

**Required Report:** Required - Public Distribution

**Date:** April 15, 2025

**Report Number:** GT2025-0006

**Report Name:** Sugar Annual

**Country:** Guatemala

**Post:** Guatemala City

**Report Category:** Sugar

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**Report Highlights:**

In MY 2023/24, Guatemala ranked as the world's second most efficient sugarcane producer and fourth in overall sugar production efficiency. For MY 2025/26, production is forecast to remain steady, with planted and harvested areas unchanged from the previous two years, and growth expected in MY 2026/27. In MY 2024/25, refined sugar exports are projected to more than double raw sugar exports, as sugar mills continue expanding their refinery capacity. The United States remains Guatemala's primary trading partner for sugar from sugarcane.

## PRODUCTION

Sugar production, harvested area, and planted area in Guatemala are projected to remain unchanged from MY 2024/25 through MY 2025/26. For MY 2025/26, Guatemala is expected to harvest 250,000 hectares of sugarcane from 270,000 hectares planted. A potential expansion in cultivated area is under consideration for MY 2026/27, contingent on the delayed implementation of the 10 percent ethanol-gasoline blend law, now scheduled to begin in calendar year (CY) 2026.

The area planted for MY 2024/25 remains consistent with MY 2023/24, which concluded with 2.62 million metric tons (MT) of sugar produced. However, the MY 2024/25 harvest experienced a two-week delay due to unexpected rainfall in October and November, months typically marked by dry weather. Unseasonal rainfall reduced sugar concentration in the cane, resulting in yield losses. The sector also continued to grapple with criminal burning, a persistent challenge in recent years. Despite these setbacks, yields for both sugarcane and sugar per hectare slightly exceeded those of the previous year, and overall production is expected to remain stable (see Figure 1).

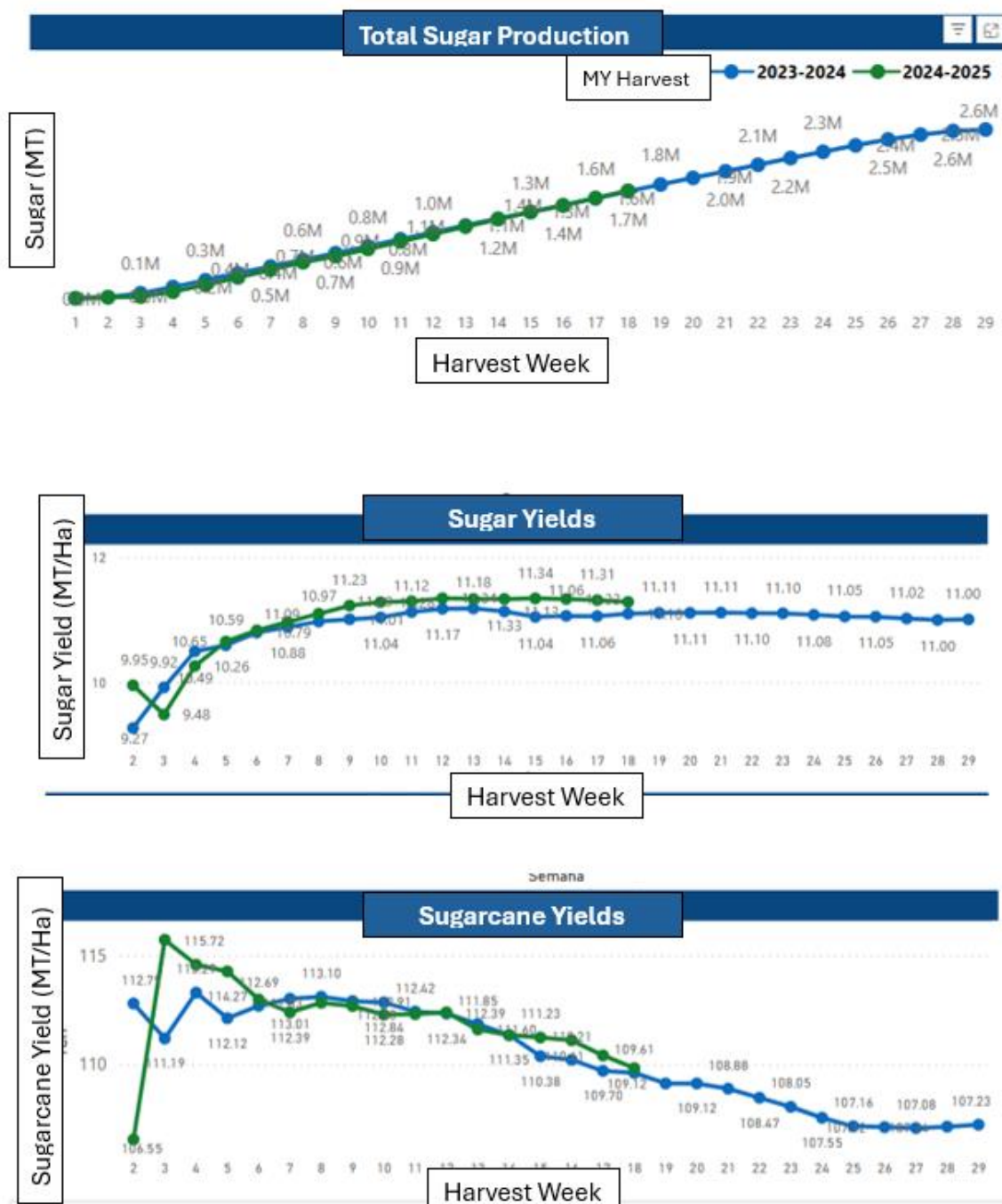
The Guatemalan Research Center for Sugarcane (CENGICAÑA) has driven steady improvements in sugarcane yields through its breeding program, achieving increases every five years of up to 12 MT of cane per hectare. However, weather anomalies, particularly those affecting sugar concentration, continue to impact final yields. In MY 2023/24, Guatemala reported a sugarcane yield of 10.76 MT/Ha and a sugar yield of 10.50 MT/Ha.

