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# Sugar output shortfall

**Mumbai:** India's sugar output could fall 20 per cent to the lowest level in three years in 2019-20 after drought last year forced farmers to curb cane planting and as floods this year damaged crops in key growing areas, a senior industry official said on Thursday.

Lower production could help the world's biggest sugar producer to reduce stockpiles that have been boosted by two years of record output and lower-than-expected exports.

India's sugar output could fall to 26.3 million tonnes in the marketing year starting from October 1, down from 33 million tonnes a year ago, said Prakash Naiknavare, managing director of the National Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories Ltd.

"Last month's floods badly affected cane plantation in Maharashtra and Karnataka."

Maharashtra is the second-biggest sugar producer, while Karnataka ranks third. Maharashtra's production could halve to 5.5mt, while Karnataka's output may drop 23 per cent to 3.3 mt, he said. *Reuters*