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**Florida Sugar Cane League Welcomes Back**

**Sugar Cane Growers Cooperative As Industry Unites In Farm Bill Efforts**

**Washington, D.C. –** The Florida Sugar Cane League announced today that the Sugar Cane Growers Cooperative of Florida, based in Belle Glade, FL, is once again represented by the industry trade association. This move ensures that the three major sugarcane companies in Florida – along with their independent growers – are fully united under the banner of the Florida Sugar Cane League as debate over no-cost American sugar policy takes place in Congress.

“With the Sugar Cane Growers Cooperative, we are united under the Florida Sugar Cane League as Congress considers the future of farm policy and food security in America,” said Ryan Weston, CEO of the Florida Sugar Cane League.  “Florida’s sugarcane farmers play such an important role in helping to secure America’s domestic food supply in one of the most important food producing regions of the entire country.”

**Statement by Tony Contreras, President & CEO of the Sugar Cane Growers Cooperative**

“On behalf of our 44 member growers, their families and our employees, we are thrilled to once again be joined in a united front through the Florida Sugar Cane League with U.S. Sugar and Florida Crystals in Washington, D.C. efforts.  Even when the Cooperative was not formally part of the League, we still worked together on common issues, particularly important legislative policies.  We’re happy to provide a united voice on behalf of the more than 12,500 people in Florida employed by sugarcane farming and processing.”

**Statement by Robert H. Buker, President & CEO of U.S. Sugar**

“There’s always strength in numbers.  With the Cooperative and its growers back on board, Florida’s representation in Washington is unified in its efforts to retain commonsense, zero-cost sugar policy in our nation’s capital.   Both sugar as a matter of national farm policy and as a food product remain a bargain, and we intend to keep it that way. The last thing we need is for predatory foreign governments who heavily subsidize their own sugar farmers to be putting American farmers out of business.   We’ve always been a formidable team when the Florida industry joins together for a common goal.”

**Statement by Pepe Fanjul, Jr., Executive Vice President of Florida Crystals**

“Florida Crystals partners with Sugar Cane Growers Cooperative on many business fronts and we’re delighted to work with them through the Florida Sugar Cane League.  This announcement sends a message that our industry is more united than ever. We look forward to working with our friends at the Cooperative throughout the Farm Bill debate to ensure American sugarcane and sugar beet farmers, processors and refiners can continue to sustainably produce safe, affordable food here at home.”

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