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**Report Highlights:**

FAS/Pretoria's Sugar annual report provides information on the production, supply, and distribution of sugar in Zimbabwe for marketing year (MY) 2023/24, MY 2024/25, and MY 2025/26. Sugar cane production and exports in Zimbabwe are forecast to decrease in MY 2025/26 on dry conditions in 2024. However, the sugar recovery rate is forecast to improve on timely delivery of cane and improved milling efficiency.

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## Report Highlights

- Sugarcane and sugar production: FAS/Pretoria forecasts sugar cane production to decrease by three percent in marketing year (MY) 2025/26 on dry conditions during the growing stage of the crop in 2024. Sugar production is forecast to decrease by three percent on reduced cane deliveries.
- Domestic consumption: Forecast to decrease slightly by one percent on expected reduction in production and imports.
- Exports: Forecast to fall by two percent because of a slight reduction in production and need to supply the local market.
- Imports: Forecast to decrease on a reinstated import duty.

## Report Notes

The marketing year (MY) for sugar cane is April-March, while the sugar marketing year is considered May-April. For the purposes of this report, refined cane sugar has been converted to raw value basis using a factor of 1.07.

# Sugar Cane

**Table 1: Production, Supply, and Distribution (PSD) Table for Sugar Cane**

Sugar Cane for Centrifugal Market Year Begins	2023/2024		2024/2025		2025/2026	
	Apr 2023		Apr 2024		Apr 2025	
Zimbabwe	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
Area Planted (1000 HA)	54	46	54	47	0	47
Area Harvested (1000 HA)	43	43	45	45	0	44
Production (1000 MT)	3165	3165	3358	3635	0	3450
Total Supply (1000 MT)	3165	3165	3358	3635	0	3450
Utilization for Sugar (1000 MT)	3096	3096	3289	3566	0	3381
Utilization for Alcohol (1000 MT)	69	69	69	69	0	69
Total Utilization (1000 MT)	3165	3165	3358	3635	0	3450
(1000 HA) ,(1000 MT)						
OFFICIAL DATA CAN BE ACCESSED AT: <a href="#">PSD Online Advanced Query</a>						

## Area

FAS/Pretoria forecasts area under cane production will remain unchanged in MY 2025/26 as producers are focusing on replanting area already under production to improve cane quality. Growers continue to be constrained by increasing production costs and infrastructure challenges, which limit the expansion of planted area. The cost of seed cane is reported to have increased along with the cost of agrochemicals, and increased water costs are further eroding profit margins for cane grown under irrigation. Additionally, there are constraints with conveyance infrastructure from major dams to the lowveld where sugarcane is grown, although contacts report plans to improve this situation to support cane production. Electricity shortages and lengthy outages have significant impacts on irrigation scheduling, with growers incurring additional costs to rent generators to pump irrigation water. However, dam levels at the Kariba dam have improved and may boost electricity supply.

FAS/Pretoria lowers MY 2023/24 and MY 2024/25 area planted due to updated industry data. Area harvested in MY 2025/26 is forecast to decrease by two percent from MY 2024/25 as FAS/Pretoria contacts report that there is no carry-over (unharvested) cane from MY 2024/25.

## Production

FAS/Pretoria forecasts that sugar cane production in MY 2025/26 will drop by five percent on trend yields, however, volumes will be slightly above the 3-year average. Contacts report below average rainfall in 2024, which negatively impacted cane yield during the growing stage for non-irrigated fields. The start of the rain season has also been delayed. However, growing regions received significant rains as of late January through March, and dam levels supplying irrigation water are reportedly sufficient to support the MY 2025/26 crop.

**Table 1** shows dams supplying water to major cane producing regions. The Tugwi-Mukosi and Mutirikwi dams supply about 72 percent of total sugar cane area, followed by Manjireni (24 percent) and Manyuchi (4 percent).