To further advance productivity, CENGICAÑA recently restructured its research program around four core focus areas: Physiology and Agricultural Production, Integrated Pest Management, Varietal Development, and Digital Agri-Mechanics. The latter reflects a strategic push toward full mechanization, responding to persistent labor shortages linked to outward migration. In varietal research, the center is preparing for the eventual replacement of widely adopted local cultivars, such as CG02-163, which is now planted on approximately 80 percent of farms. Breeding efforts are supported by an active pest and disease surveillance system and software-assisted trait selection, with a strong emphasis on improving resilience to water stress.

In MY 2023/24, Guatemala also produced 144,613 MT of alcohol and 436,000 MT of molasses, both byproducts of sugarcane extraction. Globally, Guatemala ranks as the second most efficient producer of sugarcane per hectare and fourth in sugar yield per hectare, underscoring its leadership in the sector.

**Figure 1**

MY2024/25 sugarcane and sugar yields, and accumulated production in Guatemala up to week 18 out of 29 production weeks, compared to MY2023/24 harvest



Source: CENGICAÑA, 2025

## CONSUMPTION

Guatemala's sugar consumption is projected to experience a modest increase of approximately 1.5 percent, rising from 1.35 million MT in MY 2024/25 to 1.37 million MT in MY 2025/26. This gradual growth reflects the country's stable demand for sugar despite new zero calorie and low sugar options in food and drinks.

According to data from the February monthly cost of the basic food basket, white refined sugar remains the preferred sweetener in Guatemala, with an average monthly consumption of 1.184 kg per person (153.47 Kcal), compared to 0.121 kg (15.31 Kcal) of brown sugar. Households spend approximately \$1.21/kg for white sugar and \$1.12/kg for brown sugar, with per capita annual sugar consumption reaching 75 kg. Prices remain relatively stable throughout the year, with little variation from the previous year.

While sugar substitutes are readily available in the country's 700 supermarkets, they are largely absent from the 50,000 municipal stores that serve as the primary distribution channel. Popular alternatives include Stevia (\$81.01/kg), Sucralose (\$36.70/kg), and Splenda (\$108/kg). Despite the availability of substitutes, Guatemalans continue to favor white sugar and panela, a traditional unrefined sugar sold in one-pound blocks (\$3.78/kg) or granulated form (\$5.58/kg), both marketed as organic. While non-organic panela was once common, most retail offerings today are labeled as organic. Panela features prominently in typical Guatemalan desserts and candies, often alongside white sugar.

