



It's *Sweet* TO THE ENVIRONMENT

Sugar is a gift from nature. The Louisiana sugar industry, as a responsible **caretaker**, gives back to the environment as much as it can. Sugar farmers, millers, refiners, and scientists are respectful of sugar's value and do all that is possible to **utilize** this gift in responsible ways.

Once sugarcane leaves the field, the crop is headed for great things. Not only does it provide the sugar we eat, but the parts of the cane plant that are not used for sugar have important jobs, too. They're not just thrown away.

Would you believe some parts of the sugarcane plant help to power the factories that purify sugar? A substance called **bagasse** is one of the **by-products** of sugarcane. Not only can it fuel the processing facilities, bagasse has been used to produce electricity for nearby towns!

Speaking of other products, molasses (which comes from the sugar purification process) is used in hundreds of goods. Many of them might be in your home right now! If you like gingerbread, you must like molasses, too. It's one of the key ingredients. Bakers, pharmaceutical companies, distillers and other food processors use this flavorful syrup in many of their products. Ask your mom; she probably uses it, too.

The men and women working in the fields and mills **appreciate** the value of these plants and help make sure that little is wasted in sugar refining. Even professionals working outside of the mills and factories "think green." Scientists have been experimenting with sugar for years. They have discovered many products that can be made better by using sugar. But, you may wonder, how does this help the environment? Good question.



The use of **renewable** materials is environmentally responsible. Sugarcane can be made into ethanol, a biofuel. But the non-sugar containing parts of the sugarcane plant can be compressed into a briquette that can be used as fuel to replace coal. Researchers are also discovering ways to make biodegradable plastic and rechargeable batteries from sugar.

Solid waste is also reduced when you recycle. When sugar is added to paper, it recycles more easily. Paper made from sugarcane plant fiber is biodegradable, compostable and recyclable. How's that for looking out for Mother Nature!

When industries, like the Louisiana sugar industry, make sure they are doing their best to protect our world, they are promoting environmental stewardship. Just like you, the sugar industry is sweet on nature!

Glossary

- **caretaker** - *n.* one that takes care of the house or land for an owner
- **utilize** - *v.* to make use of
- **bagasse** - *n.* The fibrous leftover material of the sugarcane plant after the juice has been squeezed from the cane.
- **by-products** - *n.* something produced in addition to the main product
- **appreciate** - *n.* the act of recognizing the worth or importance of something
- **renewable** - *adj.* capable of being replaced by natural ecological cycles

Unscramble the following words, putting one letter in each space. Then combine the circled letters to answer the question. This is a really sweet brain twister.

Q: By using renewable materials and recycling we help the _____?

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|-------------|---|-------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1. | TNUREA | ○ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. | LMILS | ○ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. | LAEUV | ○ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. | FOIBEUL | | _____ | _____ | _____ | ○ _____ |
| 5. | TRCEAAKRE | | _____ | _____ | ○ _____ | _____ |
| 6. | NREGE | | _____ | _____ | ○ _____ | _____ |
| 7. | TILZIEU | | _____ | ○ _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 8. | AFCOTYR | | _____ | _____ | _____ | ○ _____ |
| 9. | SOMSLAES | | _____ | ○ _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 10. | SEOBPLINSER | | _____ | _____ | _____ | ○ _____ |
| 11. | ASEBGSA | | _____ | _____ | _____ | ○ _____ |



Now you're ready to unscramble and combine the circled letters to answer the question.

12. _____

ANSWER KEY:
 1. NATURE
 2. MILLS
 3. VALUE
 4. BIOFUEL
 5. CARETAKER
 6. GREEN
 7. UTILIZE
 8. FACTORY
 9. MOLASSES
 10. RESPONSIBLE
 11. BAGASSE
 12. ENVIRONMENT