**Table 1: Levels of Dams Supplying Irrigation Water to the Sugar Industry**

Dam Name	Full Volume (Cubic Meters)	% Full on						
		2-Apr-19	2-Apr-20	23-Mar-21	22-Apr-22	13-Feb-23	06-Mar-24	04-Apr-24
Tugwi Mukosi	1,802,600	59	42	104	100	91	85	100.0
Mutirikwi	1,378,080	52	40	96	100	97	97	99.9
Manjirenji	274,170	83	71	96	80	53	48	90.9
Manyuchi	30,600	77	51	102	100	84	84	100.0

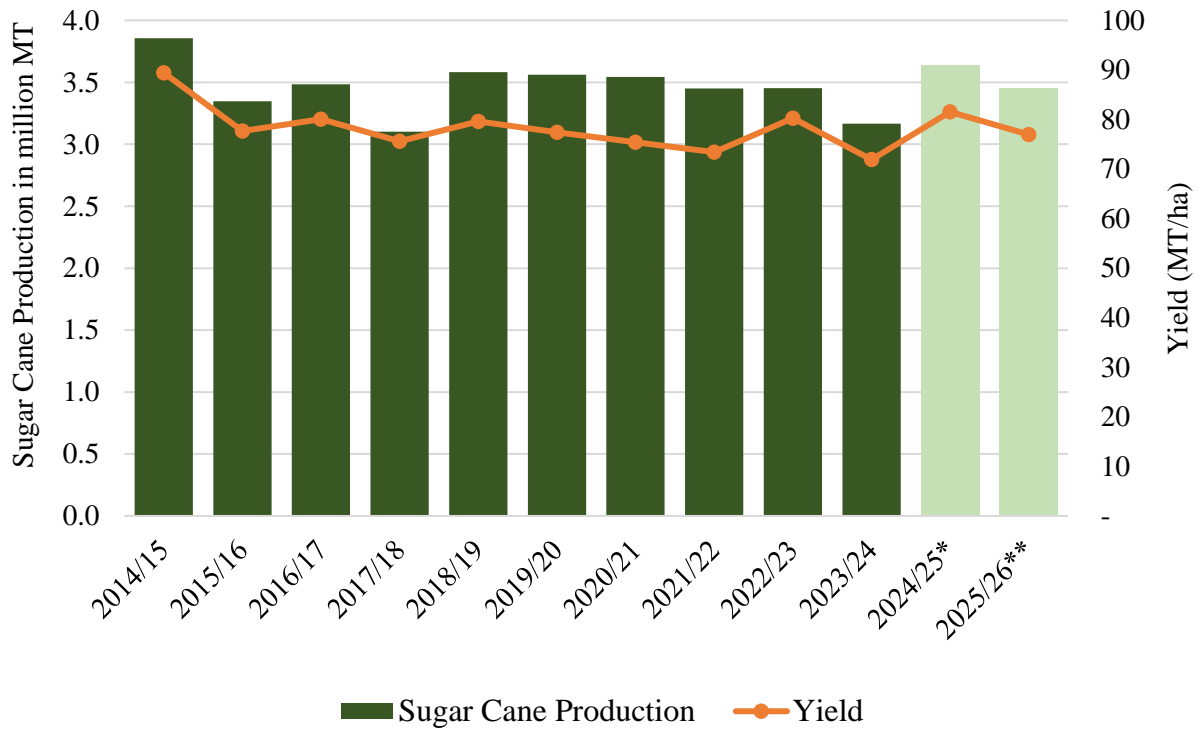
Source: [Zimbabwe National Water Authority](#)

FAS/Pretoria contacts report that there is no carry-over (unharvested) cane from MY 2024/25. Growers are concerned about the Yellow Sugarcane Aphid, which is the major pest attacking sugar cane in Zimbabwe. There is also a resurgence of the African sugar cane stalk borer (*Eldana saccharina*) which damages cane quality and yield of newer and popular varieties, namely the ZN9 and ZN10 varieties.

FAS/Pretoria revises MY 2024/25 production upwards by 277,000 MT on the harvest of carry-over cane from MY 2023/24. FAS/Pretoria contacts reported that about 3,995 ha of cane was carried over to MY 2024/25. Additionally, some growers conducted aerial spraying to control for Yellow Sugarcane Aphid and improve yields. FAS/Pretoria maintains MY 2023/24 production at 3,17 million MT.

**Figure 1** highlights Zimbabwe’s sugar cane production and yields from MY 2014/15 to forecast yields in MY 2025/26. While average yields are forecast at 78.4 MT/Ha in MY 2025/26, the variation in yields in the country ranged widely from 4 MT/Ha for poorly performing farms to about 200 MT/Ha for well managed sugar estates.

