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Report Highlights:

Sugar cane production in Eswatini is forecast to improve by two percent in MY 2026/27 year-on-year, based on expanded area under production and sufficient water for irrigation. Sugar production is forecast to increase from MY 2025/26 in line with sugar cane production. This expanded production is expected to increase exports by two percent, as Eswatini continues to supply its traditional markets. Eswatini received a sugar tariff rate quota allocation of 17,213 MT to the United States market for FY 2026.

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Executive Summary

- Sugar cane and sugar production:
- FAS/Pretoria forecasts that MY 2026/27 sugar cane production will increase by two percent from MY 2025/26, based on expanded planted area and normal weather conditions. Although the yellow aphid is a major pest affecting cane yields, infestations have reportedly decreased in affected areas due to preventative spraying. Sugar production is forecast to improve by two percent based on sustained cane recovery rates.
- Domestic consumption: MY 2026/27 domestic consumption is forecast to remain unchanged from MY 2025/26, based on available sugar supply.
- Exports: Sugar exports are forecast to increase by two percent in the MY 2026/27 year on year, based on increased domestic production. Eswatini is expected to supply its traditional markets: the Southern African Customs Union, United Kingdom, EU, and United States.

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 (PS&D) for Sugar Cane

Sugar Cane for Centrifugal Market Year Begins	2024/2025		2025/2026		2026/2027	
	Apr 2024		Apr 2025		Apr 2026	
Eswatini	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
Area Planted (1000 HA)	64	61	0	63	0	64
Area Harvested (1000 HA)	60	60	0	62	0	63
Production (1000 MT)	5534	5359	0	5600	0	5700
Total Supply (1000 MT)	5534	5359	0	5600	0	5700
Utilization for Sugar (1000 MT)	5534	5359	0	5600	0	5700
Utilizatn for Alcohol (1000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Utilization (1000 MT)	5534	5359	0	5600	0	5700
(1000 HA) ,(1000 MT)						
OFFICIAL DATA CAN BE ACCESSED AT: PSD Online Advanced Query						

Area

FAS Pretoria forecasts that area planted in MY 2026/27 will increase by two percent, as FAS Pretoria contacts report newly planted cane area that will be harvested in MY 2026/27. New irrigated plantings reportedly replaced land previously under subsistence maize production. This forms part of a government project to integrate smallholder growers into commercial agriculture.

At the same time, growers are replanting some cane to enhance yields and are investing in solar-powered generators and drip irrigation systems. The cost of these investments limits further expansion of the total area under cane.

Growers and the industry anticipate several challenges, including expected increases in fuel and fertilizer costs due to the conflict in the Middle East. In addition, the electricity tariff rates are expected to rise by an average of 11.74 percent as of April 1, 2026, while global sugar prices are on a downward trend.

Despite these challenges, sugar cane remains the main enterprise for most growers, supported by the well-established sugar marketing channels of the Eswatini Sugar Association. FAS Pretoria revises MY 2025/26 area planted upwards to reflect the reported gradual expansion of irrigated cane area.

