

SUGARCANE VARIETY PERFORMANCE



Dr. Kenneth Gravois, Sugarcane Specialist, LSU AgCenter

Varieties, Varieties, Varieties

Sugarcane varieties are the lifeblood of the Louisiana sugar industry. Therefore, variety selection is one of the most important decisions on the farm — a decision with long-term consequences. The goal is to maximize profitability on every acre of the farm for each year of a long crop cycle.

Sugarcane variety choices for planting in 2025 are many. L 01-299 and HoCP 14-885 will continue to be widely planted by producers across the Louisiana sugar industry. L 15-306 and HoL 15-508, new variety releases from 2022, should occupy a moderate portion of your planting acreage because of excellent stubbling ability and yield potential. Other varieties that will be planted on minor acreage include: HoCP 96-540, HoCP 09-804, Ho 13-739 and L 14-267.

Variety selection should emphasize managing risk across the entire crop cycle. Each farmer uniquely manages their own set of risks. On-farm experience and record keeping are critical in the decision-making process. Yield potential, disease and insect resistance, stubbling ability, drought tolerance and cold tolerance are key traits to consider when focusing on variety selection. With more acreage devoted to older

stubble crops, the second and third stubble data from outfield variety trials provides key information.

No single sugarcane variety is perfect — each has inherent risk. With brown rust, brown stripe and other diseases, new insect pests and tough winters, variety diversification is important. No single variety should occupy more than 50% of your planting. With the release of each new sugarcane variety, the Louisiana sugar industry remains poised to manage the challenges faced each growing season. Good luck with planting in 2025!

Note for seed cane and plant cane – Keep the bottom of the planting furrow above the wheel or water furrow of the sugarcane row. In addition, consider late fall cultivation to build up the row and reestablish water drainage in washed out water furrows. Both practices could improve drainage and keep the seed cane and underground stubble/roots out of excessively wet conditions that favor damping off disease. Deep subsoiling during the fallow year will improve internal drainage. These practices may not eliminate all risks of damping off disease but could help with early spring establishment for both seed cane and newly planted sugarcane grown in Louisiana.

Sugarcane Outfield Variety Trials: 2022-2024

Plant Cane (Three-year means)

Variety	Sugar Yield Pounds/Acre	Cane Yield Tons/Acre	Sugar Content Pounds/Ton
L 01-299	7,749	31.8	243
HoCP 09-804	7,987	31.6	252
L 12-201	7,861	32.6	244
Ho 12-615	8,509	35.3	240
Ho 13-739	7,611	30.2	251
L 14-267	7,129	28.7	255
HoCP 14-885	9,637	36.3	264
L 15-306	8,375	33.9	248
HoL 15-508	8,016	30.7	259
HoCP 18-803	9,642	38.5	250

First Stubble (Three-year means)

Variety	Sugar Yield Pounds/Acre	Cane Yield Tons/Acre	Sugar Content Pounds/Ton
L 01-299	8,405	32.7	257
Ho 05-961	7,012	26.3	269
HoCP 09-804	8,082	30.9	262
L 12-201	7,648	29.8	258
Ho 12-615	8,207	32.8	251
Ho 13-739	7,746	29.4	265
L 14-267	7,432	28.7	260
HoCP 14-885	8,830	32.5	272
L 15-306	8,058	30.9	261
HoL 15-508	8,146	30.5	267
HoCP 18-803	8,603	34.5	249

Second Stubble (Three-year means)

Variety	Sugar Yield Pounds/Acre	Cane Yield Tons/Acre	Sugar Content Pounds/Ton
L 01-299	7,515	31.1	244
Ho 05-961	5,367	22.2	249
HoCP 09-804	7,019	28.5	249
L 11-183	5,294	23.7	230
L 12-201	6,187	24.8	250
Ho 12-615	6,408	27.0	239
Ho 13-739	6,501	25.2	259
L 14-267	6,720	26.6	253
HoCP 14-885	7,441	28.8	262
L 15-306	6,828	28.0	247
HoL 15-508	7,160	28.4	254
HoCP 18-803	7,174	30.5	233

Third Stubble (Three-year means)

Variety	Sugar Yield Pounds/Acre	Cane Yield Tons/Acre	Sugar Content Pounds/Ton
L 01-299	7,702	33.0	236
Ho 05-961	5,347	21.3	245
HoCP 09-804	6,909	29.8	237
L 11-183	5,114	23.2	225
L 12-201	6,088	25.8	239
Ho 12-615	6,073	27.4	224
Ho 13-739	6,660	27.4	247
L 14-267	7,013	28.3	246
HoCP 14-885	7,725	30.6	257
L 15-306	6,829	28.9	240
HoL 15-508	7,346	29.5	252

Outfield variety trials are cooperatively conducted by the LSU AgCenter, USDA-ARS 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

HoCP 96-540 was released for commercial planting in 2003 and occupied 9% of the state's 2024 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. HoCP 96-540 is better adapted to sandier soils. Rust infections can be high in the plant-cane crop. HoCP 96-540 possesses superior cold tolerance and responds well to ripeners.

