

# Sugar News

NUUESTRA INDUSTRIA AZUCARERA

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## Froghoppers: Field Foes!

**Have you seen adult froghoppers in a sugar cane field? If you have, it's a bad sign because one female adult can hatch up to 300 eggs and if the field is left unattended froghoppers can cause major damage to sugar cane fields.**



To survive a "froghopper season" the work needs to start immediately after harvesting cane fields. Farmers can request SIRDI's field personnel to take samples of soils to analyse in their mini-laboratory for the presence of froghopper eggs. These results are usually ready in 2-3 days. If the egg results indicate over 200,000 eggs per acre, a light harrow needs to pass over the sugar cane rows within 2-20 days after harvest. The light harrow makes several cuts on the sugar cane bed; this exposes the eggs to the hot sun to dry. 60-70% of the froghopper egg population

can be effectively eliminated using this mechanical method.

Once the rains commence all fertile froghopper eggs remaining in the soil will have the potential of hatching into nymphs also called spittle, due to the foam like covering that they produce to protect themselves.



As nymphs progress through 5 stages, it takes about 30-45 days for them to fully form into an adult. Even at the nymph stage, these cause some damage as they feed off the roots of the sugar cane. This means that the field must be monitored for the presence of nymphs.

If the farmer does not identify the problem in his fields, the spittle (nymph) becomes an adult, and at that stage the sugar cane field is in serious trouble! Even though an adult only lives for about 6-9

days, the damage it causes is irreversible. Once the adult



hatches, it immediately starts feeding from the sugars in the plant, injecting toxins into it causing a burnt like appearance; it also starts reproducing, leaving large egg populations for the cycle to start all over again!

However, by monitoring and determining the stage of a nymph (by simply breaking the spittle apart) farmers can tell the amount of time they have to implement either a biological or chemical control. If you need more advice, contact SIRDI at 677-4734.



**Here are some valuable tips to combat the Froghopper:**

*Call SIRDI personnel to determine the presence of froghopper eggs in the field.*



*Use yellow or green sticky traps to monitor adult froghoppers.*



*Conduct a sanitary harrow immediately after harvesting. This is done to expose eggs to the sun (for drying) and to ants which eat them.*



*Apply Metarhizium for biological control*



*Only use insecticide when the plague has become difficult to control*





# From Cane to Sugar Crystals: It's a Sweet Shuga Festival!



**Sugar Fest 2016, among the best examples of collaboration by stakeholders of the Sugar Industry, drew the largest crowd to date since its inception in 2013. More than 2,000 people-including cane farmers, association executive members, SIRDI and BSI employees, and the general public at large-participated in fun-filled activities prepared by the very dynamic Sugar Fest committee comprised of representatives from all sugar industry stakeholders -SIRDI, the associations (BSCFA, CSCPA and PSCPA), BSI and GOB.**

This year's theme, "From Cane to Sugar Crystals: It's a Sweet Shuga Festival" was selected through a competition open to stakeholders, their employees and families and was won by Marcella Swasey of the Storage Division. All three associations participated along with charity

groups and businesses from Orange Walk and Corozal town.

Sugar Fest kicked off at 9 a.m. on Saturday July 23rd at the BSI Field in Orange Walk Town with the performance of the Gwen Lizarraga Marching Band who delighted the crowd with their new dance routines and melodious sounds. This was followed by a sweet short welcome by BSI's Chief Financial Officer, Belizarío Carballo and ASR's Vice-President of International Relations, Mac McLachlan. The crowd was then delighted by prize giveaways and by JoJo the clown who entertained all age groups with his fun games and lively activities! The first ever muscle man competition was held where participants had to prove their stamina and strength by lifting heaving objects - including a sack of commercial sugar! Going down in the history books as the first winner is Eddie Hernandez, while Dudley

Sutherland finished second.

This year, the Panerrixf Steel Band also made their debut at the event. A large group of fascinated listeners gathered under the main tent to enjoy the unique sound from the steel band family of instruments. The Band was also joined by dancers from GMX's group, who wore vibrant decorated costumes, and danced to the beat of the instruments. The event counted with most of last year's signature activities including the famous kid's corner, fun family games, free fresco hour and live performances from popular local bands such as Abraxas and Morelia Pop. Kids had an unforgettable day with the introduction of the first ever paint powder party where they had the opportunity to squirt others with brightly colored powder and cover their clothing in a rainbow of colors! A salsation dance hour was also held to promote an active and healthy lifestyle.