Production

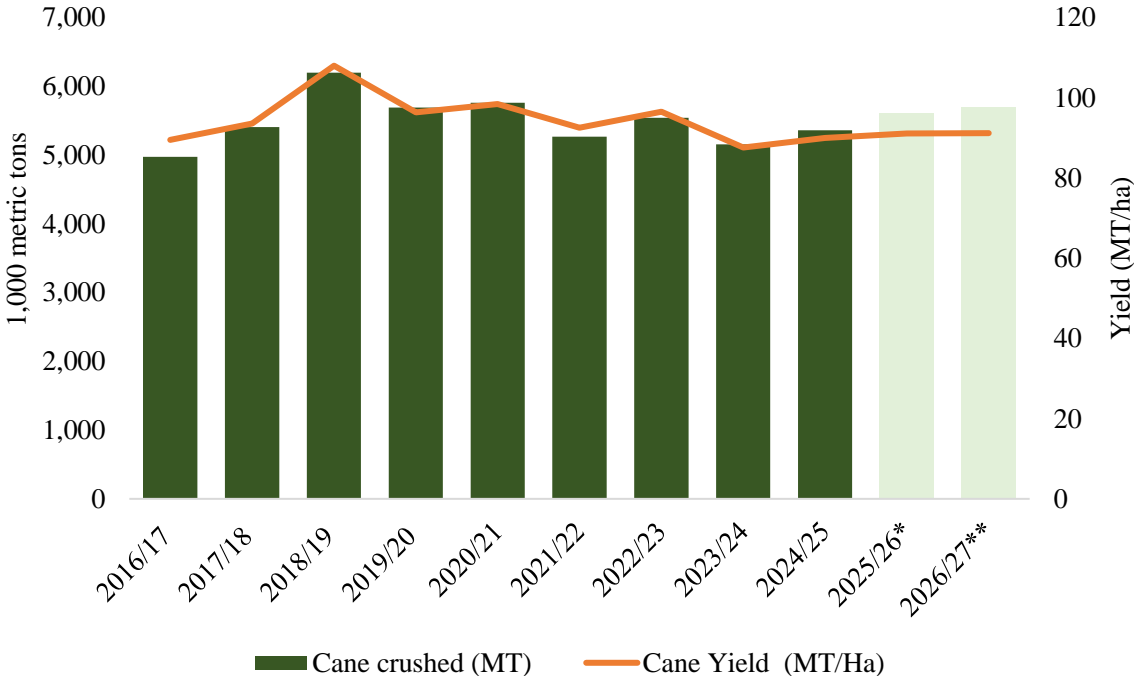
FAS Pretoria forecasts that cane production will improve by two percent, based on normal weather conditions, expanded planted area, and sufficient water for irrigation. Dam levels supplying water for sugar cane, including the Maguga and Mnjoli dams, are reported to be at full capacity due to sustained rainfall. Growers expect to harvest cane from April until early December. FAS Pretoria contacts reported that in MY 2025/26, some growers experienced cane lodging even with minimal wind conditions, which will likely continue to affect growers in MY 2026/27. Cane lodging can lead to sugar yield losses and increased harvesting costs.

FAS Pretoria contacts report that although yellow sugar cane aphid poses some challenge to cane yields, there is some reduction in areas affected due to increased mowing and preventative spraying. However, the leafhopper has emerged as a concern and is known to reduce sugar content and yields.

MY 2025/26 sugar cane production is revised upwards by 100,000 MT, representing a four percent improvement from MY 2024/25, based on sufficient irrigation water and expanded area under production. Typically, cane harvesting runs from April until November or early December. However, FAS Pretoria contacts report that early rains in December 2025 resulted in some cane being left for harvest in March 2026. In March 2026, Eswatini experienced some rains which further disrupted harvesting. Despite this, FAS Pretoria contacts plan to complete harvesting before the new marketing year begins in April. FAS Pretoria maintains MY 2024/25 cane production at 5,359 MMT.

Figure 1 shows sugar cane production and yields in Eswatini since MY 2016/17. Cane yields in MY 2026/27 are forecast to remain unchanged from MY 2025/26.

Figure 1: Sugar Cane Production



Source: Eswatini Sugar Association, Eswatini Cane Growers Association, & Post Forecast

