



SUGAR CANE GROWERS COOPERATIVE OF FLORIDA

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 18, 2010

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CHALLENGING CROP FINISHES ON SCHEDULE

BELLE GLADE.....Despite freeze impacts and stepping through un-seasonably heavy rain events, the 2009-10 Sugar Cane Growers Cooperative of Florida harvest produced respectable results. The Cooperative mill set new records including most sugarcane hauled in one crop day (26,562 tons) and the highest quality raw sugar (99.14% sucrose).

The 132-day 2009-10 harvest commenced on October 24, 2009 with liquidation completed on March 9, 2010. The 46 grower-members of Sugar Cane Growers Cooperative of Florida produced 2,747,396 tons of sugarcane grown on 62,436 acres in Palm Beach County. This yielded 316,081 short tons raw value (STRV) sugar and 16.8 million gallons of blackstrap molasses. This compares to last year's production of 2,555,577 tons of cane producing 300,811 STRV sugar and 16 million gallons of blackstrap molasses. Sugar yields dropped this year to 11.26% compared to last year's 11.53%, and well below the high of 11.73% achieved in 2003-04. The reduction in yield is primarily attributable to the January freeze conditions followed by wet conditions.

"Mother Nature continues to provide many challenges to area growers that result in reduced production and productivity," said Cooperative President and CEO George H. Wedgworth. "Our growers have survived through two years of hurricane-damaged crops followed by three years of droughts. This year's crop was looking most promising until the January 6th and January 12th, 2010 freeze events. Cold temperatures coupled with wet conditions held yields down hampering what could have been a record year. However, we are hopeful that we will be blessed with a good growing season and overcome the loss of growth in plant cane due to freeze conditions in January and February."

The Cooperative is made up of 46 grower-owners and employs 550 people during the harvest season. The primary functions of the Cooperative are the harvesting, transporting and processing of sugarcane and the sales of raw sugar to American Sugar Refining Inc., (ASR) that is co-owned by the Cooperative and Florida Crystals Corporation. Refined sugar is then marketed nationwide through Domino Foods, Inc.

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