# Fairtrade Associations Collaborate with Pesticide Control Board on Field Safety Training!



**With the good use of Fair Trade Funds, the Progressive Sugar Cane Producers Association (PSCPA) kicked off the month of August with Environmental Trainings to sensitize farmers on how their productions practices have an impact on their health, their loved ones and communities where they live.**

The training was hosted by Marla Quetzal from PSCPA and invited guest, Edgar Silva from the Pesticides Control Board. Farmers received insight on calculating the correct dosage of agrochemicals, safe use of pesticides and calibrating their equipment. Farmers also received a small training on First Aid Kit Basics by Pharmacist Jair Rosado from DR's Pharmacy. The first workshop was held on August 1st at Patchakan to host

members from Zone 4 and on August 8th the second workshop was held at the PSCPA Office to host members from Zones 1, 2 and 3. A total of 46 farmers attended these workshops. Group leaders have also received First Aid Kits and rubber boots purchased from the Fairtrade Premium. Each zone is to receive an incinerator for disposal of empty containers.

The adoption of these good practices by farmers should help farmers reduce their overall input costs, protect their personal and family's lives and safeguard the surrounding environments which are impacted by the production of sugar cane. If farmers from PSCPA want to learn more about field safety training, please contact your nearest zone leader, visit the PSCPA Office or give us a call at 302-1568.



**Chairman Mr Elvis Canul & Mr. Enrique Torres Group Leader**



**Mr. Edgar Silva Pesticide Control Board & Mr. Leonardo Folgarait**

**In a similar vein, taking an opportunity of the out of crop season, the Corozal Sugar Cane Producers Association (CSCPA) hosted a similar Group Leaders' Training Workshop for their farmers.**

These trainings were held on the 24th of August at the Corozal District with the assistance of DR's Pharmacy and the Pesticide Control Board; similar topics were covered such as first responder and agro chemical handling and application. The training involved all leaders of the associations comprising of harvesting group leaders together with the board of directors. Leaders were handed out PPE material such as gloves, respirators and chemical suits; they were reminded about the importance of the use of these personal protective equipment (PPE's).

The workshop was well attended with 40 leaders participating. Very important information was shared related to these topics with excellent farmer participation in the question and answer session. The CSCPA is now preparing a second workshop in the area of diversification with sustainable markets. The ministry of agriculture has already been engaged to conduct workshop presentations.



# BSCFA Holds Training Sessions with Reaping Group Leaders



*The importance of water is very clear to the Belize Sugar Cane Farmers Association (BSCFA) and FLOCERT, who created a Compliance Criteria No. 3.3.6.05 which states that "You and your members provide clean drinking water for workers." Field work in the sugar industry requires workers to spend long hours under the hot sun, exposing themselves to dehydration.*

*BSCFA provided reaping group leaders of all branches in both the Corozal and Orange Walk Divisions with water gallons in order for them to be able to provide clean drinking water for their cane cutters.*

**On the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of June, 2016 the Belize Sugar Cane Farmers Association (BSCFA) held training sessions with all the Reaping Group Leaders in the Corozal and Orange Walk Divisions. The session for the Corozal Division was held at Dreams Salon in Corozal Town and at Gala Lounge in Orange Walk Town for the Orange Walk Division. Various topics were presented to them including:**

- Storage of Pesticides
- Handling of empty chemical/pesticide containers
- The correct use of the Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)
- Child labor
- The Importance of Water



Inspection of Warehouses

Following the training sessions, the staff of the Projects/ Environmental Department of BSCFA have continued their work in the fields assuring that cane farmers have their warehouses in good conditions. BSCFA has been promoting to cane farmers the proper handling of empty

containers by means of the triple rinse and perforation. The farmers are cooperating by disposing their containers in the trailers that are rotated within all branches.

## Sugar Industry Receives Grant of €800,000 for an Integrated Pest and Disease Management Project

It is with great pleasure that the The Sugar Industry Research and Development Institute (SIRDI) receives direct EU Grant to implement an Integrated Pest and Disease Management Project for the benefit of all sugarcane producers. This project is also being co-funded by the industry for an additional amount of €121,000. This project, as the name suggests, will aim to "strengthen the Integrated Pest and Disease Management in the Sugar Industry."



