EU sugar market update and outlook
2nd August 2018

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Global Sugar Alliance mulls WTO challenge to CAP farm subsidies

The Global Sugar Alliance, whose members comprise Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, South Africa and Thailand, have issued a press release asking India, Pakistan and the European Union to cut export and domestic subsidies for sugar, blaming such programs for weak sugar prices and the current surplus of supply on the world market.

The Global Sugar Alliance met in Geneva on 18th July to discuss the degree to which the subsidies of Pakistan, India and the EU may contravene WTO rules. “There must be no exports of the subsidized sugar,” said Mr Eduardo de Sousa, executive director of UNICA Brazil. As well as representatives of the Alliance, the meeting was also attended by Government representatives.

In addition to identifying export subsidies and domestic price supports in excess of WTO allowances (according to the Alliance) in Pakistan and India, the Alliance identified the EU’s Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) and Voluntary Coupled Support (VCS) which is granted to sugar beet production in certain member states. According to the Alliance, in 2015, BPS amounted to €319 million on 1.4 million hectares of sugar beet, whilst VCS is granted in eleven Member States: Poland (especially), Czech Republic, Italy, Spain, Romania, Croatia, Slovakia, Hungary, Finland, Greece, and now Lithuania, amounting to €174 million on 497,000 hectares of sugar beet.

Interviewed for the Townsville Bulletin (Australia), Mr Greg Beashel, Chairman of the Global Sugar Alliance, said he would much prefer that India, Pakistan and the EU reform their subsidy programs rather risk a lengthy WTO dispute. Mr Beashel noted that a WTO dispute can only be brought by Governments, but that much of the legal work has already been done and he has detected an urgency amongst the Governments of Alliance members to act if necessary.

See also:

EU sugar prices collapse leads to lower reported profits, acrimony and renewed calls for private storage aids

On 26th July, the European Commission’s Sugar Market Observatory published the average reported prices for white sugar. The EU average was reported 368 €/t in May, an increase of 6 €/t or +1.7%

On 26th July, the European Commission’s Sugar Market Observatory reported that the average price for white sugar in the EU was 368 €/t in May, an increase of 6 €/t or +1.7% from April. The average price in Region 3 (“southern Europe”) was a little higher at 383 €/t. Meanwhile, Kingsman
reported that spot prices in July were 320 €/t in Germany, France and the Low Countries, and a little higher in the UK (340€/t) and Spain (370 €/t). It may be noted that the export prices reported by Eurostat are actually a little higher than the Kingman spot prices for domestic sugar.

In recent months consequent to the collapse in EU and world sugar prices, Suedzucker and Tereos, amongst others, have reported lower profits from sugar activities.

On 12th July, Suedzucker, the largest EU sugar producer, reported a 49 percent drop in first-quarter operating profit reflecting the slump in sugar prices. The CEO of Suedzucker, Mr Wolfgang Heer, said on that trading conditions remain tough but that he sees potential for a recovery in depressed global sugar prices. He told the annual meeting of Suedzucker shareholders that, “In the sugar segment we are currently operating in a difficult environment with worldwide production overcapacity and extremely low prices with which hardly any sugar producer can operate profitably. We are convinced that the situation will normalize after a transition phase and that the market and price structure will again reach a sustainable and profitable level” (see https://reut.rs/2uMqzOK).

With European producers exposed to global prices which have fallen about 40 percent since early 2017, Tereos, the second largest sugar group in the EU, has been shaken by an internal crisis. 70 of the 73 elected representatives of the five Tereos sugar factories in France (Attin, Boiry, Lillers, Chevrières and Escaudœuvres) said that they have resigned over a disagreement with the management of the cooperative. “We have resigned from our mandates [...] to express our disagreement with the poor governance of our cooperative, Tereos SCA, and its management results”, they said in a statement on 24th July. The representatives stated they also consider that the results of the cooperative are not what farmers might expect and that since 2012, Tereos has apparently lost ground in terms of net profit compared to major European competitors such as Nordzucker and Suedzucker. When asked by La France Agricole, Tereos did not wish to react.

