

Assessment on Cane Losses due to Indiscriminate Harvesting

M. Ali and M.A. Matin

Sugarcane Research & Training Institute,
Ishurdi, Pabna, Bangladesh.

Various types of machines and methods are in commercial use to harvest sugarcane in the world. In Bangladesh harvesting operation is done by manual labourer using spade or Hasua (Sickle) which are not much suitable for cutting at below ground level. Huge quantities of cane loss occurs with the present practice of cane harvesting. Not much information are available to cane losses due to present indiscriminate system of harvesting. Therefore, a survey was conducted at Sugarcane Research & Training Institute (SRTI) farm during 1990-91 harvesting season to assess the losses of cane due to indiscriminate harvesting.

A survey was conducted in the fields where harvesting of cane stalk was done by contract labourers using Hasua. In the surveyed plot leftover stubbles were uprooted by spade and then those were cleaned. Leftover of cane stalk were separated from root stock. Variety under survey was Isd-16. Length of leftover cane stalks were measured and chemically analysed to determine the sucrose percentage. The cane yield of the surveyed plots was recorded.

Table 1. Losses due to indiscriminate harvesting of cane.

Surveyed variety	Yield of cane of surveyed plot (t/ha)	Loss of cane due to indiscriminate harvest (t/ha)	Recovery percentage in leftover cane	Sugar Loss from left-over cane (t/ha)	Loss in respect of monetary value (Tk./ha)
Isd-16	63.0	4.42	10.37	0.46	12420.00

It is seen from the Table that average yield of cane in the surveyed plot was 63 t/ha. Loss of cane due to indiscriminate harvesting was recorded 4.42 t/ha. This findings is similar to that of Parthasarathy (1972) who reported 2-3 tons of cane loss as stubles left in the field during harvesting. It is also observed that if earthing up is done high enough more cane stalk portions are left unharvested (results not shown). Jorge *et al.* (1985) reported that cane stalks left in the field ranges from 1.74 to 6.74% under different harvesting system. Average length of leftover cane stalks was 12.1 cm where maximum length was recorded 16.5 cm and minimum was 8 cm. Further indiscriminate harvesting results loss of Tk. 1240.0 per hectare. Crop loss due to indiscriminate harvesting may be avoided using spade instead of using Hasua. Due consideration should be given during harvesting that cutting of cane stalk could be done as far as possible below ground level.

REFERENCES

- Parthasarathy, S.V. 1972. Sugarcane in India. The K.C.P. Ltd., Madras-6. 643 p.
- Jorge, S.; Enrique, M. and Jorge, M. 1985. Experience with sugarcane harvesting systems in Tucuman, Argentina. *Sugar Cane* (May/June) : 9-15.