



ZULULAND NORTH EXTENSION NEWS



Supplementary irrigated variety trial results

The supplementary irrigated variety trial planted at Ubizo estate on 16 January 2019 was harvested for the 4th time on 3 August 2023. The trial was harvested at 14 months.

Moddus® was applied through aerial application at 800ml/ha 10 weeks before harvest. This was then followed by ORCA® applied aerially at 330ml/ha at 6 weeks before harvest.

The yields of the 3rd ratoon crop have not been as good as the previous crops. This could be attributed to limited irrigation during this period. The cane was also badly lodged at the time of harvest due to heavy winds that were experienced during April. Among the top performing varieties in the trial were the longer cutting cycle varieties, N59, N55 and N53 with RV yields of more than 12 tons/ha. The cane yields of these varieties were, however, lower compared to 12 month cutting cycle irrigated varieties like the N60 and N25. This indicates the importance of harvesting each variety at the recommended harvest age.

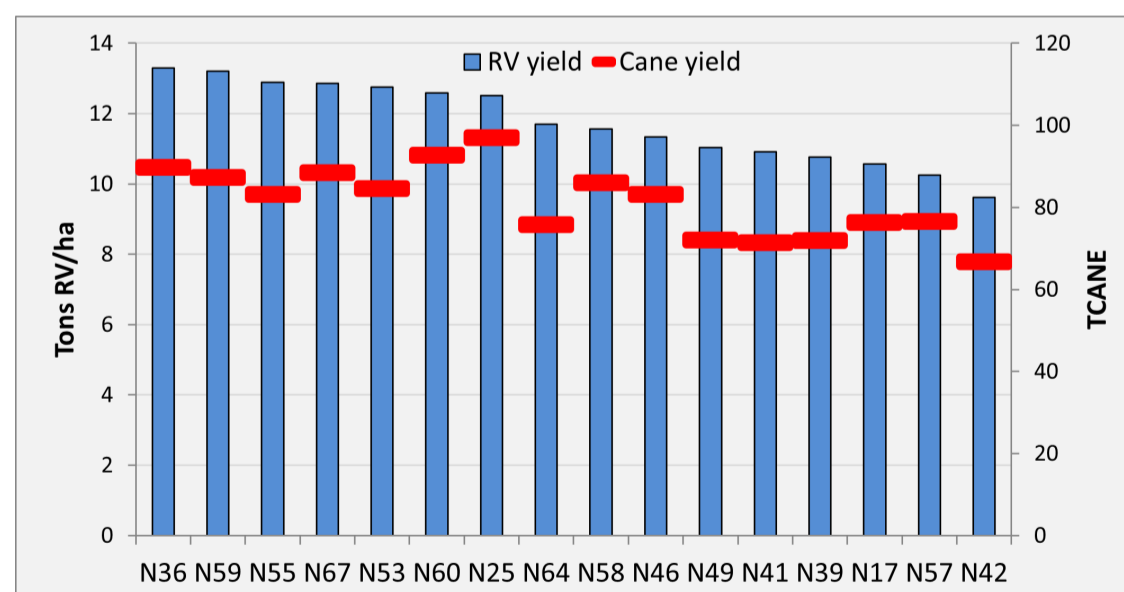


Figure 1: Average performance of the four crops under supplementary irrigated conditions. (Results of the trial are shown in tons cane/ha (red dashes) and in tons RV/ha (blue columns)).

Planting tips

It is predicted that rainfall will be below average this summer with an increase in temperature. Early planting is therefore recommended whilst adequate moisture is still available in the soil.

It is advisable to use double stick when planting. Use good quality seedcane to ensure uniform germination. When planting, ensure that the time from opening the furrows to covering the setts, is as short as possible so that drying of the soil and setts is kept to a minimum.

Carry-over cane

- Ensure that all fields earmarked to be carried over are surveyed for eldana.
- You should have already started your eldana spray programme considering that we anticipate below average rainfall and high temperatures this summer.
- To avoid eldana resistance build-up, follow the IRAC spray programme.
- Avoid carrying-over varieties that are susceptible to eldana
- Do not carry-over heavily flowered cane.
- Earlier this year parts of the area experienced hail damage. Hail damaged cane should not be carried over as side shoots would have developed.
- Please advise your Biosecurity Officer of all carry-over fields, so that the teams can help with eldana surveys.

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