



ZULULAND NORTH EXTENSION NEWS



RAINFED VARIETY TRIAL: RESULTS OF THE PLANT CROP

This trial, comprising nine varieties, was planted on the 21st November 2022 at UVS North Farm. Four months later, the crop was damaged by hail. Thereafter the crop started to develop side shoots but recovered a few weeks after the event and normal growth resumed.

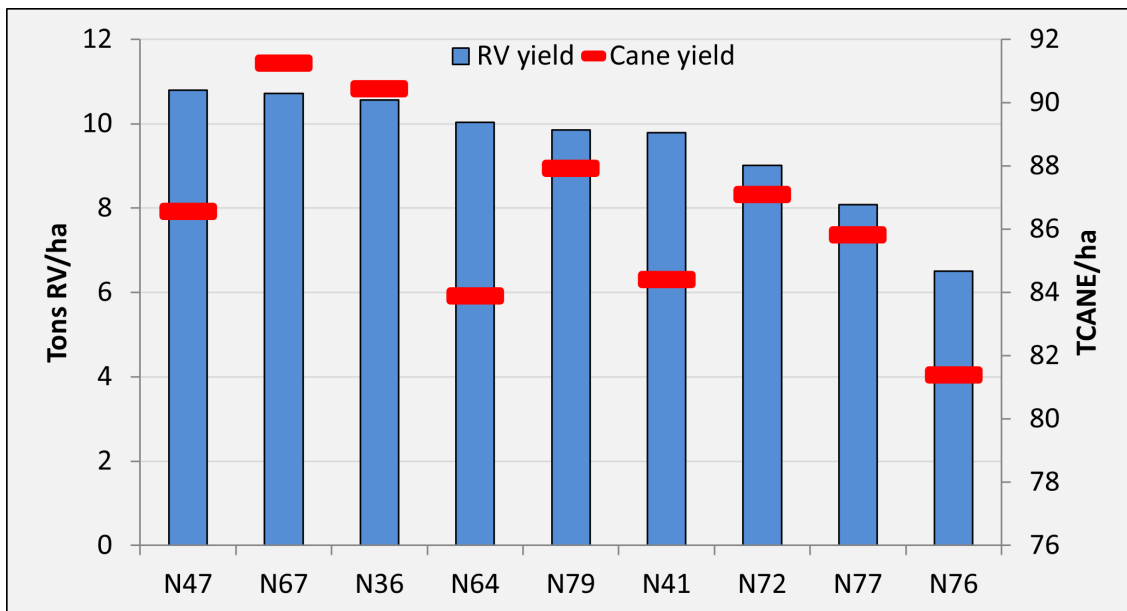


Figure 1: Variety performance under rainfed conditions. (Results of the trial are shown in tons cane/ha (red dashes) and in tons RV/ha (blue columns).

The trial was harvested at the age of 16 months on the 19th April 2024. All the varieties in the trial were lodged at the time of harvest, except for N67 – a possible reason why this variety achieved higher cane yields when compared to other varieties.

Although the N47 RV yield was on a par with those of N67 and N36, its cane yield was much lower.

The low cane yields of N47, N64, N41 and N76 can be attributed to the damage caused by the hail. The assumption being that growth was lost during the recovery period. It will be interesting to see how these varieties perform when the next crop is cut at 12 months of age. We hope that there will be no adverse weather conditions that could compromise the performance of these varieties at the next harvest.

POTENTIAL CARRY-OVER CANE

The current crop in the area is suffering from moisture stress creating ideal conditions for a build-up of eldana numbers. To ensure that eldana is kept in check, the following recommendations should be followed:

- Growers should avoid carrying over any fields with eldana levels above the threshold (5e/100 stalks).
- Ensure that all carryover fields are treated with an appropriate IRAC-approved pesticide.
- At no time should cane exceed 13 months of age at the end of December unless it has been treated with appropriate pesticides.
- Do not carryover eldana susceptible varieties or heavily flowered fields.
- It is the grower's responsibility to ensure that cane with more than 5e/100 stalks is harvested before the mill closes.
- After the mill has closed, any fields with eldana levels greater than 100e/100 stalks will have to be destroyed, irrespective of age.

NB: Please ensure that all potential carryover fields are inspected for eldana as soon as possible. Contact your Biosecurity officer in this regard.

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