
PREPARATION

This stage involves breaking the fibres of the cane in order to facilitate juice extraction. The cane cutter chops the cane into pieces. At Damoiseau, there is also a shredder which tears the pieces of cane into even finer strands.

PRESSING AND EXTRACTION

1. The shredded cane passes through a series of roll mills which extract the juice, known as *vesou*, and expel the *bagasse* (fibrous residue).
2. To facilitate juice extraction, water is added to the bagasse (quantities vary in accordance with the density of the juice); this process is known as *imbibition*. If necessary, sulphuric acid is added to maintain a pH level of 4-5
3. A filtration system gradually eliminates bagasse residue suspended in the air in order to leave a residue-free juice.

The marvels of bagasse: some is used to supply energy to the distillery, some to fertilise the plantations and some for animal feed.

The pressing unit: conduct and maintenance

The flow of cane to the mills needs to be managed to ensure a regular supply and a smooth pressing process, and to prevent blockages.

Without cleanliness there can be no quality (100% vigilance = 0% incidents)

Daily cleaning of all equipment (roll mills, conveyor, sampling basin, etc):

1. Eliminates the risk of bacteria developing
 2. Creates the most advantageous conditions for successful fermentation.
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