**Figure 1: Zimbabwe Sugar Cane Production and Yields**



Sources: Zimbabwe Cane Farmers Association and FAS/Pretoria Forecasts

\*FAS/Pretoria Estimate \*\* FAS/Pretoria Forecast

# Sugar

**Table 2: Production, Supply, and Distribution (PSD) Table for Sugar**

Sugar, Centrifugal Market Year Begins	2023/2024		2024/2025		2025/2026	
	May 2023		May 2024		May 2025	
Zimbabwe	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
Beginning Stocks (1000 MT)	178	178	105	139	0	300
Beet Sugar Production (1000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cane Sugar Production (1000 MT)	371	410	390	440	0	425
Total Sugar Production (1000 MT)	371	410	390	440	0	425
Raw Imports (1000 MT)	28	30	5	28	0	20
Refined Imp.(Raw Val) (1000 MT)	62	72	26	130	0	60
Total Imports (1000 MT)	90	102	31	158	0	80
Total Supply (1000 MT)	639	690	526	737	0	805
Raw Exports (1000 MT)	125	152	50	50	0	49
Refined Exp.(Raw Val) (1000 MT)	14	4	8	2	0	2
Total Exports (1000 MT)	139	156	58	52	0	51
Human Dom. Consumption (1000 MT)	395	395	360	385	0	380
Other Disappearance (1000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Use (1000 MT)	395	395	360	385	0	380
Ending Stocks (1000 MT)	105	139	108	300	0	374
Total Distribution (1000 MT)	639	690	526	737	0	805
(1000 MT)						
OFFICIAL DATA CAN BE ACCESSED AT: <a href="#">PSD Online Advanced Query</a>						

