Two Hands Beat Price Of Sugar

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—(AP) — Two former Louisiana cane-field hands are beating the price of sugar—they make their own.

- It's unrefined brown sugar, but they say it costs only 15 cents a pound, labor included.

Henry Newborn, 54, and Jody Smith, 76, did it last year on a test batch of sugar cane that they say the experts told them isn't supposed to grow in California.

CANE SQUEEZEER

It worked so well that they each planted half an acre this year. Then Smith sent home for his grandfather's 1892 sugar cane squeezer.

They borrowed a neighbor's horse to power the squeezer and commenced the cutting, grinding and boiling that should yield 75 gallons of molasses and 200 pounds of sugar.

Next year, they plan to plant at least five acres and sell some of the product as "Louisiana sugar cane molasses."

"They told us that sugar cane wouldn't grow in California," said Newborn in an interview.

GROWS LARGE

"But when we tried it, it grew as large here as it does back there (in the Mississippi Delta)," said Newborn, who is from Mount Pleasant, La. Smith is from Lake Charles. Both moved to California in the 1940s.

Newborn said of the crop: "It needs plenty of good water and plenty of fertilizer, and then it will grow here as well as it will anywhere else."