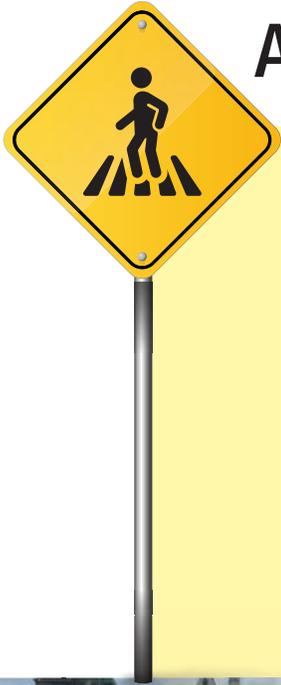
**SIRDI**  
SUGAR INDUSTRY  
RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE  
BELIZE, C.A.

**The expected results of the project includes:**

- an effective pest and disease monitoring system for the Sugar Industry of Belize
- the effective mechanism for production and distribution of ecological and biological control
- established research on varietal resistance program
- established research on cultural and physical control
- the development of well-trained staff

*A project steering committee of all sugar industry stakeholders and experts have been established to guide and monitor the progress of this project.*





# Attention Pedestrians within Factory Limits!

**Pedestrian Walkways and Cross Walks have been installed at the BSI Sugar factory premises to enhance the safety of pedestrians especially during the crop season.**

The factory is an area where large vehicular traffic such as cane trucks, loaders, forklifts, cranes and trailers are in continuous movement. If you are an employee, cane farmer or

visitor to the factory, your safety is enhanced by following these pedestrian guidelines:

- Use designated crossing areas and pedestrian facilities such as walkways, sidewalks and crossings.
- Look to the left, right and over your shoulder before starting to cross.
- Be sure to stop at all pedestrian crossings when driving inside the factory premises.



## ASR Group-BSI Participates in this Year's Independence Parade!



## Safe Forklifting!

During the off crop season, BSI takes the opportunity to organize several trainings for its staff in particular on Operational, Health & Safety. One such training occurred on August 16 and 17, 2016, for forklifters and telehandlers; the training was conducted by the US company Forklift Training Systems.

The two day training, tested the proficiency and safety techniques of operators and updated them with requirements for the safe operation of Powered Industrial Vehicles (PIV).

The goal of Belize Sugar Industries Limited is to continuously certify all other PIV operators, with the goal of reaching the global standard when it comes to the safe operation of powered industrial vehicles.





# Cane Varieties: There isn't much Variety After All



The Sugar Industry of Belize is dominated by a single variety: B79474

*While there are close to thirty (30) varieties in production in Belize, the varietal status of the industry remains unstable as the Belize sugar industry is dominated by a single variety: B79474. It currently covers approximately, 60 percent, of the total acres under production. The widespread use of the B79474 can be attributed to its remarkable adaptability to a broad range of conditions including the ability to grow on high plains and lowlands. This presents two key challenges: While it contributes to an increase in sugar quality in February, March and April and its maturity peak coincides with the dry season, the challenge for the industry is to harvest the majority of the cane at the best time for everyone growing that variety. Secondly and perhaps most important, having so much B79474 under production leaves the greater part of the industry vulnerable to pests and diseases.*

**If the Belizean Sugarcane Industry is to remain competitive in the world market, with the decline of preferential markets and the resulting fall in sugar prices, the industry must look for ways to change the varietal composition to a more diverse distribution based on early, mid and late maturing varieties.**

Therefore, the Belize Sugar Industries Limited (BSI), the only miller in the North of Belize, has been conducting sugarcane variety screening trials for about 40 years for the benefit of the entire sugarcane industry. These variety trials are on land under its control and do not cover all soil types in which cane is grown. As counter part funding to the SIRDI-IDB project, BSI is working with SIRDI to expand the focus of variety development and extension to the entire sugarcane producing areas by expanding the outfield testing of advanced stage varieties to additional locations more representative of all farmers' cane fields. The ultimate objective is to provide to the cane farming community a group of cane varieties adaptable to the various soil types in which sugarcane is grown and which are identified for harvest at particular times during crop to maximize sugar content.

