

SUGARCANE VARIETY PERFORMANCE



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Varieties, Varieties, Varieties

Sugarcane varieties are the lifeblood of the Louisiana sugar industry. As a result, variety selection is one of the most important decisions a producer makes — one with long-term implications. The goal is to maximize profitability on every acre throughout an extended crop cycle.

Producers have many options for the 2026 planting season. L 01-299 and HoCP 14-885 will remain widely planted across the state. More recent releases, L 15-306 and HoL 15-508, are expected to occupy an increasing share of planted acreage due to their excellent stubble performance and yield potential. Several additional varieties will be grown on more limited acreage, including HoCP 96-540, HoCP 09-804, Ho 13-739 and L 14-267. Newly released HoCP 18-803 should be expanded on a limited scale to begin on-farm evaluation.

Effective variety selection should emphasize risk management over the full crop cycle. Each farm faces a unique combination of challenges,

making on-farm experience and strong record-keeping essential to informed decision-making. Key traits to consider include yield potential, resistance to diseases and insects, stubble performance, drought tolerance and cold tolerance. As more acreage is carried in older stubble, results from second- and third-stubble outfield trials provide valuable guidance.

No single variety is without risk. Diseases such as brown rust and brown stripe, emerging insect pests and the threat of severe winter conditions all reinforce the importance of diversification. To reduce risk, no single variety should comprise more than 50% of total planting acreage.

With the continued release of new varieties, the Louisiana sugar industry remains well positioned to address the challenges of each growing season. Good luck with the 2026 planting season.

Sugarcane Outfield Variety Trials: 2023-2025

Plant Cane (Three-year means)

Variety	Sugar Yield Pounds/Acre	Cane Yield Tons/Acre	Sugar Content Pounds/Ton
L 01-299	7,600	30.8	246
HoCP 09-804	7,137	30.8	231
Ho 12-615	8,432	34.6	242
Ho 13-739	6,726	29.3	229
HoCP 14-885	10,001	36.6	272
L 15-306	8,687	34.5	253
HoL 15-508	8,275	31.2	263
HoCP 18-803	10,246	40.0	255

First Stubble (Three-year means)

Variety	Sugar Yield Pounds/Acre	Cane Yield Tons/Acre	Sugar Content Pounds/Ton
L 01-299	8,375	32.3	261
HoCP 09-804	7,601	30.2	253
L 12-201	6,931	26.0	268
Ho 12-615	8,029	31.7	255
Ho 13-739	7,089	28.3	252
L 14-267	6,439	25.2	254
HoCP 14-885	9,295	33.3	279
L 15-306	8,239	31.2	264
HoL 15-508	8,410	31.0	270
HoCP 18-803	8,848	34.5	256

Second Stubble (Three-year means)

Variety	Sugar Yield Pounds/Acre	Cane Yield Tons/Acre	Sugar Content Pounds/Ton
L 01-299	7,920	31.9	250
Ho 05-961	4,647	18.7	250
HoCP 09-804	7,257	28.8	253
L 12-201	6,063	24.6	245
Ho 12-615	6,904	28.7	242
Ho 13-739	6,956	27.0	258
L 14-267	6,353	26.1	242
HoCP 14-885	8,011	30.0	269
L 15-306	7,395	29.3	253
HoL 15-508	7,348	28.0	262
HoCP 18-803	8,217	33.2	246

Third Stubble (Three-year means)

Variety	Sugar Yield Pounds/Acre	Cane Yield Tons/Acre	Sugar Content Pounds/Ton
L 01-299	7,889	33.3	237
Ho 05-961	4,694	19.7	233
HoCP 09-804	7,347	30.6	241
L 12-201	6,466	26.9	242
Ho 12-615	5,681	25.4	225
Ho 13-739	6,633	27.0	246
L 14-267	7,084	28.3	249
HoCP 14-885	7,659	30.2	257
L 15-306	6,980	29.1	241
HoL 15-508	7,406	29.3	254
HoCP 18-803	7,256	29.0	248

Outfield variety trials are cooperatively conducted by the LSU AgCenter, U.S. Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Research Service and American Sugar Cane League. The trials are grown at 10 locations across sugarcane-growing areas of south Louisiana.