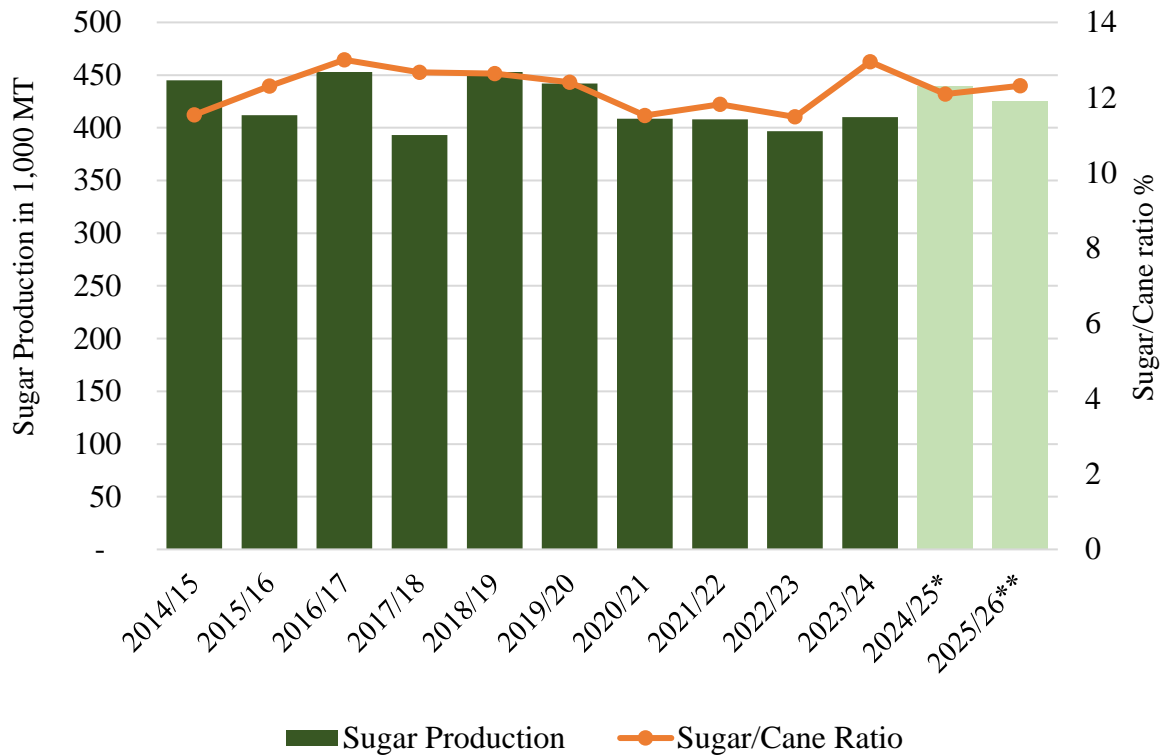
## Production

FAS/Pretoria forecasts that MY 2025/26 sugar production will decline by three percent from MY 2024/25 as dry conditions affected cane quality. Cane quality issues are partially mitigated by off-season maintenance to improve milling efficiency, which millers reported having sufficient time to complete this season. Millers also reported some additional costs due to the importation of spare parts to service and maintain sugar mills.

FAS/Pretoria revises MY 2024/25 sugar production up 50,000 MT on increased cane deliveries and quality, and a rise in available working capital following the reinstatement of sugar import duties in Zimbabwe. Some of the cane moves to the mills by rail, and FAS/Pretoria contacts report that rail performance was below expectations as the rail line moved less volume for the season compared to initially agreed volumes. Furthermore, loading zones were impacted by power outages and additional costs were incurred to rent generators for loading zones. MY 2023/24 sugar production is revised up by 39,000 MT on updated industry data, increasing by three percent from MY 2022/23.

The sugar recovery/extraction rate refers to the amount of sugar obtained from a metric ton of sugar cane, expressed as a percentage. **Figure 2** shows that the sugar-to-cane ratio is forecast to improve to 12.3 percent in MY 2025/26.

**Figure 2: Zimbabwe Sugar Production**



Sources: Zimbabwe Cane Farmers Association, Zim Sugar Sales and FAS/Pretoria Forecasts  
 \* FAS/Pretoria Estimate \*\* FAS/Pretoria Forecast

**Consumption**

FAS/Pretoria forecasts that MY 2025/26 sugar consumption will drop by one percent from MY 2024/25 on a slight decline in domestic production and expected reduction in imports. Domestic consumption of sugar in Zimbabwe is constrained by high unemployment and poverty rates, limiting consumer spending growth. Exchange rate volatility and soaring inflation (up 15 percent year-on-year in March 2025) also erode consumer purchasing power. FAS/Pretoria contacts report that retailers are constrained by government requirements that transactions should be done in the local currency, leading some retailers to reduce stock levels. Despite these challenges, the shelf price of sugar has remained unchanged, which is expected to support the consumption of sugar in Zimbabwe.

FAS/Pretoria revises MY 2024/25 domestic consumption upwards on increased domestic sugar production and imports, particularly of refined sugar. Imported sugar is usually traded below the cost of Zimbabwean production, making it cheaper than locally produced sugar. Additionally, sugar produced in Zimbabwe must comply with labelling and Vitamin A fortification regulations, while some imported sugar does not comply with those requirements, further undermining price levels of domestic production. MY 2023/24 consumption estimates remain unchanged.

The two main categories of sugar consumers in Zimbabwe are manufacturers (beverages, confectioners, bakers, and pharmaceuticals) and private households. White sugar makes up about 30 percent of domestic sugar consumption, while brown sugar accounts for 70 percent. Independent sugar refinery Star Africa (the dominant refiner in Zimbabwe) has significantly improved processing capacity in terms of the quality and volume of refined sugar that it produces, including bottler-grade sugar (premium refined sugar that has been graded). The industry currently sees minimal impact from the use of alternative sweeteners by some beverage producers, as the quantities utilized are still low.