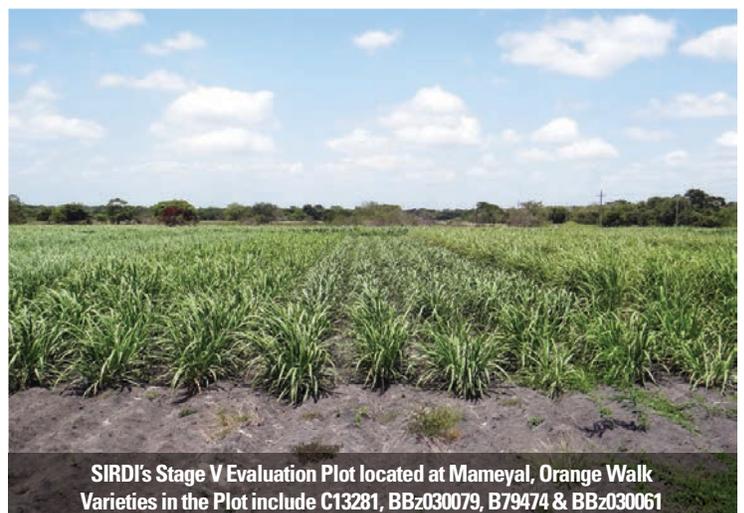


Nursery Seedlings at BSI's Research Department

*Farmers that have adequate land for sugar cane planting and would like to try potential varieties are encouraged to contact the Sugar Industry Research Institute's research coordinator at phone number 677-4734 for more information.*



Seedlings ready to be transferred to Field Trials

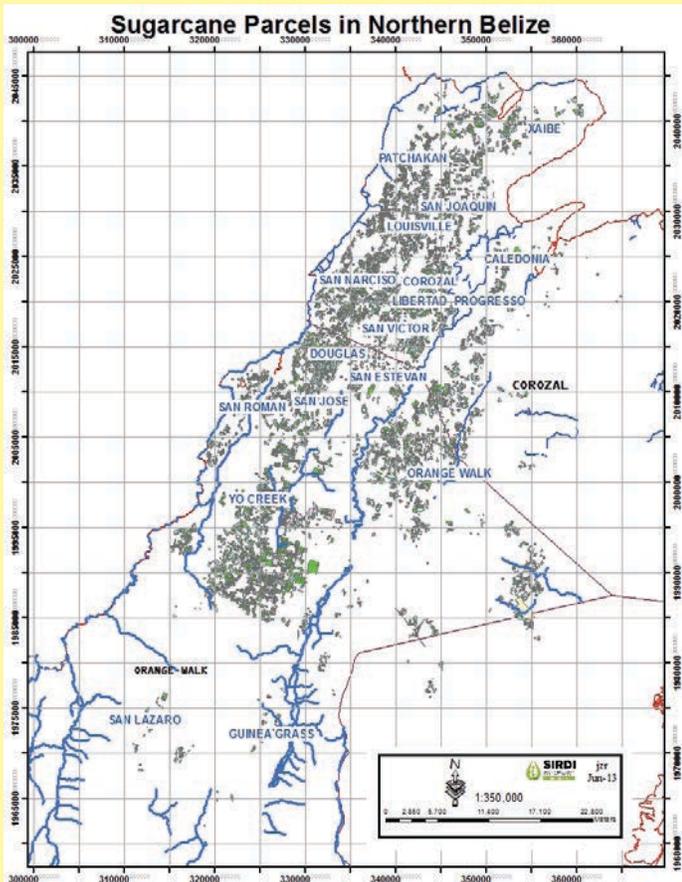


SIRDI's Stage V Evaluation Plot located at Mameyal, Orange Walk  
Varieties in the Plot include C13281, BBz030079, B79474 & BBz030061



# Get Your Cane Field Maps Today!

SIRD, in collaboration with Sugar Industry stakeholders, has developed a tool that can provide farmers with maps of their sugar cane fields with accurate acreage information. This tool is called the Sugar Industry Management Information System (SIMS). Farmers can use these maps for better management and decision-making of their sugar cane production if they provide the system with accurate information.

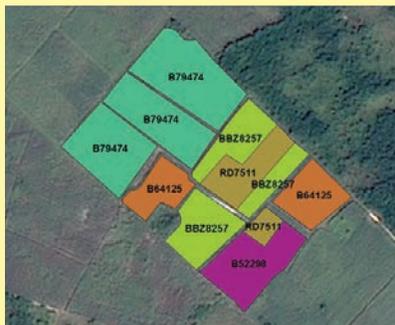


*“By monitoring delivery by parcel, a more realistic production per parcel can be provided; cutters can be paid based on data collected per trip and revisions/ estimates can be made at any point during the crop to determine what has been harvested and what is still pending.”*