Meanwhile, at the Management Committee meeting on 26th July, several Member States repeated their requests to the Commission to introduce Private Storage Aid in order to alleviate the difficult situation in the EU sugar sector. However, other Member States voiced opposition to introducing Private Storage Aid at this stage. The Commission, for its part, repeated the reply that Commissioner Hogan gave at the last Agriculture Council, which summarized a more precise answer given by the Commission to a European Parliamentary question (E-002167/2018): “According to the common market Organisation Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 as amended by the so-called ‘Omnibus Regulation’, the measures available to the Commission remain private storage aid as well as exceptional measures that can be adopted in case of market disturbance or imbalances. The Commission does not currently envisage proposing any revision of the reference threshold for sugar”.

Just one cargo of ACP raw sugar imported in May 2018 at 258 €/t CIF tel quel – Eurostat

Imports of bulk raw sugar from ACP countries have almost ceased this year; the prices and quantities seem both to have fallen off a cliff (see graphs below). According to the latest data released by Eurostat, just one cargo of 11,400 tonnes of ACP raw sugar was imported into the United Kingdom in May 2018 at price of 258 €/t CIF tel quel. Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia have not (yet) imported a gramme of bulk raw sugar in the 2017/18 marketing year.
Rhythm of EU monthly exports continues to slow – on target now for 3.4m tonnes in 2017/18 (after earlier estimates of 3.7m tonnes)

According to the latest Eurostat and Taxud Surveillance data, the rhythm of monthly exports from the EU slowed quite considerably in May, June and July 2018, led by exports from France which in May were half their average since October. From 1st until 24th July, according to Taxud, just over 180,000 tonnes was exported, a far cry from the monthly totals exceeding 300,000 tonnes seen in Oct/Dec 2017. As a result, with only two months to go until the end of the marketing year on 30th September, expectations of total EU exports may be revised further downwards from 3.7 million tonnes to, say, 3.4m or even lower for the 2017/18 marketing year.

This month of July also witnessed the largest white sugar delivery on the London #5 market since December 2016, with just over 66,000 tonnes of EU whites delivered. Although recent Eurostat data has indicated that EU exporters were achieving premiums to the #5 market until May, it seems that 66,000 tonnes of sugar decided that the best option was to be delivered at flat against the August contract. Market rumours were that a large German producer delivered to a large London based trade house.

On a more positive note, the Commission reported to the Management Committee that, according to data sourced from the IHS Markit Global Trade Atlas ©, the European Union is now the second largest global exporter of refined sugar, after Brazil. Before the WTO limit became disregarded, the EU was 3rd or 4th position after India and Thailand (depending if India was exporting or not).
EU stocks remain relatively high, but not exceptionally so

Perhaps unsurprisingly given the news concerning slower EU exports, the level of stocks reported by EU sugar producers and refiners to the European Commission at the end of May 2018 remains high at just over 9.2 million tonnes. However, total stocks were considerably higher in 2015. Perhaps also unsurprisingly, the level of stocks reported by the cane sugar refiners was also higher at around 380,000 tonnes in May compared with around 325,000 tonnes reported held by the refiners in April. At the very least, this level of stocks ought to ensure more than adequate “fluidity” in the EU market.

Outlook for the EU sugar crop in 2018/19

Sugar beet yields in 2017/18 were exceptionally high, especially in the major European producing countries, with an EU average of 12.6 tonnes sucrose produced per hectare sown. Preliminary reports are that the area sown for the 2018/19 crop was around 2% less, or 1,645,000 hectares compared with 1,678,000 hectares in 2017/18, excluding jus vert.

Taking a three year average yield (of 12.0 tonnes/ha) and multiplying the above numbers for each Member State, would give an EU28 production estimate in 2018/19 of 19.7 million tonnes, or 1.4 million tonnes less than last year.