*FAS Pretoria MY 2025/26 sugar production estimate

** FAS Pretoria MY 2026/27 sugar production forecast

Sugar

Table 2: Production, Supply, and Distribution (PS&D) for Sugar

Sugar, Centrifugal Market Year Begins	2024/2025		2025/2026		2026/2027	
	May 2024		May 2025		May 2026	
Eswatini	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
Beginning Stocks (1000 MT)	68	68	174	104	0	155
Beet Sugar Production (1000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cane Sugar Production (1000 MT)	641	641	660	660	0	672
Total Sugar Production (1000 MT)	641	641	660	660	0	672
Raw Imports (1000 MT)	2	1	2	1	0	1
Refined Imp.(Raw Val) (1000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Imports (1000 MT)	2	1	2	1	0	1
Total Supply (1000 MT)	711	710	836	765	0	828
Raw Exports (1000 MT)	430	501	500	500	0	510
Refined Exp.(Raw Val) (1000 MT)	32	30	40	35	0	37
Total Exports (1000 MT)	462	531	540	535	0	547
Human Dom. Consumption (1000 MT)	73	73	73	73	0	73
Other Disappearance (1000 MT)	2	2	2	2	0	2
Total Use (1000 MT)	75	75	75	75	0	75
Ending Stocks (1000 MT)	174	104	221	155	0	206
Total Distribution (1000 MT)	711	710	836	765	0	828
(1000 MT)						

OFFICIAL DATA CAN BE ACCESSED AT: [PSD Online Advanced Query](#)

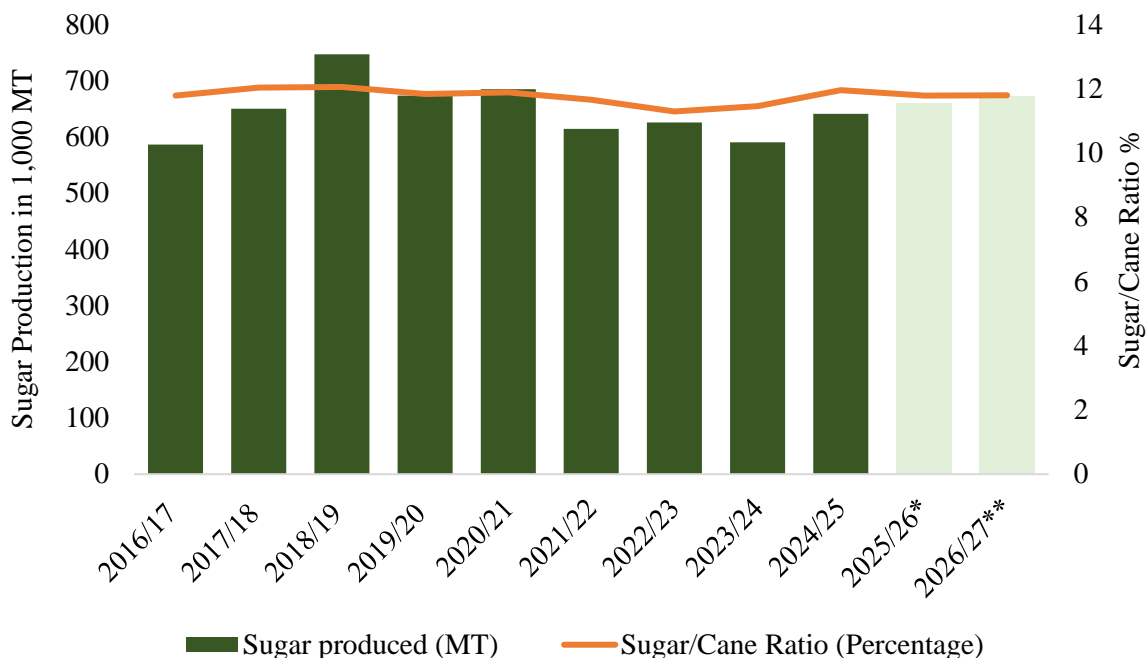
Production

FAS Pretoria forecasts that sugar production will increase by two percent, driven by improved cane deliveries and sustained sugar recovery rates. Millers conducted off-crop maintenance between January and March to prepare for MY 2026/27 crushing. Crushing is expected to run from April until early December.