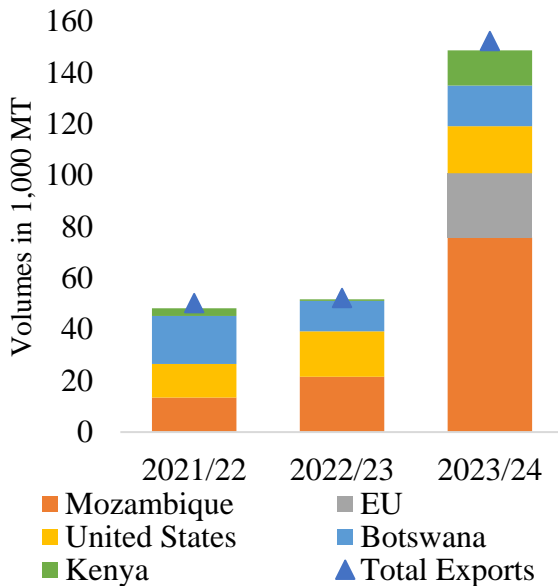
### **Exports**

FAS/Pretoria forecasts that MY 2025/26 sugar exports will decrease by two percent from MY 2024/25 on reduced production. The government of Zimbabwe requires exporters to convert 25 percent of export receipts into the local currency, which discourages exports, as revenue from foreign sales lose some of their value due to the conversion requirement while the local currency continues to lose value against the U.S. dollar. FAS/Pretoria revises MY 2024/25 sugar exports 6,000 MT down from previous estimates back to normal export averages after Zimbabwe reinstated its import duty, leading to more sales on the local market. Zimbabwe exports sugar via the sugar terminal, Sociedade Terminal De Açucar De Maputo (STAM) located in Maputo, Mozambique. FAS/Pretoria reports that the post-election protests in Mozambique affected the movement of sugar for exports, therefore, some volumes were delayed and planned to be exported in April 2025.

MY 2023/24 sugar exports are revised upwards by 17,000 MT as sugar producers increased exports in the face of challenges in the domestic market due to the influx of cheaper imports. For Post's forecast and estimates, refined sugar has been converted to raw value using a factor of 1.07.

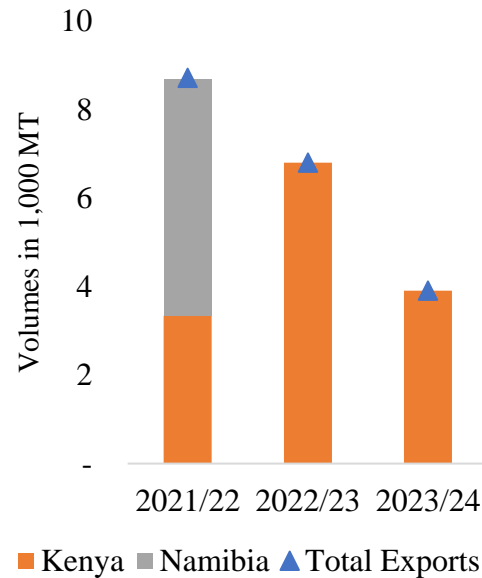


**Figure 3: Zimbabwe’s Raw Sugar Exports**  
 HS Codes: 170111/170112/170113/170114



Source: FAS/Pretoria using Trade Data Monitor, LLC.  
 \*Mirror data

**Figure 4: Zimbabwe’s Refined Sugar Exports**  
 HS Codes: 170191, 170199

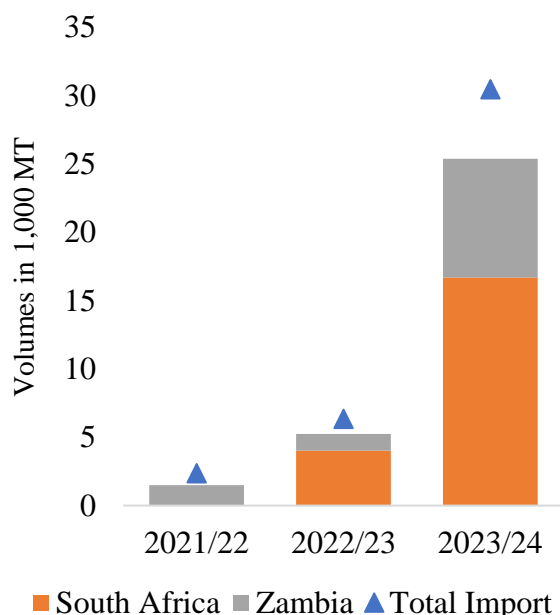


Source: FAS/Pretoria using Trade Data Monitor, LLC.  
 Refined sugar volumes in this table have been converted to raw value using a factor of 1.07.