But will we reach an EU average of 12.0 tonnes/ha this year? Sowing of the 2018/19 beet was delayed in many European countries owing to the wet and cold spring weather, and now, in many north and western areas of Europe, it didn’t rain at all from the middle of June until the end of July, and temperatures were extremely high. Beet is a very resilient crop and yields often seem to surprise on the upside providing no disasters e.g. with frost and thaw during the later campaigns. Although it remains extremely worrying from a political point-of-view that scientific evidence of the environmental benefits of neonic treatment of pelleted beet seed has been disregarded, the neonic ban will not affect 2018/19 beet seed. We shall see, but for the moment, julianprice.com Ltd is pencilling in an estimate EU sugar production of 19.7m tonnes for 2018/19.
Caribbean Sugar Industry Leaders Highlight Brexit Opportunity

Sugar Association of the Caribbean Board Members met with representatives from ACP Sugar producing countries on 6th July in London to discuss future market access to UK post-Brexit.

Chairman of the ACP/LDC Sugar Industries Group (“ACP Sugar”), Philip de Pass, outlined developments to date: “[The] EU reforms of the sugar market concluded last year have seen imports of cane sugar from traditional suppliers collapse. They are already down 55% compared with 2017/18 and 74% compared with 2013/14. ACP countries have been left substantially worse off than anticipated and the Accompanying Measures programme designed to help them has not had the desired impact. Brexit is a once in a lifetime opportunity for traditional suppliers to the UK to retain a share of their traditional market for sugar.”

Sugar Association of the Caribbean Board Representative, Mac McLachlan added: “CARICOM sugar producers are now faced with the prospect of the loss of opportunity to export to their largest historic market – the UK. BREXIT offers UK policy makers an opportunity to support development partners in the Caribbean and wider ACP – and to create a level playing field for cane and beet refiners, where domestic production constraints permit a market environment which continues to provide UK consumers a continuing choice of cane sugar, or to lose this opportunity at the expense of some of the poorest farmers in the world.”

“Rectification” of UK/EU27 schedules opposed by WTO members

On 24th July, the newly appointed UK Permanent Representative to the UN and WTO in Geneva, Mr Julian Braithwaite, submitted the UK’s WTO goods schedule to all WTO members for certification. The submission follows an earlier agreement by both the EU27 and the UK to split the tariff rate quotas in accordance with a formula based on the average quota fills in the 2014, 2015 and 2016 calendar years according to licences data. For sugar, the quotas would be split as in the table below. However, nearly all the other major WTO players have rejected the EU27/UK formula with the not unreasonable comment that to split the quotas will lead to a loss of flexibility and hence potential revenue. Negotiations will likely continue!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Raw cane sugar, for refining</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>9,925</th>
<th>AUS</th>
<th>094317</th>
<th>50%</th>
<th>4,961</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raw cane sugar, for refining</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>388,124</td>
<td>BRA</td>
<td>094318</td>
<td>92.4%</td>
<td>358,454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw cane sugar, for refining</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>CUB</td>
<td>094319</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw cane sugar, for refining</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>372,876</td>
<td>EO</td>
<td>094320</td>
<td>91.6%</td>
<td>341,460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cane or beet sugar</td>
<td>t (white sugar equivalent)</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>IDN</td>
<td>094321</td>
<td>58.4%</td>
<td>5,841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cane or beet sugar</td>
<td>t (white sugar equivalent)</td>
<td>1,294,700</td>
<td>ACP</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>71.2%</td>
<td>921,707</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### July 2018 in the Twittersphere