FAS Pretoria maintains MY 2025/26 sugar production at 660,000 MT, reflecting a three percent increase from MY 2024/25 due to improved cane deliveries. FAS Pretoria contacts report that a major milling company is expanding, and some cane was diverted to another mill for crushing. In addition, some cane was not crushed in 2025 because of wet conditions; this cane was carried over into 2026 and is expected to be crushed in the last week of March

FAS Pretoria maintains MY 2024/25 sugar production at 640,738MT on finalized industry data.

Figure 2: Sugar Production and Sugar Recovery Rates (Sugar/Cane Ratio)



Source: Eswatini Sugar Association and FAS Pretoria Forecast

*FAS Pretoria MY 2025/26 sugar production estimate

** FAS Pretoria MY 2026/27 sugar production forecast

Consumption

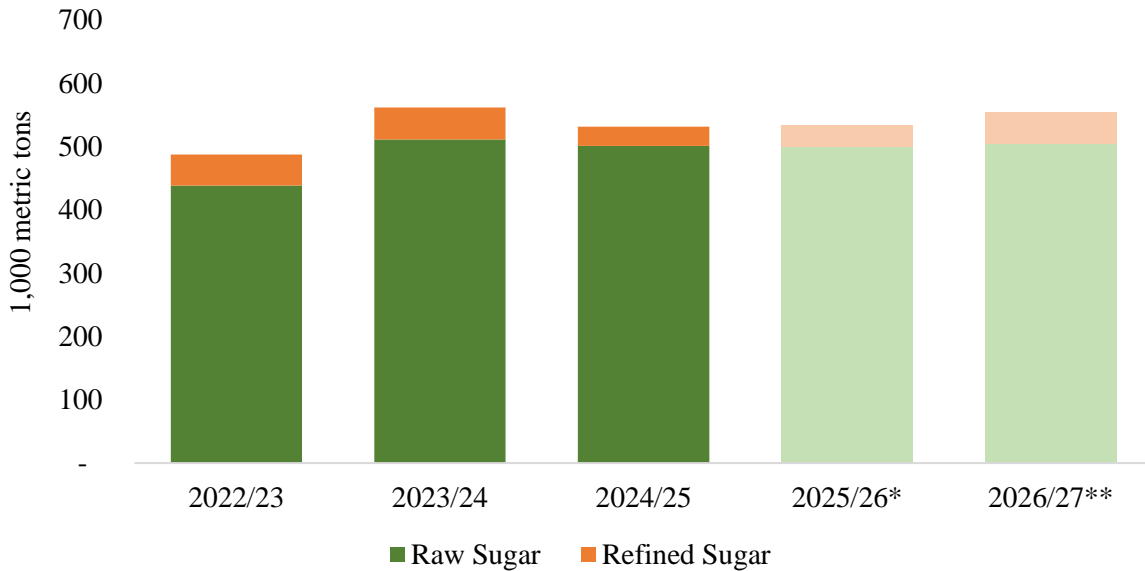
FAS Pretoria forecasts that MY 2026/27 sugar consumption will remain unchanged from MY 2025/26 on available supply of sugar. Per capita consumption of sugar in Eswatini is approximately 45.5kg, supported by improved market access in remote areas of the country, which are now serviced by large retail groups such as Shoprite under the Usave brand. FAS/Pretoria contacts report that there is gradual growth in demand for locally produced low Glycemic Index (GI) sugar in retail stores to appeal to niche consumers.

Eswatini enjoys strong sugar demand from food and beverage manufacturers who use sugar as one of their main ingredients. The impact of alternative sweeteners on sugar consumption has thus far been insignificant in the country, and the local sugar industry is not concerned at this stage. However, given the increasing trend of using artificial sweeteners in South Africa, in the long run it is expected that Eswatini manufacturers may also adopt the use of artificial sweeteners to remain competitive in the region.