**Figure 2**  
Panela presentation in Guatemala



Source: FAS Guatemala (via supermarkets online channel), 2025

## TRADE

Total sugar exports from Guatemala are expected to increase by 2.6 percent, rising from 1.29 million MT in 2024/25 to 1.32 million MT in MY 2025/26. This growth is expected to be driven by a 4.9 percent increase in the export of refined sugar, measured in raw value (MTRV), reflecting the industry's strategic shift toward higher-value, refined sugar products. In MY 2024/25, refined sugar exports are expected to more than double those of raw sugar, underscoring Guatemala's continued emphasis on value-added exports.

Guatemala remains among the top 10 largest sugar exporters globally. In MY 2023/24, Guatemala exported a total of 1.183 million MTRV of sugar to 44 countries, including 414,482 MT of raw sugar and 768,943 MTRV of refined sugar. Exports accounted for 45 percent of total production, with domestic consumption representing the remaining 55 percent. The United States remains Guatemala's largest trading partner, holding 21 percent of the export market, followed by Mexico, Taiwan, Chile, Peru, Canada, and others, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
MY2023/24 Sugar Exports from Guatemala to the World

	MY2023/24		
Metric Tons Raw Value (MTRV)	Raw	Refined	TOTAL
United States	134,221	116,855	251,076
Mexico	17,598	152,241	169,839
Taiwan	114,196	44,006	158,202
Chile	475	138,051	138,526
Peru	22,619	54,246	76,865
Canada	51,250	1,540	52,790
Haiti	17,668	36,627	54,295
Jamaica	-	46,022	46,022
Colombia	-	41,654	41,654
South Korea	35,000	-	35,000
Spain	251	31,007	31,258
United Kingdom	17,855	8,974	26,829
Trinidad and Tobago	266	27,636	27,902
Dominican Republic	-	20,209	20,209
China	1,806	-	1,806
Italy	928	691	1,619
Others	349	49,184	46,316
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>414,482</b>	<b>768,943</b>	<b>1,183,425</b>

Source: FAS Guatemala with TDM data, 2025

Refined sugar exports continued their upward trend in MY 2023/24, accounting for 65 percent of total exports. In recent years, sugar mills have been expanding refinery and packaging capacities, including the Palo Gordo Sugar Mill, which recently inaugurated a new refined sugar plant. In MY 2023/24, Guatemala exported 73 percent of its sugar to the Americas, 16 percent to Asia, 5 percent to Africa, 5 percent to Europe, and 1 percent to Oceania. Exports to the European Union (EU) declined due to falling prices resulting from overproduction of sugar beets.

In addition to sugar exports valued at \$729 million, Guatemala exported 14,613 MT of alcohol from sugar (183.2 million liters), worth \$110 million, and \$82 million from molasses exports. The primary markets for alcohol exports are the Netherlands, Puerto Rico, Sweden, and Mexico. Molasses exports mainly went to the United States, Ireland, the Philippines, and South Korea.

## STOCKS

Ending stocks of sugar in Guatemala are projected to decline modestly by 17.9 percent, from 414 MT in MY 2024/25 to 340 MT in MY 2025/26. This reduction reflects the sector's commitment to meeting full domestic demand while simultaneously fulfilling export obligations. The decrease in off-season months of May to September.

## TRADE POLICY

Guatemala has free trade agreements (FTAs) with the United States, Central America (including the Dominican Republic), the EU, Mexico, Taiwan, Colombia, Chile, Panama, the United Kingdom, and Israel. Additionally, the country has signed partial trade agreements with Ecuador, Cuba, Belize, and Venezuela, and is negotiating agreements with the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). Guatemala's Congress is also reviewing the approval of several pending agreements, including FTAs with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Sweden), Costa Rica, Panama, Peru, and Trinidad and Tobago. After years of deliberation, Guatemala has finally approved the Central American FTA with South Korea, though it is still pending Congressional ratification.

Table 2 details sugar exports under quotas with countries with whom Guatemala has FTAs. Guatemala has consistently met its sugar quota commitments with key trading partners, including the United States, and plans to fully export its MY 2024/25 WTO as the CAFTA-DR quotas.

**Table 2**  
Guatemala Sugar Quotas Under Free Trade Agreements (FTA)

FTA	MY2023/24 (MTRV)	MY2023/24 (MTRV)	MY2024/25 (MTRV)
<b>Taiwan</b>	137,977	155,000	155,000
<b>United States</b>	76,990	48,041	51,639
<b>WTO</b>			
<b>United States</b>	52,640	56,580	54,520
<b>CAFTA-DR</b>			
<b>EU</b>	92,000	94,700	97,400
<b>UK</b>	27,747	28,601	29,457
<b>Ecuador</b>	21,000	21,000	21,000

Source: Guatecaña, 2025

## POLICY

Guatemala continues to prioritize its domestic sugar supply through laws and regulations requiring the fortification of sugar with vitamins (mainly Vitamin A) and minerals (mainly iron). As part of this policy, the sugar industry is tasked with fulfilling local market demands first, followed by export markets. To sustain the industry's presence in the country, the sector has adopted a new 2023-2033 strategy focused on achieving economic equilibrium through investments in sustainability, encompassing environmental, social, and ethical commitments.