#### The Sugar Market

| Land abundant exporters, population dense importers. [AgTrade](https://t.co/v3ltN2SJdm) expected to flow increasingly from land abundant countries to regions where resources are scarce and/or population pressure is high. [AgOutlook](pic.twitter.com/68rDBZYyaK) — Jonathan Brooks (@JBAgriFood) **July 3, 2018** |

| Latest member of [UoN Beet team](https://t.co/v3ltN2SJdm) joined me to walk the plots this morning. Looking pretty good considering the mid May sowing date and almost no rain since [BBRO Beet](https://t.co/v3ltN2SJdm) [UoNBiosciences](https://t.co/68rDBZYyaK) — Debbie Sparkes (@DebbieSparkes) **July 8, 2018** |

| Brazilian sugar exports totaled 1,927.1 thousand tonnes in June - 8% lower than May and a 1,161,900-tonne decline from the same period last year. This decrease is mostly associated with a higher ethanol-directed mix at mills and lower export basis for VHP in the country. [OATT](pic.twitter.com/GsdL1Sb1wG) — Matheus Sleiman (@matheus_sleiman) **July 9, 2018** |

| As projected in OECD/FAO Outlook to 2027, world sugar output may exceed 200 mln tonnes by 2026. Brazil is projected to remain the largest producer with strong growth prospects foreseen in India, China and Thailand. Demand for caloric sweeteners is expected to grow by 1.5% a year — [ISO Sugar](https://t.co/GsdL1Sb1wG) (@iso_sugar) **July 12, 2018** |

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Biggest white #sugar delivery since Dec 16. Just over 66,000 tonnes of EU whites delivered. Mkt rumours that a large German producer has delivered to a large London based trade house. Let the fun and games begin. The freight mkt should warm up - especially for larger sizes.
— A Real Sugar Expert (@ARealSugarExprt) July 17, 2018

Annual shareholders’ meeting ... Suedzucker presents a satisfying result for the last year but warns of severe profit drop in 2018/19 following the liberalisation of the EU sugar market. Cui bono? pic.twitter.com/yecKho7BMM
— fz (@SouthGermanBeet) July 19, 2018

Sugar beet isn’t a tropical plant! 35°C is way to hot as you can see on the left picture made at 6 pm. Compare it to the same field at 8.30 am the same day. I’m expecting a yield significantly below average as dry weather shall continue ...
pic.twitter.com/U2p2kJti5I
— fz (@SouthGermanBeet) July 25, 2018

Refined Sugar Carrier "CHL Innovator" back in the water after a month in dry dock. Ready to add another 20 k/mth to EU sugar exports. Last trip was early May. pic.twitter.com/z61qZ7r3JA
— Josh Rossato (@JoshRossato) July 24, 2018

Raw sugar has 2 consecutive closes below 11 c/lb. The N. Hemisphere summer doldrums haven’t resulted in sideways market - it is falling and may head towards the 2018 (10.69) or 2015 (10.13) lows. That is despite dry weather in CS Brazil, EU & Russia, and an possible El Nino.
— Green Pool (@GreenPoolComms) July 31, 2018

In Brazil, high ethanol production and stocks, that hit more than 7.0 million m³ in the first half of July), are keeping mill prices down. Still, demand could offset this bearish effect on prices, especially considering the possibility of an early end of the 2018/19 season. #oatt pic.twitter.com/SAORjW9ygs
— Matheus Sleiman (@matheus_sleiman) July 31, 2018
The average EU #sugar price was 368 €/t in May, and increase of 6 €/t or +1.7%, according to @EUAgri data released today. That's 33p per kilo in #brexit terms. Have we seen the worst of the low sugar prices in Europe?
pic.twitter.com/Gf037RTiDY
— Julian Price (@hools) 26 July 2018

Governments urged to act to save sinking sugar price - https://t.co/ugL7ssx17V pic.twitter.com/uPZ79IGMC1
— Sugarcane (@UNICA_sugarcane) 19 July 2018

India's ISMA says that India's 18/19 cane crop could yield 35 - 35.5 mln mt sugar, depending on monsoon rainfall. That is more than 9 mln mt surplus sugar over domestic consumption, and India's milling industry is still asking for gov't assistance to deal with the 17/18 surplus!
pic.twitter.com/W8d09YnUwF
— Green Pool (@GreenPoolComms) 17 July 2018

#EUSugarBeet sector calls on #EUInstitutions to maintain the 98 EUR/tonne #sugar duty in future #EUMercosur deal. #sustainablesugar pic.twitter.com/IOZKohZ9io
— C.I.B.E. (@SugarBeetEurope) 10 July 2018