Exports

Eswatini traditionally exports raw sugar via the sugar terminal, Sociedade Terminal De Açúcar De Maputo (STAM) located in Maputo, Mozambique, which is jointly owned by Eswatini, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and South Africa. On average, just over 90 percent of sugar exports from Eswatini are raw sugar exports (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Eswatini’s Raw and Refined Sugar Exports



* FAS/Pretoria Estimate

** FAS/Pretoria forecast

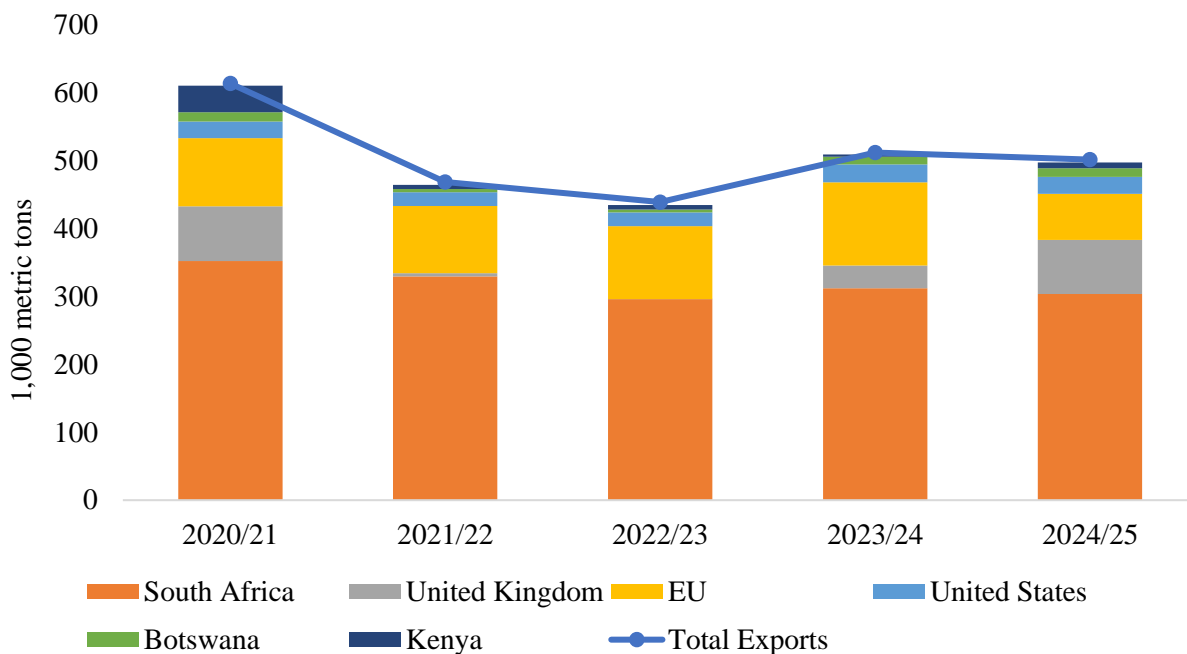
Source: FAS Pretoria using Trade Data Monitor, LLC. data

FAS Pretoria forecasts that MY 2026/27 total sugar exports (raw and refined sugar) will increase by two percent from MY 2025/26 based on expected improvement in sugar production, available stocks, sustained supply to the region, and the U.S. TRQ.

FAS Pretoria revises MY2025/26 total exports downwards by 5,000 MT based on the pace of exports through January 2026, particularly for refined sugar. South Africa, one of the leading markets for Eswatini’s sugar, experienced a surge in imports from other countries in MY 2025/26. FAS Pretoria contacts report that discounts were offered to buyers in South Africa to encourage sales amid this increased competition. As a result, year-to-date exports of refined and raw sugar to South Africa increased by 24 percent and 12 percent, respectively. Therefore, FAS Pretoria estimates that MY 2025/26 total exports of sugar will increase by one percent from MY 2024/25. To support sales in South Africa, discounts may continue in MY 2026/27 while Dollar-Based Reference Price (DBRP) investigations by South Africa’s International Trade Administration Commission remain ongoing (see South Africa’s annual sugar report for more information on the DBRP investigations).