To manage risk in HoCP 96-540, it should occupy 5% or less of your farm's acreage.



L 01-283

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 on most farming operations.



Sugarcane Variety Highlights

L 01-299

L 01-299 was released in 2009 and is the leading variety grown in the state. 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 following a mild winter and early in the growing season. 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 and reestablish drainage and apply herbicide. 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 and cold sandier soil types.

Keep the planted acreage of L 01-299 at 25% to 50% of total planted acres.



HoCP 09-804

Released in 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 very inconsistent performance.

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



Sugarcane Variety Highlights

L 11-183

In 2018, L 11-183 was released to the Louisiana sugar industry. The variety was derived from a cross between HoCP 92-624 and LCP 85-384. L 11-183 has a moderate population of larger diameter stalks. Its rolling canopy and broad leaves provide good shading. The variety has good yield potential, good sucrose content and fair stubbling ability. L 11-183 has moderate cold tolerance based on recent freeze tests. The variety is better adapted to lighter soils. L 11-183 is susceptible to brown rust but is resistant to the other major diseases of sugarcane. The variety will lodge. The variety did not stubble well after the freeze of mid-February 2021 and the Christmas freeze of 2022. Its biggest risk is performance in older stubble crops.

Acreage planted with L 11-183 should be kept at 0% to 5%.



Ho 12-615

In 2019, Ho 12-615 was released to the Louisiana sugar industry. 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 excellent 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%.



Sugarcane Variety Highlights

Ho 13-739

In 2020, Ho 13-739 was released to the Louisiana sugar industry. 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. This is 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.



L 14-267

In 2021, L 14-267 was released to the Louisiana sugar industry. 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% of planted acreage.



Sugarcane Variety Highlights

HoCP 14-885

HoCP 14-885 was released to the Louisiana sugar industry in 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 Bru1gene 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 difficult to harvest when it goes down.

HoCP 14-885 will be widely planted again in 2025. Keep the variety at 25% to 50% of your planted acreage.



L 15-306

In 2022, L 15-306 was released to the Louisiana sugar industry. 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 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.



New Variety Releases

HoL 15-508

In 2022, HoL 15-508 was released to the Louisiana sugar industry. 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 your acreage. Begin moving some acreage to your tougher ground to determine the best fit on the farm.



HoCP 18-803

The newest variety release, HoCP 18-803, was released to Louisiana sugarcane producers in 2025. The variety was derived from the cross HoL 08-718 x HoCP 09-814. The variety had higher sugar yield in plant cane and first stubble crops, but less sugar yield in older stubble crops than L 01-299. HoCP 18-803 has a lower population of larger diameter stalks. The new variety has resistance to the sugarcane borer and most major sugarcane diseases, except for susceptibility to brown rust disease. Producers should obtain seed cane of HoCP 18-803 and increase the new variety on their better land.



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	2020	2021	2021	2022	2022	2025
Harvestability	G	VG	G	M	M-P	G	G	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	G
Sugarcane borer	S	R	S	S	MS	MS	MS	S	VS	S	MR
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	-
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	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	1-Year Change
HoCP 96-540	15	12	10	8	9	6	-3
L 01-283	14	10	10	8	4	3	-1
L 01-299	56	59	58	56	53	54	+1
HoCP 09-804	5	9	10	11	9	8	-1
L 12-201	<1	<1	1	2	2	2	0
Ho 12-615	<1	<1	3	6	10	8	-2
Ho 13-739		<1	<1	1	2	3	+1
L 14-267				<1	<1	<1	0
HoCP 14-885				1	3	11	+2
L 15-306					<1	0.5	+1
HoL 15-508					<1	0.5	+1

¹ Based on annual variety surveys by county agents, 2010-2024.

Links:

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

Visit: www.lsuagcenter.com/topics/crops/sugarcane
Click on “Annual Reports” icon.



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