Drought affecting all crops although sugar beet is showing resilience, apparently able to grow without much soil to root contact or maybe this one is a 'super beet' forcing soil apart! Shame that what little rain is around chooses to fall in barley fields @nfusugar @farmerkit pic.twitter.com/nluo05qiSu
— BBRO_Beet (@BBRO_Beet) July 17, 2018

Industrie sucrière : l'Union européenne exporte sa production à un rythme soutenu mais à des prix bas https://t.co/XjmBgiB4Gb#commerce_exterieur #exportation #perspectives #prix #production #betteraveasucre #stocks #UE #sucre @Min_Agriculture @ITBetterave @LeBetteravierFR pic.twitter.com/lqYr1MjHsP
## Brexit

Constructive and frank discussions today with @DominicRaab and the #UK team. Work continues over the coming weeks to reach a #Brexit deal. Next meeting will be in mid-August: https://t.co/DEtmslMjJk

— Michel Barnier (@MichelBarnier) [July 26, 2018](https://t.co/DEtmslMjJk)

We will now analyse the #Brexit White Paper w/ Member States & EP, in light of #EUCO guidelines. EU offer = ambitious FTA + effective cooperation on wide range of issues, including a strong security partnership. Looking forward to negotiations with the #UK next week.

— Michel Barnier (@MichelBarnier) [July 12, 2018](https://t.co/DEtmslMjJk)

### The EU

The #EU encourages and supports over-production in sugar and poultry and then dumps its surplus production in Africa and other developing regions - killing jobs, drowning industry. #crocodilettrade Read more here: https://t.co/mcQWfSYrRG

— FairPlay (@FairPlayZA) [July 31, 2018](https://t.co/mcQWfSYrRG)

Rectification works for most commitments, ie, ordinary tariffs but not for tariff quotas because

1. the UK & EU want EU27+UK quotas to = present EU28 quotas

2. the EU is launching GATT Art28 negotiations on the quotas.

If the EU negotiates the UK has to too, or drop point 1. https://t.co/AihZmG8COu

— Peter Ungphakorn (@CoppetainPU) [July 21, 2018](https://t.co/AihZmG8COu)

### Power from Ireland's Taoiseach

Powerful stuff from Ireland's Taoiseach: 'One hundred years ago this country was forced to accept partition. We can never go back to the borders that followed.' 'We will stay calm and negotiate alongside our European allies.' #Brexit #Irish #independence

— Feargal Dalton IE EU #AthClathabú (@FeargalDalton) [July 22, 2018](https://t.co/8G01qDyS5y)

I have small model T&L lorry which has pride of place on my workdesk. Happy 140th birthday to all @TateLyleSugars pic.twitter.com/yNgNhSpYz

— Julian Price (@hools) [July 27, 2018](https://twitter.com/yNgNhSpYz)
Delighted the UK’s WTO goods schedule is being circulated today formally to all @WTO members for certification. It seeks to replicate the concessions and commitments applicable to the UK as part of the EU today. An important milestone as we prepare for our departure from the EU. pic.twitter.com/1vgcpgFV7T
— Julian Braithwaite (@JulianUNWTO) July 24, 2018

Pleasure to show @AusUKChamber Elizabeth & Kirsty around the Refinery and talk trade & Australian raw cane sugar pic.twitter.com/Sci6vyQBlc
— Tate & Lyle Sugars (@TateLyleSugars) July 31, 2018

**Health & Sustainability**

Südzucker, the world's leading sugar producing company aims to expand its output of organic beet sugar in Germany to meet steadily rising demand for the product. It will therefore contract additional quantities of organic sugar beet for the 2019 campaign.
— ISO Sugar (@iso_sugar) July 5, 2018

The Guatemala sugar industry launched Sugar for Good, a campaign and pledge to meet nine sustainability commitments tied to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2025.
— ISO Sugar (@iso_sugar) July 10, 2018

