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Report Highlights:

Local sugar production for Jamaica is expected to continue its downward trend, reaching 29,000 metric tons (MT) for marketing year (MY) October 2026 to September 2027 consistent with the steady decline observed in recent years. Elevated production costs, outdated equipment and lack of reliable labor have plagued the industry, undermining production capacity. In spite of years of government underinvestment, a renewed effort is underway to revitalize the industry with plans to add another facility within the next three to five years that should elevate production in the future. In the meantime, local export of raw sugar to the United States is expected to continue under the World Trade Organization (WTO) tariff-rate quota program (TRQ), while also meeting both domestic and regional demand, especially in markets where prices are favorable.

Sugar Production

Sugar production in Jamaica is expected to extend its downward trend with output estimated at 29,000 metric tons (MT) produced from 350,000 MT of sugarcane in MY 2026/2027. For MY 2025/2026, Jamaica’s raw sugar production is estimated at 32,000 MT, produced from approximately 385,000 MT of sugarcane. Production downturn is largely influenced by high production costs, labor challenges, and antiquated equipment.

Sugar Cane Production

With only two operating mills in Jamaica, planting area is forecasted to remain flat at 14,000 hectares in MY 2026/2027. Additionally, area harvested is estimated to remain relatively steady from the previous period if challenges, such as availability of labor, input supplies, and factory inefficiencies remain unchecked. For MY 2025/2026, 50 percent of the approximately 14,000 hectares of sugar cane cultivation is expected to be harvested due to limitations which continually burden industry.

Sugar industry data show a decline in major production areas for both raw sugar and sugar cane over numerous years. Post sources attribute the decline in Jamaica’s raw sugar production to various factors, including the rising costs of inputs, fertilizers, labor shortages, and reduced land availability. Former sugarcane cultivation areas have now been repurposed for housing and other crops, further exacerbating the decline. The government has also redistributed lands, which were previously under sugarcane cultivation for other agricultural undertakings. Figure 1 indicates diminishing raw sugar production from 39,000 MT in MY 2022/2023 to 29,000 MT in MY 2026/2027 and the volume of sugar cane milled also slumped compared to the same marketing years.

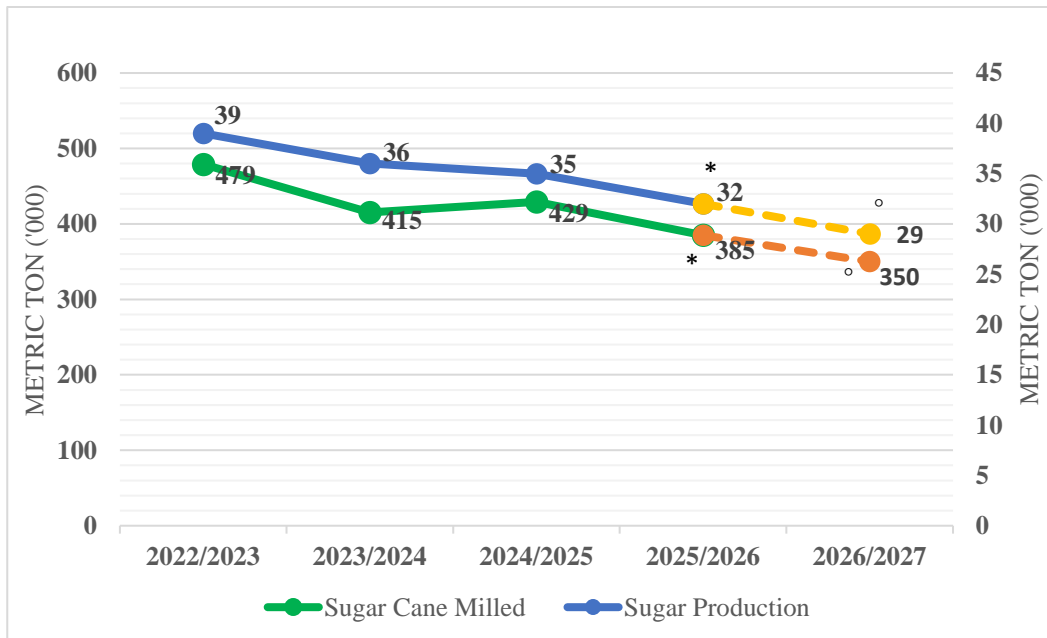


Figure 1: Quantity of sugar production and sugar cane milled in Jamaica between 2022/2023 and 2025/2026 production years.

