



LOUISIANA
sugarcane

ONE Sweet HISTORY...

In Spanish they call it “azucar.” “Sucre” is the French word for it, while Germans say “zucker.” It’s called many things in many places, but as long as it’s been around, and it’s been a while, Americans have always called it “sugar.”

Sugar is one of the world’s oldest documented **commodities**, and at one time it was so valuable that people locked it up in what was called a sugar safe.



SUGAR’S OLD AND ILLUSTRIOUS TIMELINE:

8000 B.C. In the beginning, sugarcane was valued for the sweet syrup it produced. As people migrated to different parts of the world, the good news spread, and eventually, sugarcane plants were found in Southeast Asia, India, and Polynesia.

500 B.C. A new form of sugar was discovered — sugar crystals! This major breakthrough in ancient **technology** occurred in India, when sugarcane juice was boiled until crystals developed.

325 B.C. “Honey without bees?” Could this be true? This is how sugar was first described to Alexander the Great. As his empire spread across Asia and into Africa and Europe, so did the **cultivation** of sugarcane.

200 B.C. A Chinese emperor heard about India’s secret for manufacturing sugar, and he sent his **emissary** there to learn about this sweet sensation. Sugarcane was planting roots around the world.

1493 Christopher Columbus is credited with introducing sugarcane to the New World, but that was old news in places like Southeast Asia where sugar had already been making life sweeter for over 8,000 years.



1500s Sugar is a scarce luxury in Europe at this time. One teaspoon costs as much as \$5, and a calf costs as much as 4 pounds of sugar!

1744 A new source for sugar was found. As luck would have it, a German scientist named Andreas Marggraf discovered that the sugar beets used to feed cows could be transformed into sugar crystals. Eureka!

1751 Of the U.S. sugar producing areas, Louisiana is the oldest and most historic. Sugarcane arrived in Louisiana with the Jesuit priests in 1751 who planted it near where their church now stands on Baronne Street in New Orleans.

That’s one sweet history!

Continued on Back →

1795

Several plantations were planted in what is now the city limits of New Orleans and in 1795, Etienne de Boré, first granulated sugar on a commercial scale in Audubon Park. The success of the sugar industry hastens Louisiana's admittance to the United States.

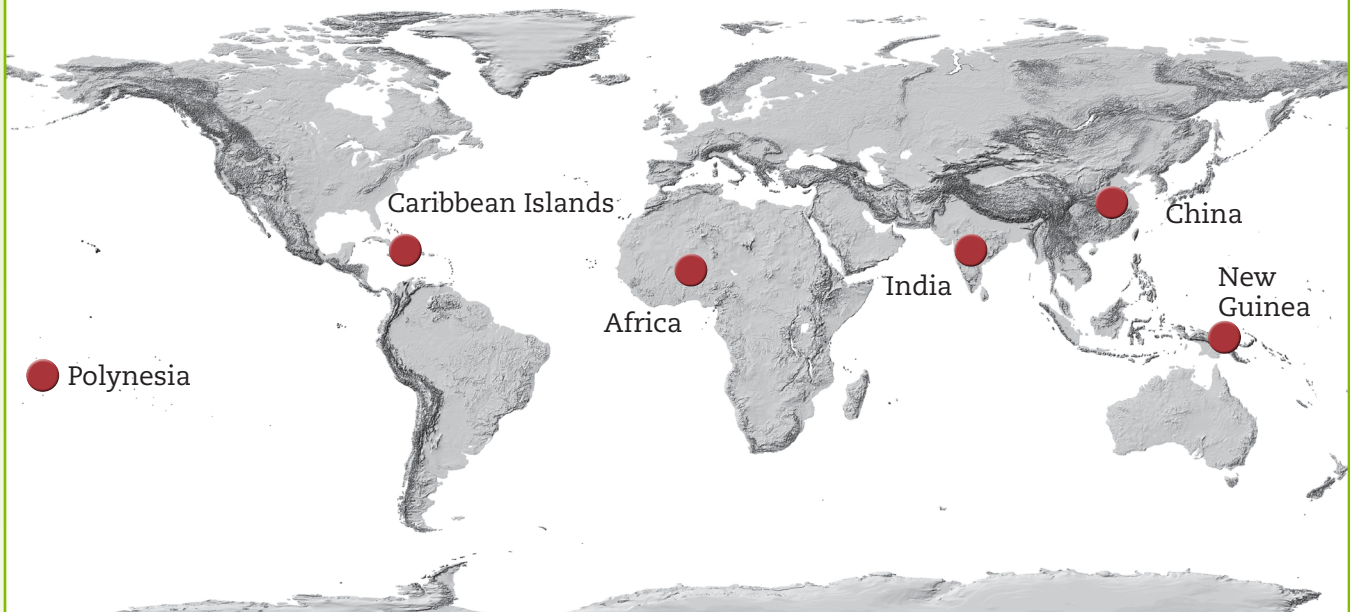
1865

Except for disastrous production years during the Civil War, during a disease epidemic of the 1920s, and from 10 degree freezing temperatures affecting the 1990 crop, the Louisiana sugarcane industry has continued to increase in productivity, mainly due to improved **varieties**, cultural practices, pest control and sugar processing techniques. The Louisiana sugarcane industry is currently in its third century of sugar production.

Glossary

- **commodity** - n. a raw material or primary agricultural product that can be bought and sold
- **technology** - n. the use of scientific knowledge to make work easier
- **cultivation** - n. the use of land for growing plants
- **emissary** - n. a person who is sent on a mission as a representative for someone else
- **variety** - n. any of various groups of plants or animals ranking below a species.

WHERE SUGAR WAS FIRST GROWN



In the 1500's a teaspoon of sugar cost \$5.00. Answer this question and you may be surprised at how much things have changed.

If you put 2 teaspoons of sugar in your coffee every day for a year, at \$5.00 per teaspoon how much would you spend in that year?