Peter De Klerk, Senior Economist @iso_sugar is busting the myths about sugar on health in International Conference at National Sugar Institute, Kanpur where food secretary Mr. Ravikant is the chief guest is also present @nsi_sugar pic.twitter.com/Ejn8qij0u4
— Ashish Verma (@AshishNSIK) July 19, 2018

An info-graphic illustrating deaths from #GMO consumption by country over the last 30-years. pic.twitter.com/bWgQHwVx7N
— Matthew Pot (@MatthewPot) July 22, 2018
Néonicotinoïdes : des gages pour obtenir une dérogation #betteraves
A lire sur : https://t.co/5x94C2sTK6 pic.twitter.com/rECVk0LKPv
— Le Betteravier français (@LeBetteravierFR) July 23, 2018

The ECJ press release on the judgement declaring that organisms obtained using gene-editing technologies must be regulated as GMOs with link to full judgement https://t.co/oDJK5wVkro
— Alan Matthews (@xAlan_Matthews) July 25, 2018

New issue of Agricultural Economics published by Czech Academy of Sciences now available, open access, articles include measuring shadow price of GHG emissions in dairy production and discussion of a common agricultural policy for Africa https://t.co/bsaFDSj3mT
— Alan Matthews (@xAlan_Matthews) July 18, 2018

Trade Negotiations

With the largest bilateral trade deal EVER, today we cement Japanese-European friendship. Geographically, we are far apart. But politically and economically we could hardly be any closer. With shared values of liberal democracy, human rights and the rule of law.
pic.twitter.com/ICcGTY3Xl8
— Donald Tusk (@eucopresident) July 17, 2018

Great to meet @linda_apelt in London to discuss the trade and investment opportunities for sustainably produced Qld sugar in a post-Brexit world @CANEGROWERS @TateLyleSugars pic.twitter.com/6yOTwfQ8XM
— Warren Males (@MalesWarren) July 17, 2018
Much momentum with progressing Australia UK & EU global rules based agenda re Free Trade Agreements. @Australia UK Leadership Forum London today @The Policy Institute at Kings @Kings College London @TIQd_London pic.twitter.com/v8yuLZfLL1
— Linda Apelt TIQ (@linda_apelt) July 18, 2018

Addressing the farmers who marched to @the_dti on 25 June 2018, Director General of the DTI Lionel October acknowledges that the sugar industry is suffering as a result of excessive imports. Watch here: https://t.co/D77H7Tb2Ab pic.twitter.com/8Q4emQfFad
— FairPlay (@FairPlayZA) July 16, 2018

Meeting in Geneva, Global Sugar Alliance members urged their governments to save the sinking sugar price. Indian, Pakistan and EU sugar supports in excess of WTO allowances must be stopped. @CANEGROWERS @wto pic.twitter.com/XThLMhN0nq
— Warren Males (@MalesWarren) July 19, 2018

EU-Japan trade deal - what’s in it for sugar? Limitations on non-originating sugar kept (20-40% max Non-Originating Material in weight). Liberalisation of chocolates, sugar confectionery in 10 yrs. TRQ’s for other high sugar content products. (pg. 17) https://t.co/cBrjSKLE0j
— ISO Sugar (@iso_sugar) July 23, 2018

Status of #afcfta signing @ECA_OFFICIAL @AUTradeIndustry pic.twitter.com/5vOwISHYy4
— ECA | ATPC (African Trade Policy Centre) (@ATPC2) 30 July 2018

Dress code changes at the ISO HQ in London are afoot. All employees are being asked to wear sugarcane shoes. Unclear whether there will be a discount at November’s ISO conference for attendees wearing these shoes. New demand emerges for cane @ 10.50
— A Real Sugar Expert (@ARealSugarExptr) August 1, 2018
Fiji Sugar Corporation’s chief operating officer Navin Chandra says crushing at the Lautoka Sugar Mill has doubled and are crushing 4500 tonnes cane now compared to 2200 tonnes last week.


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