**Imports**

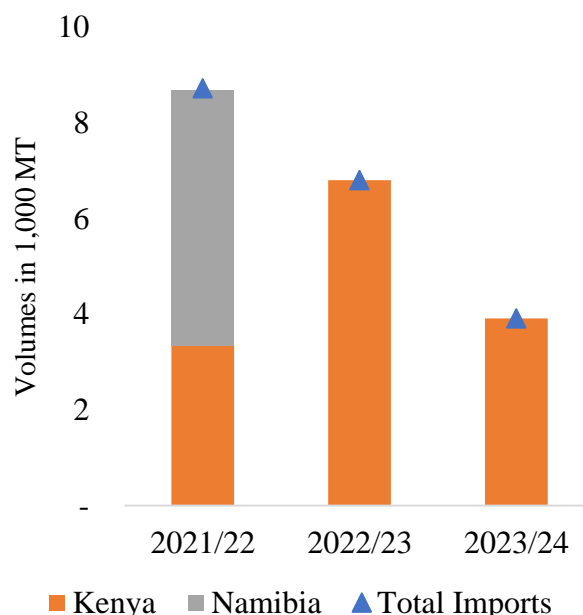
FAS/Pretoria expects Zimbabwe’s MY 2025/26 sugar imports will drop by 49 percent on domestic production, import duties, and reduced sugar tax. Zimbabwe introduced a sugar tax of US\$0.001 per gram in February 2024. This led to beverage manufacturers importing sugar, which is cheaper than locally produced sugar. Effective January 2025, Zimbabwe reduced the sugar tax by half to address downward pressure on demand for locally produced sugar. FAS/Pretoria revises MY 2024/25 imports up 127,000 MT from previous estimates, with the sugar tax driving increased demand for relatively lower priced imports. MY 2023/24 sugar imports are revised slightly upwards on finalized import data. Imports by Zimbabwe in MY 2023/24 came mostly from South Africa.

**Figure 5: Zimbabwe's Raw Sugar Imports**  
 HS Codes: 170111/170112/170113/170114



Source: FAS/Pretoria using Trade Data Monitor, LLC.

**Figure 6: Zimbabwe's Refined Sugar Exports**  
 HS Codes: 170191, 170199



Source: FAS/Pretoria using Trade Data Monitor, LLC.  
 Refined sugar volumes in this table have been converted to raw value using a factor of 1.07.

**Ending Stocks**

FAS/Pretoria forecasts that ending stocks will increase to 374,000 MT in MY 2025/26, based on the slight decrease in exports and domestic consumption. All the sugar produced in each marketing year is considered sold at the end of the season, as the industry must share revenue between growers and millers per the agreed “division of proceeds” formulas used by the milling companies and industry. Ownership of closing stocks is usually held by wholesalers, retailers, refineries, and to a limited extent, the Zimbabwe Sugar Sales Company. Larger ending stocks, especially those held by the Zimbabwe Sugar Sales Company, pose a cost challenge to the industry as growers and millers must pay for storage.

## **Trade Policy and Regulations:**

### **U.S. Sugar Quota**

Zimbabwe is a beneficiary of the U.S. sugar tariff-rate quota (TRQ), allowing the country to export raw sugar duty-free to the United States, prior to the start of reciprocal tariffs. For FY 2025 (October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025), Zimbabwe received a base TRQ allocation of 12,910 MT. For FY 2024 (October 1, 2023-September 30, 2024), Zimbabwe received an initial TRQ allocation of 12,910 MT, and an additional allocation of 6,601 MT (total of 19,511 MT for FY 2024). Zimbabwe usually fully utilizes its sugar quota as prices in the U.S. market remain high compared to other markets.

### **Customs Duties**

In 2014, the Zimbabwean government instituted a 10 percent customs duty plus \$100/MT surtax on all sugar imports from countries outside of Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) in a bid to protect the local industry from an influx of sugar imports from countries such as Brazil and India. In May 2022, the Zimbabwean government suspended custom duties on basic commodities, including sugar, for a period of six months (until November 2022) to combat serious supply shortages in the market. The tariff was then reinstated on November 16, 2022, at a 10 percent customs duty plus \$100/MT surtax on all sugar imports from countries outside of SADC and COMESA.

