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17May89 CUBA: SUCCESSFUL CUBAN SUGAR HARVEST WINDING DOWN.

By Lionel Martin

HAVANA, May 17, Reuter - The Cuban sugar harvest which will end this month was described by a Cuban sugar industry source as the most successful in recent years.

"Most of our 154 sugar mills have reached their projected raw sugar production goals and some are overfulfilling them," the source said. On Wednesday, Cuba's official newspaper Granma reported that 113 mills have reached their projected goals.

The harvest, which was scheduled to end on April 30, has been extended to maximize production.

With heavy season rains beginning to fall, the harvest is beginning to wind down and should end later this month, the source said.

While the sugar industry does not reveal its overall raw sugar production targets, a foreign sugar expert said that raw sugar production for the present harvest could surpass eight million tonnes.

Cuban raw sugar production during the previous 1987-88 campaign was about 7.3 million tonnes. Production during the 1986-87 harvest reached slightly over 7.2 million tonnes.

"With this campaign our sugar industry is now back on track just in time to take advantage of the higher world market price for raw sugar," the sugar industry source said.

The source said Cuba plans to increase its production of raw sugar during the coming decade.

He said aside from raw sugar exports, Cuba has ambitious plans to produce more sugar derivatives such as paper and board made from bagasse, torula yeast for animal feed and alcoholic beverages.

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