

PROJECT SUMMARY

Title of Project: Adding Value to Mauritian Sugars and By-products	
Local Company: Omnicane Ltd	
Main Collaborating Institution: Mauritius Sugarcane Industry Research Institute (MSIRI) - Mauritius Cane Industry Authority (MCIA)	
Project Leader: Dr Jean Claude Autrey	
Research Collaborator(s)	
Name	Organisation
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Technical Abstract	
<p>Public perception that sugar contributes to obesity, diabetes and other preventable “civilization diseases” has led to introduction of many alternative sweeteners. Although the physiological effects of some are questionable, most of these alternative sweeteners that usually sell at a premium have taken a significant part of the market away from cane sugar. This is one of the factors why the Mauritian sugar industry faces unprecedented challenges; declining production and lower export prices. Adding value to its products is a logical way to enhance the industry’s competitiveness. Mauritius as a major exporter of “specialty” dark sugars and molasses is in a unique position to benefit from the worldwide trend towards higher value “healthy” sugars. This project will characterize Mauritian “brown” sugars and other byproducts of the Mauritian sugar industry in terms of the natural components that are usually associated with beneficial nutritional properties of functional foods. Novel processes will be developed to isolate and purify the physiologically active compounds that originate in sugar cane and that find their way in trace quantities to brown sugars and some cane by-products. The research will lead to development and commercialization of new proprietary sugar products with enhanced and well-documented beneficial physiological properties and with higher commercial value.</p>	
Key Words: Sugarcane, sugar, sucrose, value addition, molasses, glycemic index, antioxidant	