25.39	9.25
2007-08	3.91	2.76	229.68	21.41	9.32
2008-09	3.54	2.29	165.72	15.95	9.62
2009-10	3.09	2.02	142.99	12.70	8.88
2010-11	2.93	2.19	203.12	18.46	9.09
2011-12 (Estimated)	3.16	2.75	220.96	20.75	9.39

The concept of “Fair and Remunerative Price” (FRP) for sugarcane was introduced by the Government of India on all India basis by deleting the existing provisions for payment of Statutory Minimum Price, 5A Price and also by amending the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966. Accordingly, the Government of India has fixed the Fair and Remunerative Price of ₹1450 per Metric tonne for the sugar season 2011-12 linked to 9.5% recovery with an incentive of ₹15.30 per Metric tonne for increase of every 0.1% recovery. The Government of Tamil Nadu has fixed the State Advised Price of ₹2100 per Metric tonne inclusive of transport subsidy for 2011-12 crushing season and the cane payment is being made as per the orders of the Government.

The projected demand for sugarcane has to be met by improving the productivity per unit area which is possible by introduction of new varieties and new technologies such as Sustainable Sugarcane Initiatives, Drip Fertigation, Tissue culture etc. To double the sugarcane production and

to achieve full capacity utilization, the Sustainable Sugarcane Initiative method of cane cultivation along with Drip Fertigation is being implemented in 3000 Hectares during 2011-12 by installing 1000 shadenet units in all sugar mills of Tamil Nadu and it is programmed to cover around 6000 Hectares under Sustainable Sugarcane Initiative Scheme during 2012-13.

In order to motivate the sugarcane farmers to adopt drip fertigation, the Government has increased the subsidy for drip irrigation from 65% to 100% to small and marginal farmers and 75% to other farmers. This will save around 40% of irrigation water and increase the cane yield by 35 % to 45%.

The Sugarcane Productivity is increased by improving the physical properties of the soil through bio-composting along with Integrated Nutrient Management and utilisation of organic resources as organic manure. The value added vermi compost is produced from the press mud obtained from the mills and distributed to the farmers for increasing the sugarcane productivity. The farmers were encouraged to take up production of vermi compost, bio inputs and organic manure at village level to enrich the soil as well as to increase the productivity of Sugarcane.

The existing ruling varieties cultivated are Co.86032, CoC.22, CoV.94102 etc. The Sugar Mills along with Tamil Nadu Agricultural University and other Sugarcane Research Stations have introduced promising high yielding, drought and pest resistant varieties like CoC 24, Co 99004, Co 99006 Co 94012, Co.Si.7, CoG.5 etc., to improve production and productivity of the sugarcane. The Sugarcane Cess Fund is also utilized for developing new sugarcane varieties in coordination with Tamil Nadu Agricultural University.

In order to minimize the cost of cutting Sugarcane and also to overcome the difficulty in engaging cane cutting workers , the Government of Tamil Nadu has decided to purchase Sugarcane Harvesters for Co-operative & Public Sector Sugar Mills with their own resources and the administrative approval has been obtained from the Government. A Committee has been formed and the technical specifications were prepared to purchase sugarcane harvesters which are suitable for Tamil Nadu conditions. The proposal seeking assistance from Sugar Development Fund has been sent to Government of India. After availing the assistance, the Sugarcane Harvesters will be purchased subject to the financial viability of the mills.