Sugarcane Variety Highlights

HoCP 96-540 (Released 2003)

HoCP 96-540 occupied 5% of the state's 2025 acreage. The variety continues to perform well for some growers. The main reasons for decreasing acreage of HoCP 96-540 are low yield in older stubble crops and susceptibility to brown rust, which can be high in the plant-cane crop. HoCP 96-540 is better adapted to sandier soils. HoCP 96-540 possesses superior cold tolerance and responds well to ripeners.

HoCP 96-540 should occupy 5% or less of your farm's acreage. Plant the variety in a location to take advantage of its cold tolerance.



L 01-283 (Released 2008)

L 01-283 has good sugar per acre, erectness, excellent stubbling ability and cold tolerance. Elevated levels of off-types can decrease sugar per acre in L 01-283. Off-types are often stress induced. L 01-283 overwinters well, and early spring and summer growth is impressive. Good, early sugar and tonnage make it a good option for early harvest. Watch for late-season brown rust and borer infestations. Its biggest risk is stress-induced off-types and susceptibility to brown rust.

L 01-283 is being phased out across most farming operations. However, some growers continue to use it in a manner similar to HoCP 96-540, planting it in fields designated for late harvest to take advantage of its excellent cold tolerance.



Sugarcane Variety Highlights

L 01-299 (Released 2009)

L 01-299 was grown on 54% of the state's 2025 acreage, making it the most widely grown variety. The appeal is high tonnage and a long crop cycle because of superior stubbling ability. L 01-299 is the best heavy land cane that this industry has produced. L 01-299 has resistance to stalk borers and brown rust. Watch for smut, which is more prevalent in plant cane and tends to decrease in older stubble crops. L 01-299 possesses a level of field resistance to smut. Consider first stubble as a seed cane source. L 01-299 is susceptible to the disease brown stripe, which is more prevalent early in the growing season following a mild winter. The variety is slow to emerge after planting and should not be covered too deeply. In recent years, the variety has struggled to reestablish after being cut for seed cane. Try treating your seed cane like a spring crop after planting — cultivate to build the row (protecting the crown) and reestablish drainage. L 01-299 responds well to glyphosate ripeners. Many growers have used higher rate ranges of glyphosate for ripening because of its high tonnage and tolerance to glyphosate. Its biggest risk is establishing a stand at planting, especially in sharp/cold sandier soils.

Keep the planted acreage of L 01-299 at 20% to 40% of total planted acres.



HoCP 09-804 (Released 2016)

HoCP 09-804 has a high population of small diameter stalks. The variety has excellent yield potential and high sucrose content. HoCP 09-804 possesses moderate cold tolerance. The stubbling ability of HoCP 09-804 is very good. The variety is early maturing and responds well to the ripener glyphosate (apply glyphosate at the low rate of the recommended range). Bleached shoots are commonly seen on regrowth of cane that has been treated with the ripener glyphosate. HoCP 09-804 has been a good choice to replace other early maturing varieties such as HoCP 00-950 and L 01-283. Its biggest risk is fit — some areas have done well with the variety and other areas have seen inconsistent performance.

Plant 0% to 10% of your acreage with HoCP 09-804.



Sugarcane Variety Highlights

Ho 12-615 (Released 2019)

Ho 12-615 has a high population of small diameter stalks. The variety was derived from a cross between TucCP 77-42 (from Argentina) and HoCP 96-540. The variety has very good cane tonnage and sucrose content like L 01-299. The stubbling ability of HoCP 12-615 is inconsistent. Ho 12-615 is sensitive to glyphosate ripeners, and stubble fields had weaker stands in the spring following harvest where glyphosate was used as the ripener. Even with no ripener application or late harvest, stubble fields have been a problem at times. The variety has an excellent disease package. You will see some brown stripe disease in the spring. Ho 12-615 has a dark green and erect canopy. The leaves will turn purplish after cool weather. In freeze-tolerance tests, the variety rated as poor for cold tolerance. Its biggest risk is cold tolerance and stand establishment in stubble crops.