Source: Graph constructed using data from Sugar Industry Research figures. * estimate; °forecast

Most sugar mills have ceased operations in recent years, leaving only Pan Caribbean and Worthy Park operating in raw sugar production. Jamaica’s reliance on imported refined sugar persists due to current limitations in manufacturing capacity.

To support the industry, the Government of Jamaica (GoJ) continues to provide transportation subsidies, particularly to small sugarcane farmers, to offset costs associated with transporting sugarcane to factories. Furthermore, the Government of Jamaica recently announced the addition of a new state-of-the-art vertically integrated facility, called the Tropical Sugar Company¹ which broke ground in December 2025.

The Tropical Sugar Company is expected to revive the flailing industry with a US\$50-million investment. The company will stand up the new 50,000 MT capacity mill on approximately 11,000 acres of sugar lands previously leased from the Sugar Company of Jamaica Holdings (SCJH) Limited. Ground for the construction of the new facility was broken in December 2025, with completion of the facility expected in 18 months.

Table 3: Sugarcane production for production year 2024/2025

Factory	Company	Estate Area Reaped (HA)	Farmer Area Reaped (HA)	Total Area Reaped (HA)	Estate Cane Milled (MT)	Farmer Cane Milled (MT)	Total Cane Milled (MT)	Raw Sugar Produced (MT)
Appleton	Campari	0.00	630.0	630.0	0.00	25,216.29	25,216.29	0.00
Frome	Pan Caribbean	1,812.79	642.33	2,455.12	106,275.54	22,177.52	128,453.06	9,996.99
Worthy Park	Worthy Park (includes Monymusk farmers)	2,086.10	771.96	2,858.06	151,197.03	78,667.80	203,045.50	22,075.77
*	Everglades	0.00	27.35	0.00	0.00	1,743.51	0.00	0.00
GRAND TOTAL		3,898.89	2,914.55	5,943.18	257,472.57	127,755.12	385,227.69	32,072.76

* Farmer-reaped sugarcane is generally transferred to one of the above factories for processing.

Source: Sugar Industry Authority (Preliminary) 2026

¹ <https://jis.gov.jm/us50-million-sugar-factory-in-clarendon-to-generate-2000-jobs/>

Consumption

Local sugar consumption is projected to fall to 83,000 MT (23,000 MT of raw sugar and 60,000 MT of refined sugar) for MY 2026/2027 compared to MY 2025/2026. Per capita sugar consumption in Jamaica fluctuates around 82lbs.

The manufacturing sector in Jamaica accounts for the use of most of the imported refined sugar. However, in recent years, the Ministry of Health and Wellness, as well as the Heart Foundation of Jamaica, have jointly launched a national campaign warning against excessive sugar intake. In response, some manufacturers have lowered sugar content in their products. Since 2019, the GoJ has proposed a [levy](#)² on all sugary beverages to discourage consumers from purchasing products with high sugar content. This tax comes in effect on May 1, 2026.

This special consumption tax (SCT), affecting both imported and local products, will be a cost of 22 cents per gram of added sugar, of non-alcoholic sugary beverages, sodas and fruit-flavored drinks. The Government of Jamaica outlined that this tax is intended to lower the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages to counter non-communicable diseases, such as diabetes and hypertension. Government authorities further highlighted that the enactment of the sugar tax follows the World Health Organization's (WHO) guideline of 2.5 grams per 100 milliliters for each serving of sugar content. With the implementation of this new policy and tax, consumption of both local and imported sugar may decline over time.

Annually, the spirits' industry uses an estimated 100,000 MT of molasses and 5,000 MT of raw sugar. Though other sweeteners are available locally, their market share remains minimal compared to cane sugar, which continues as the preferred choice among consumers.

Trade

Jamaica has historically exported sugar to the European Union (EU) under the European Union Sugar Protocol (EUSP), which extended benefits to countries in the African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) group. Under the EUSP, Jamaica could export raw sugar to the EU at a premium price and import raw sugar for domestic consumption at a lower price.

In 2009, the EUSP was replaced by the Economic Partnership Arrangement, which reduced the price differential between the world market price and that of ACP countries. In 2013, the EU revised its Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), known as [EUCAP](#)³, effectively removing the preferential price enjoyed by ACP countries. This policy change led ACP countries, such as Jamaica, to operate under regular market conditions, characterized by high input costs and low efficiency relative to other global sugar markets.