MY 2023/24 exports are revised upwards by 69,000 MT based on finalized trade data.

Figure 4: Eswatini’s Exports of Raw Sugar



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

Eswatini exports sugar mainly to South African Customs Union (SACU) members, the EU, UK, and the United States, with smaller volumes to other African countries outside of SACU. SACU is the main market for Eswatini’s raw (63 percent in MY 2024/25) and refined sugar (85 percent in MY 2024/25), with most exports destined for South Africa. As a member of the customs union, Eswatini has duty-free access into Botswana, Lesotho, South Africa, and Namibia. In MY 2024/25 and MY 2025/26, non-SACU countries exported some sugar to South Africa, taking away some market share from Eswatini’s exports. The EU is another large export market, as Eswatini has quota-free and duty-free market access for sugar exports to the EU under the Southern African Development Community-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (SADC-EU EPA).

Historically, Eswatini exported in-quota sugar to the United States duty-free; however, as of August 7, 2025, Eswatini’s sugar is subject to both an in-quota duty and an over-quota duty based on weight. The United States is considered a premium market for Eswatini’s sugar, with prices much higher than other export markets. Typically, Eswatini exports five percent of its raw sugar to the United States. On August 15, 2025, the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) announced a TRQ allocation for raw cane sugar of 17,213 MT for FY 2026 (October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2026) (see Table 3). By November 2025, Eswatini had fully utilized its FY 26 TRQ.

Table 3: U.S. Tariff-Rate Quota Allocations for Eswatini Raw Cane Sugar, Refined and Specialty Sugar, and Sugar-Containing Products. (Values in Raw Value Metric Tons)

	Volumes in Metric Tons Raw Value		
	FY 2024 <i>Oct 1, 2023- Sept 30, 2024</i>	FY 2025 <i>Oct 1, 2024- Sept 30, 2025</i>	FY 2026 <i>Oct 1, 2025- Sept 30, 2026</i>
Initial Allocation	<u>17,213</u>	<u>17,213</u>	<u>17,213</u>
Unused Reallocation	<u>5,802</u>	0	
Increase Allocation	<u>2,998</u>	0	
Total	26,013	17,213	17,213

Source: FAS Pretoria using USTR information

The sugar industry marketing year runs from April to March, while the TRQ year runs from October to September, which results in the TRQ for two different FYs being recorded in one MY.

Imports

Eswatini’s sugar imports are minimal due to the country’s high production volumes, which typically far exceed domestic consumption. Eswatini’s imports are mainly from South Africa and are less than 3,000 MT per marketing year.

Stocks

FAS/Pretoria forecasts that ending stocks will increase to 206,000 MT in MY 2026/27 as domestic production is expected to increase while the domestic demand is saturated. In MY 2025/26, South Africa experienced a surge in imports, which led to other deep-sea suppliers taking up some market share from Eswatini. This is likely to continue in MY 2026/27. The Eswatini Sugar Association owns the ending stocks of unsold sugar at the end of the season. Stocks held by retailers, wholesalers, and pre-packers are considered sold at the end of the season. Ending stocks greater than 40,000 MT pose a challenge to the industry as the Eswatini Sugar Association must pay storage fees and compensate millers and growers for any sugar not sold at the end of each season.

Trade Policy and Regulations

Sugar Marketing and Sales

The Eswatini Sugar Association (ESA) is responsible for marketing of all sugar produced in Eswatini (both raw and refined). The revenue obtained through the sale of sugar and molasses is shared between growers and millers based on an agreed process and formula guided by the Sugar Act of 1967 and the Eswatini Sugar Agreement. The ESA provides a rebate (discount) to value-added industries located within Eswatini to encourage and support domestic sugar sales.

Attachments:

No Attachments