Acreage planted to Ho 12-615 should be limited to 0% to 5%.



Ho 13-739 (Released 2020)

Ho 13-739 has a moderate population of larger diameter stalks. The variety was derived from a cross between Ho 06-9610 (borer resistant) and HoCP 04-838. The variety has good yield potential and early and high sucrose content. The variety has an excellent disease package. Outfield performance places this variety for sandier soil types. Ho 13-739 has a dark green and erect canopy. Based on cold tolerance tests, the variety was rated as moderate. Early maturity and high sucrose are important characteristics — a variety that you can harvest early or harvest without ripener if wet weather sets in during grinding. Consider Ho 13-739 as a replacement for HoCP 00-950 or L 01-283. Its biggest risk is sugar yield in older stubble crops.

Ho 13-739 should occupy 5% or less of planted acreage.



Sugarcane Variety Highlights

L 14-267 (Released 2021)

The parents of L 14-267 are HoCP 05-918 and L 01-283. L 14-267 has a moderate population of large diameter stalks — the stalk is dense and heavy. The variety has very good yield potential and high sucrose content. L 14-267 has an excellent disease package, and early yield performance indicates adaptability across all soil types. L 14-267 has an erect canopy and does not shade row middles well. Based on cold tolerance tests, the variety was rated as moderate. L 14-267 performed well in third stubble outfield trials and should be given consideration for planting. Its biggest risk is poor shading, which makes weed control difficult.

L 14-267 should occupy 5% or less of planted acreage.



HoCP 14-885 (Released 2021)

HoCP 14-885 has a high population of moderate diameter stalks. The variety was derived from a cross between Ho 07-613 and HoCP 05-920. The variety has excellent yield potential and high sucrose content. HoCP 14-885 has an excellent disease package that includes the Bru1 gene for brown rust resistance. Early yield performance indicates that HoCP 14-885 is adapted to all soil types. HoCP 14-885 grows vigorously with a spreading and drooping canopy providing excellent shading of row middles. HoCP 14-885 had excellent sugar and cane yields in second and third stubble yield trials conducted at locations across the cane belt. Its stubbling ability may be comparable to L 01-299. Based on cold tolerance tests, the variety was rated as poor. Its biggest risk is poor stalk cold tolerance rating and lodging. The variety is very difficult to harvest when it goes down.

HoCP 14-885 will be widely planted again in 2026. Keep the variety at 20% to 40% of your planted acreage.



Sugarcane Variety Highlights

L 15-306 (Released 2022)

The variety was derived from a cross between CP 83-644 and L 01-283. L 15-306 has a high population of moderate diameter stalks. The variety has excellent yield potential and is a mid-maturing variety. The variety has an excellent disease package, and early yield performance indicates that L 15-306 is adapted to all soil types. The canopy provides for good shading of row middles. Based on cold tolerance tests, the variety was rated as moderate. L 15-306 has very good stubbling ability. The variety seemed to better tolerate the dry conditions of 2023. L 15-306 is very susceptible to stalk borers, sometimes requiring multiple insecticide applications.

L 15-306 should be planted on 10% to 20% of planted acreage. Begin moving some acreage to your tougher ground to determine the best fit on the farm.



HoL 15-508 (Released 2022)

The variety was derived from a cross between CP 83-644 and L 01-283. HoL 15-508 had excellent sugar yield and cane yield in all crops, including second and third stubble yield trials conducted at locations across the cane belt. HoL 15-508 has a high population of small to moderate diameter stalks. The variety is early maturing with high sucrose content. The variety is resistant to smut and moderately susceptible to leaf scald and brown rust diseases. HoL 15-508 grows vigorously, with a spreading and drooping canopy, making the variety excellent for shading row middles. Based on cold tolerance tests, the variety rated as poor. The variety is susceptible to stalk borers. The main attributes of HoL 15-508 are high sugar yield, early maturity and excellent stubbling ability.

HoL 15-508 should be planted on 5% to 15% of planted acreage. Begin moving some acreage to your tougher ground to determine the best fit on the farm.