*What Maps can I get?*

**Acreage-** Map of sugarcane parcels numbered in acres/ hectares.



**Variety distribution-** Map of sugarcane parcels identifying different varieties planted.



**Field type-** Map of crop class.



**Current Field Status-** Map identifying current production estimate.

**AND MUCH MORE!**



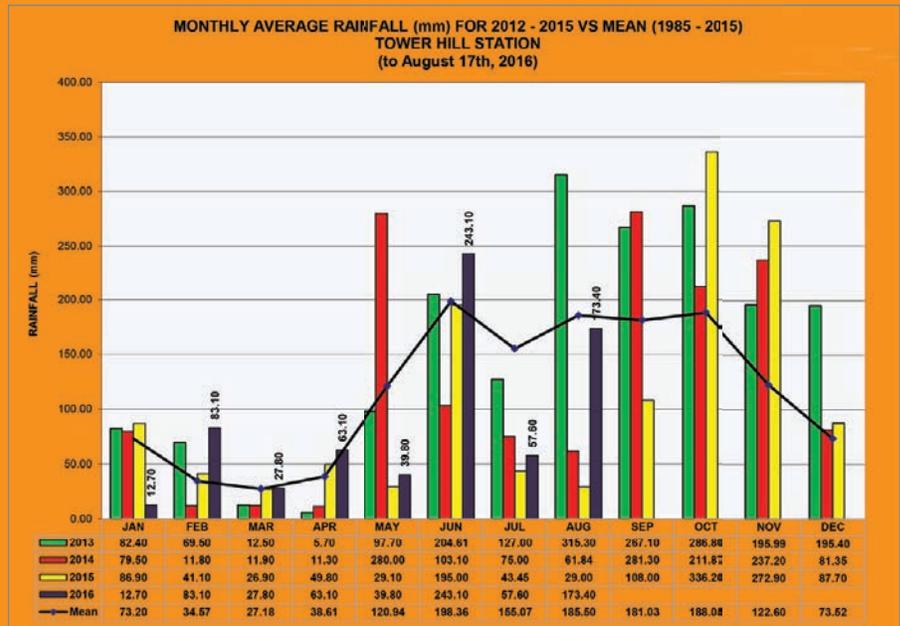
To get your maps, contact the SIRD Extension Personnel in your area or visit the SIRD Office at Mile 66.5 Philip Goldson Highway, Buena Vista or call at 677-4734 for more information.



# How Weather Affects Sugar Cane Production & Operations

The graph shows rainfall recorded at Tower Hill from 2012 up to August 31, 2016. May marks the initiation of the rainy season and as can be noted, there was a sharp increase of 203.3 mm from the month of May to the month of June for this year. These unfavorable weather conditions led to the interruption of cane supply during the last weeks of the 2016 crop season which officially closed on June 26, 2016.

Rainfall recorded for the months of July and August were noticeably higher when compared to the months of 2015 leading to favorable conditions for good cane growth and planting fall varieties such as CP. However, these humid conditions were also very favorable to trigger the froghopper pest which was reported by farmers affecting their cane fields.



## BSI's Community Board

Write us at  
P.O. Box 29  
Orange Walk Town

Email us at  
**infobelizesugar**  
**@asr-group.com**

Call or text us:  
**666-2006**

Send us a  
message  
in Social Media

belizesugarindustries

**Do you have any question, comment or concern for us in matters regarding:**

- Environmental Health & Safety
- Factory
- Power Plant
- Agriculture
- Sugar Shipping
- Cane Farmer Relations
- Security?

## VIEWS ON THIS PUBLICATION?

Contact us. Send ideas, thoughts and suggestions to:

**Jessamyn Ramos at SIRD**  
[(501) 671-8376 [jessamyn.sirdi@gmail.com](mailto:jessamyn.sirdi@gmail.com)]

**Mariol Chan at BSCFA** [(501) 631-2701 [bscfa\\_com@yahoo.com](mailto:bscfa_com@yahoo.com)]

**Erika Sosa at CSCPA** [(501) 667-1150 [cscpa.czl@hotmail.com](mailto:cscpa.czl@hotmail.com)]

**Gilda Dominguez at PSCPA**  
[(501) 668-3626 [alotpscpc@gmail.com](mailto:alotpscpc@gmail.com)]

**Jeremy Góngora at BSI** [(501) 615-5996 [jeremy.gongora@asr-group.com](mailto:jeremy.gongora@asr-group.com)]

**Contact BSI's Hotline & Farmer Number at: 605-3101**

*We want to hear from you! Let us know what you want in your newsletter.*



## Introducing BSI's Community Board!

As a part of our ongoing efforts to improve and maintain dynamic and responsible relations with the community, Belize Sugar Industries Ltd. has established a system of communication to receive, investigate and respond to complaints from the community. Our community board is comprised of our P.O. Box No., specialized email to receive comments, hotline number, Facebook social media page and our community suggestion box at the entrance of the Tower Hill Mill.