To control for food price inflation, the Zimbabwean government again suspended import duties on essential goods (sugar, cooking oil, corn meal, milk, rice, flour, salt) from May 23, 2023, to February 1, 2024. Now that the duty on sugar has been reinstated, the Zimbabwean sugar sector expects to see a rebound in domestic sales, complimented by a decrease in exports.

### **Levy on Sugar Content of Beverages**

The Zimbabwean Minister of Finance in a national budget speech on November 30, 2023, announced the introduction of a tax on beverages containing added sugar. The Zimbabwean government cited health concerns linked to high sugar consumption as the main reason for imposing the tax. A levy of \$0.02 per gram of added sugar in beverages went into effect on January 1, 2024. Contacts shared that the tax was subsequently reduced to \$0.001 per gram for specified beverages. The tax was further reduced to \$0.0005 per gram effective from January 1, 2025.

### **Domestic Retail Sugar Price Support**

Star Africa Corporation, an independent refinery, supplies the majority (at least 80 percent) of refined sugar in Zimbabwe. To maintain low retail prices for sugar in Zimbabwe, the government negotiates a “fair” price at which Star Africa buys raw sugar from the sugar mills. As a result, Star Africa is also required to obtain permission from the government to increase the wholesale and retail prices of refined sugar sold in Zimbabwe.

### **Ethanol Production**

Zimbabwe introduced mandatory blending of fuel with ethanol in 2011. Currently, the minimum mandatory blending of vehicle fuels with ethanol is 20 percent, but the level varies depending on

the domestic supply and availability of ethanol. Green Fuels had a monopoly in the production and supply of ethanol from cane sugar for fuel blending purposes. However, in 2019, Triangle Sugar was licensed to produce and sell ethanol. Since 2020, there are about 11 companies with licenses to blend ethanol into gasoline for retail sale at the pump.

FAS/Pretoria estimates that total annual ethanol production in Zimbabwe ranges between 40 million to 120 million liters. The volume varies based on changes in sugar cane production, the quality of sugar cane, and factory efficiencies. Green Fuels has about 9,000 ha under cultivation for sugar cane for the sole purpose of ethanol production. The company has the capacity to produce about 120 million liters of ethanol annually. Fuel-grade ethanol produced by Triangle Sugar is a complementary product to sugar and is produced from molasses, a co-product of sugar production. This makes ethanol produced by Triangle Sugar cheaper (but also less efficiently produced) than the ethanol produced by Green Fuels from fermentable sugar. Triangle Sugar's ethanol production is estimated to range from 20 to 50 million liters annually.

### **Vitamin A Fortification**

In 2017, the Zimbabwean government implemented a regulation for the mandatory fortification of household sugar with Vitamin A. This regulation was passed as part of the Zimbabwe National Food Fortification Strategy 2014-2018, which is aligned to the National Food and Nutrition Strategy for Zimbabwe that serves as a guideline to both policy and implementation levels to prevent micronutrient deficiencies. The strategy was developed to address the micronutrient deficiency burden in the country as revealed by the 2012 Zimbabwe Micronutrient Survey. According to the survey, 19 percent of children aged 6-59 months are Vitamin A deficient.

### **Project Kilimanjaro**

Project Kilimanjaro is an initiative by the Zimbabwean government, Tongaat Hulett (a sugar mill), and private banks to assist up to 1,070 private farmers supplying cane to mills to increase productivity on 22,822 ha of land by increasing yields to at least 100 MT/ha by MY 2023/24. The project plans to develop 4,000 ha of virgin land into new sugar cane fields to benefit 200 new farmers on a full cost recovery basis, creating 2,000 new jobs. About \$17.1 million has been spent to date with 2,700 ha of virgin land cleared, storage dams and water canals built, water pumps installed, and 455 ha planted to cane.

### **Report Sources:**

Green Fuels – <https://www.greenfuel.co.zw>

Star Africa Corporation – <http://www.starafriacorporation.com/>

Tongaat Hulett – <https://www.tongaat.com/>

Zimbabwe Sugar Association Experiment Station – <https://www.zsaes.org.zw/>

Zimbabwe National Water Authority – <http://www.zinwa.co.zw>

### **Attachments:**

No Attachments