Sugarcane Variety Highlights

HoCP 18-803 (Released 2025)

HoCP 18-803 was developed from the cross HoL 08-718 × HoCP 09-814. HoCP 18-803 has high sugar yield potential, driven by excellent cane yield and sucrose content comparable to L 01-299. The variety tends to produce a lower stalk population with larger stalk diameters.

During spring 2026, HoCP 18-803 exhibited the poorest regrowth among varieties evaluated in seedcane fields. While the variety is resistant to the sugarcane borer and most major sugarcane diseases, it is susceptible to brown rust – budget for a fungicide application because it pays. In a cold tolerance trial conducted at the end of the 2025 harvest season, HoCP 18-803 was rated poor.

Producers are encouraged to increase HoCP 18-803 acreage on their better land to begin on-farm evaluations.



Notes for seed cane and plant cane

Maintain the bottom of the planting furrow above the wheel or water furrow of the row to promote better drainage. Consider late-fall cultivation to rebuild row height and restore drainage in areas where water furrows have washed out.

For larger seed cane or plant cane, a more aggressive layby cultivation may be beneficial to increase soil cover on the row top. This practice can enhance development of the belowground crown — the underground stalks, buds and roots responsible for spring regrowth —

and improve stand establishment.

These practices improve drainage and help keep seed cane and underground stubble/roots out of excessively wet conditions that favor damping-off disease. In addition, deep subsoiling during the fallow year can further improve internal soil drainage.

While these measures will not eliminate all risk of damping-off, they may improve early spring establishment for both seed cane and newly planted sugarcane in Louisiana.

Characteristics for Recommended Commercial Sugarcane Varieties

	HoCP 96-540	L 01-299	HoCP 09-804	L 11-183	Ho 12-615	Ho 13-739	L 14-267	HoCP 14-885	L 15-306	HoL 15-508	HoCP 18-803
Variety Characteristics	2003	2009	2016	2018	2019	2019	2020	2021	2021	2022	2025
Harvestability	G	VG	G	M	M-P	G	VG	P	G	M	G
Maturity	M	M	E	M	M	E	M	M	M	E	M
Stubbling	M	VG	VG	G	M	G	G	VG	G	VG	M-G
Sugarcane borer	S	R	S	S	MS	MS	MS	S	S	S	MR
Mosaic	R	R	MS	R	R	R	R	MS	R	R	MS
Brown rust	S	R	S	S	R	MS	MR	R	R	MS	S
Smut	R	S	MR	R	R	R	R	MR	R	M	R
Leaf scald	R	R	R	MR	MR	R	MR	MS	R	MS	R
Post-Freeze deterioration	G	G	M	M	P	M	M	P	M	P	P
Shading	M	M	G	G	M	G	M-P	VG	G	VG	G

E = Early
M = Moderate, Medium
G = Good
VG = Very Good
R = Resistant

MR = Moderately Resistant
MS = Moderately
Susceptible
S = Susceptible
P = Poor

Louisiana Sugarcane Variety Trends by Variety and Year¹

Area planted to sugarcane by variety and year (%)

Variety	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	1-Year Change
HoCP96-540	12	10	8	9	6	5	-1
L01-283	10	10	8	4	3	2	-1
L01-299	59	58	56	53	54	54	0
HoCP09-804	9	10	11	9	8	6	-2
L 12-201	<1	1	2	2	2	1	-1
Ho 12-615	<1	3	6	10	8	6	-2
Ho 13-739	<1	<1	1	2	3	3	0
L 14-267			<1	<1	<1	<1	0
HoCP 14-885			1	3	11	16	+5
L 15-306				<1	0.5	1	+1
HoL 15-508				<1	0.5	1	+1
HoCP 18-803						<1	

¹ Based on annual variety surveys by county agents, 2020-2025.

Links:

Additional sugarcane variety information can be found in the 2025 Sugarcane Annual Report.

Visit: www.lsuagcenter.com/topics/crops/sugarcane

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Sugarcane being cultivated in West Baton Rouge Parish. Photo by Johnny Morgan. Cover photo by Olivia McClure.



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