NEWS

US SUGAR BALANCE

According to the latest estimate of USDA, sugar production in the US in 2004-2005 is expected at 8.48 million short tons raw value or 0.36 million strv lower than the production 2003-04. Including opening stock of 2.18 million strv and imports of 1.59 million strv, the total supply is expected at 12.25 million strv, almost the same as in 2003-04. Total use (including exports) in 2004-05 is estimated at 10.11 million strv, slightly higher than in 2003-04. Stock at the end of 2004-05 is estimated at 2.15 million strv as against 2.18 million strv at the end of 2003-04. Stocks to use ratio in 2004-05 is expected at 21.2% compared with 21.6% in 2003-04.

RUSSIAN SUGAR IMPORT

According to the state's Customs Committee, Russia imported 672,800 tonnes of raw sugar in January/April 2004, compared to 1,243 million tonnes in the previous year. White sugar imports in January/April 2004 reached 82,600 tonnes as against 45,800 tonnes in the same period last year.

INCREASE IN CHINESE SUGAR IMPORTS

According to preliminary figures, sugar imports by China in May 2004 amounted to 172,393 tonnes, bringing cumulative imports in the first five months of 2004 to 495,917 tonnes, a rise of almost 118% on 2003. China's General Administration of Customs said. Major countries of origin in January/May 2005 were Thailand (103,773 tonnes), Cuba (221,451 tonnes) and South Korea (49,434 tonnes). Sugar exports in January/May 2004 amounted to 25,950 tonnes, down by almost 58%. The main country of destination in 2004 was HongKong with 12,108 tonnes.

BIOTECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENT AT HAWAII AGRICULTURE RESEARCH CENTER (HARC)

Improvements in crop productivity and quality historically were achieved by a combination of increased farming inputs such as fertilizers and pesticides, and genetic improvement of the crop. Genetic improvement was accomplished through the traditional methods of plant breeding. Today, biotechnology is applied in crop improvement to enhance the efficiency and broaden the

boundaries of traditional methods. HARC's biotechnology team utilizes techniques such as gene transformation through particle bombardment and/or *agrobacterium* to achieve insect and disease resistance to solve production problems and genome mapping to enhance breeding programs.

Currently, genetic transformation projects are on sugarcane, pineapple, coffee and papaya. This year, genome mapping research has expanded from sugarcane to other tropical fruits such as papaya, coffee, macadamia nuts, and pineapple. Tissue culture protocols for plant regeneration and micropropagation for wide range of plants including sugarcane, pineapple, banana, taro and woody species such as *Eucalyptus* and *Acacia* have been developed and are in use. Cellular and molecular biology research is also conducted under funds received through the USDA. This program mainly sponsors graduate students at the University of Hawaii and post-doctoral researchers collaborating with USDA scientists at HARC. Projects include improving transformation efficiency through investigation of promoters, reducing variability of transgene expression, and increasing sucrose accumulation through cell transformation with constructs which alter soluble acid invertase activity.

NEW RECORD OF WHITE WOOLLY SUGARCANE APHID (*CERATOVACUNA LANIGERA*) FROM UTTAR PRADESH, INDIA

During the survey of major pest of sugarcane in Shaharanpur district of Uttar Pradesh during Dec. 2001, it was observed that some white aphids were sucking sap from the lower sides of the sugarcane leaves. The sucking aphids which were covered with white woolly covering, were collected from fields and identified as white woolly sugarcane aphids *Ceratovacuna lanigera* Zehnt. Its heavy infestation was observed in the sugarcane fields having popular plantation. It is a minor pest of sugarcane and very little information is available on this pest.

**Manager Singh, Atar Singh, Mahabeer Prasad
and S.B. Singh**
U.P. Council of Sugarcane Research,
Shahjahanpur - 242 001