**U.S.D.A. lowers 2018-19 sugar ending stocks; raises 2019-20 stocks**

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Agriculture, in its Oct. 10 World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates report, estimated the carryover of U.S. sugar on Oct. 1 (2018-19 ending stocks) at 1,725,000 short tons, raw value, down 22,000 tons, or 1.3%, from its September forecast as lower beet sugar production and tariff-rate quota imports more than offset lower deliveries for food.

The U.S.D.A. estimated the 2018-19 ending stocks-to-use ratio at 14%, down slightly from 14.2% forecast in September and compared with 16.1% in 2017-18.

U.S. beet sugar production was estimated at 4,907,000 tons in 2018-19, down 50,000 tons from September, with cane sugar unchanged at 4,028,000 tons.

Imports were estimated at 3,067,000 tons, down 22,000 tons from September with tariff rate quota imports at 1,540,000 tons, down 42,000 tons, and other program imports (re-export imports) at 437,682 tons, up 17,682 tons. High-tier imports were raised slightly from September to 92,679 tons, with imports from Mexico unchanged at 997,000 tons.

Domestic deliveries were estimated at 12,250,000 tons, down 50,000 tons from September due to a like decrease in deliveries for food, estimated at 12,125,000 tons, “based on a slower-than-expected pace,” the U.S.D.A. said.

U.S. sugar ending stocks for 2019-20 were estimated at 1,784,000 tons, up 118,000 tons, or 7%, from the September forecast and up 59,000 tons, or 3.4%, from 2018-19. The ending S.-T.-U. ratio was raised to 14.5% from 13.5% in September.

U.S. sugar production in 2019-20 was forecast at 9,184,000 tons, up 50,000 tons from September and up 148,000 tons, or 3%, from 2018-19. Beet sugar production for 2019-20 was projected at 5,055,000 tons, up 50,000 tons, or 1%, from September, as the reduction from 2018-19 was pushed into 2019-20, with cane sugar unchanged at 4,129,000 tons.

Total imports in 2019-20 were forecast at 3,165,000 tons, up 40,000 tons from September due to a like increase in T.R.Q. imports at 1,627,000 tons. Imports from Mexico were unchanged at 1,118,000 tons but may be adjusted in December when the U.S.D.A. “resets” the ending stocks-to-use ratio in conjunction with the U.S.-Mexico suspension agreements.

Total supply was forecast at 14,074,000 tons, up 68,000 tons from September and up 64,000 tons from 2018-19.

The U.S.D.A. forecast domestic deliveries of sugar in 2019-20 at 12,255,000 tons, including deliveries for food at 12,150,000 tons, both down 50,000 tons from September, carrying forward the downward adjustment from 2018-19.

The U.S.D.A. raised from September its import forecast for Mexico by 16,189 tonnes to 86,000 tonnes, actual weight, for 2018-19, sharply lowered domestic use by 151,000 tonnes, to 4,565,000 tonnes, and raised exports by 14,203 tonnes, to 2,194,000 tonnes. Ending stocks were estimated at 1,148,000 tonnes, up 153,000 tonnes, or 15%, from the September forecast, with an estimated 273,168 tonnes required to be exported before Dec. 31, the U.S.D.A. said.

For 2019-20, the U.S.D.A. forecast Mexican sugar production at 6,065,000 tonnes, down 135,000 tonnes from September, “based on updated reports of the severity of drought conditions in several producing areas,” lowered domestic use by 152,000 tonnes, to 4,624,000 tonnes, and raised exports by 201,607 tonnes, to 1,695,000 tonnes. Ending stocks in 2019-20 were forecast at 963,373 tonnes, down 32,000 tonnes from September and down 185,000 tonnes, or 16%, from 2018-19.