

REGULATION OF SUGARCANE PRODUCTION HAS UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

Environmental regulations in Mexico and Florida sought to reduce sulfur dioxide emissions from sugar mills and limit smoke pollution from manual harvesting. In both cases, firms' ability to substitute between different production inputs allowed them to maintain production levels, but also resulted in some unintended consequences.



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Prof. Hernández-Cortés studies how environmental and energy policies affect environmental justice outcomes. She has a deep connection to this topic since her family lives close to sugarcane fields and has been affected by the resulting pollution. Her grandfather worked in the industry. Dr. Hernández-Cortés has come to understand her community better by studying sugarcane production and evaluating how communities living near these activities are affected by

the associated pollution. As a researcher, she takes satisfaction from creating data visualizations that explain the main ideas behind the different topics she studies and enjoys using data analysis to understand how policies can be better designed to achieve equity outcomes. Learn more: *"The Distributional Consequences of Incomplete Regulation". 2025. Journal of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economists. doi.org/10.1086/735824.*



Xianru Han

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Xianru's journey into economics was guided by exploration and a desire to find her true passion within the field, leading her to environmental economics. Dr. Han's research examines how environmental policies impact different groups in society. For example, the sugarcane industry in Florida employs over 14,000 people and generates more than \$800 million in annual income. Dr. Han was motivated to pursue this work after hearing a statement from Katherine Pruitt of the American Lung Association, who highlighted the difficulty communities face in contesting agricultural burning without sufficient data: *"It's a challenge when it's your story versus mine."* Dr. Han's work aims not just to contribute to academic discussions, but also to provide communities with the evidence needed to challenge and change damaging practices more effectively. Learn more: *"Working paper: The Distributional Effects of Tighter Regulations: New Evidence from the Sugarcane Burning in Florida". 2024. xianru-han.netlify.app.*