The changes to the EU policy reshaped Jamaica's raw sugar marketing strategies. Currently, sugar is primarily used for domestic purposes, and exported to the Caribbean, the United States (under pre-determined quotas), and in modest quantities to the EU, even at reduced prices.

² <https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20260325/tax-tweak>

³ <https://www.cepal.org/en/publications/3173-impact-changes-european-union-import-regimes-sugar-banana-and-rice-selected>

In 2025, none of the allocated 11,834 MT raw sugar was exported from Jamaica to the United States. Industry sources claimed the sub-sector which usually exports duty-free under the TRQ program, is now challenged by the ten percent tariff on imports to the United States. Post has learned that sugar industry stakeholders found the tariff, coupled with low prices, prohibitive to sugar exports to the United States. Most of the raw sugar produced was consumed locally, with around 1,800 MT exported to other markets including the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

Although production continues to trend down, stakeholders consider it likely that with an evolving market and improved efficiencies, local industry will return to supplying sugar to the United States, under the Tariff Rate Quota (TRQ) program. Jamaica is expected to continue importing refined sugar, which is not produced locally. Imports are projected to remain relatively stable in the next marketing year. In 2025, Jamaica mainly imported refined processed sugar from Guatemala, Colombia, and the United Kingdom.

Stocks

Generally, producers maintain stock levels at 4,000 MT of raw sugar due to prohibitive storage costs. Importers also stock a limited amount of refined sugar.

Policy

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Mining (MoAFM) oversees Jamaica's sugar industry, governing policies related to land usage, irrigation, subsidies and other matters.

Under MoAFM, the Sugar Industry Authority (SIA) is the regulatory body that exercises oversight in areas of arbitration, research and development and monitoring and evaluation. SIA also regulates the marketing of sugar and molasses.

Initially, the Jamaica Cane Products Sales (JCPS) Limited served as a private marketing company created in 1994 to issue marketing licenses to factories it represented under the jurisdiction of the SIA, as these factories lacked individual licensing capabilities for their own products. However, subsequent policy changes by the GoJ rendered JCPS obsolete, leading to its closure in 2018, as SIA began directly issuing licenses to sugar factories.

The Jamaica Country Strategy for the Adaptation of the Sugar Industry (JCS)⁴ is the primary policy guiding the Jamaican sugar industry. The JCS I (2009-2015) was designed in response to the EU's policy changes that regulated sugar export trade in ACP countries. Following the revisions, prices paid to ACP countries for raw sugar fell by 36 percent.

The *JCS II (2016-2020)*, updated by MoAF in July 2019, outlines three main strategic objectives:

- i. developing and maintaining a sustainable private sector-led sugar cane industry with diversified product offerings.
- ii. strengthening social resilience, economic diversification, and environmental sustainability in Sugar Dependent Areas (SDA).

⁴<https://jis.gov.jm/cabinet-approves-revised-country-strategy-for-the-sugar-industry/>

- iii. maintaining progress towards the GOJ’s macroeconomic goals.

The policy, which is currently in effect, adopts a three-phase approach: transition, transformation, and consolidation. These updates aim to minimize industry risks, while opening avenues to boost revenue streams. MoAFM envisions a comprehensive transformation of the sugarcane value chain, emphasizing the production of diverse products beyond traditional commodities. Value-added prospects include the production and generation of energy products, such as ethanol, refined sugar, as well as the expanded production of premium products, such as rum and other spirits.

Marketing

Pan Caribbean Sugar Company and Worthy Park Estate are the only two sugar marketing agents in Jamaica. These companies have been licensed by the GoJ to market their own products, which allows them the authority to set their own pricing strategies. Refined sugar, which is entirely imported, is distributed to retail markets and various manufacturers of beverages and baked goods by independent companies. The pricing of sugar within Jamaica is set by marketing agents and verified by the SIA. Current local sugar prices are outlined in table 4 below.

Table 4: Price of sugar

Type of Sugar	Prices (US\$/pound)		
	Producer to wholesaler	Wholesaler/Importer to retail	Retail to consumer
Raw	N/A	0.81	1.09
Refined	N/A	1.13	1.60

Attachments:

No Attachments