This vision is embodied in GUATECAÑA, an innovation hub represented in Figure 3, which highlights Guatemala's sugar production as well as molasses, alcohol, and energy. In MY2023/24, the sugar sector contributed to 30 percent of the country's renewable energy supply, with an installed capacity of 992.4 MW.



**Figure 3**  
New Guatemalan Sugar Sector Vision



Source: GUATECAÑA, 2025

The new image of the sugar industry is represented by a collaboration of key institutions, including ASAZGUA, CENGICAÑA, and FUNDAZUCAR, which support the nine sugar mills: Palo Gordo, Madre Tierra, San Diego, Santa Ana, La Sonrisa, El Pilar, La Union, Magdalena, and Pantaleon. These mills are served by EXPOGRANEL, the export terminal at Port Quetzal on the Pacific Coast, and the Climate Change Private Institute (ICC). The hub is committed to fostering continuous innovation within its institutions, local communities, and suppliers.

The sugar sector is a significant economic driver, generating 52,000 direct jobs, 258,000 indirect jobs, and supporting approximately 310,000 families. In MY2023/24, the industry's economic footprint was valued at \$1.53 billion, with salaries accounting for 24 percent of this total. GUATECAÑA has implemented various policies focused on labor, human rights, and environmental sustainability. On the environmental front, the sector aims to reduce its water footprint and support local communities and municipalities in managing South Coast forests, river basins, and mangrove zones. Notably, the Guatemalan sugar industry uses 140 percent less water than other sugar crops globally, with 70 percent of production being rain-fed. Additionally, the sector has committed to a 7 percent reduction in its carbon footprint through a net-zero deforestation approach.



GUATECAÑA has made significant strides in improving public health and education. It has reduced acute malnutrition by 10 percent and aims to promote at least 80 percent primary school attendance. To extend healthcare services, GUATECAÑA has launched a new health mobile unit offering ophthalmology, laboratory, dental, and general medicine services, complementing its permanent clinics along the South Coast of Guatemala.

The sector upholds a strict zero tolerance policy for child labor and continues to expand its “Better Families Program,” which focuses on self-esteem, healthy living, home management, responsible citizenship, and paternity modules. Additionally, GUATECAÑA promotes educational opportunities through partnerships with Del Valle University and the Technical National Capacity Institute (INTECAP), providing technical, college, and specialized training. This initiative is particularly focuses on empowering women to enter traditionally male-dominated roles, such as machinery operations. In MY 2024/25, the program is supporting 120 female scholarships and 30 male scholarships, helping to expand labor capabilities in the region.

Sugar, Centrifugal Market Year Begins Guatemala	2023/2024		2024/2025		2025/2026	
	Oct 2023		Oct 2024		Oct 2025	
	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
Beginning Stocks (1000 MT)	334	334	278	434	0	414
Beet Sugar Production (1000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cane Sugar Production (1000 MT)	2504	2621	2403	2621	0	2621
Total Sugar Production (1000 MT)	2504	2621	2403	2621	0	2621
Raw Imports (1000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Refined Imp.(Raw Val) (1000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Imports (1000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Supply (1000 MT)	2838	2955	2681	3055	0	3035
Raw Exports (1000 MT)	525	415	505	409	0	400
Refined Exp.(Raw Val) (1000 MT)	850	769	845	882	0	925
Total Exports (1000 MT)	1375	1184	1350	1291	0	1325
Human Dom. Consumption (1000 MT)	1185	1337	1200	1350	0	1370
Other Disappearance (1000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Use (1000 MT)	1185	1337	1200	1350	0	1370
Ending Stocks (1000 MT)	278	434	131	414	0	340
Total Distribution (1000 MT)	2838	2955	2681	3055	0	3035
(1000 MT)						
OFFICIAL DATA CAN BE ACCESSED AT: <a href="#">PSD Online Advanced Query</a>						

**Attachments:**

No Attachments