

NEWS RELEASE

2020 Season - Sugar Milling Update (Cane crushed to date passes 1.5 million tonnes.)

03 November, 2020



OVERVIEW

As of Monday 02nd November 2020, the volume of cane crushed by the three FSC mills had reached 1,513,072 tonnes. The cumulative crush to date remains 5% higher than for the equivalent period in 2019, and compares to a tonnage of 1,442,177 tonnes crushed in the same period in 2019. To date all three mills have crushed more than for the same period in 2019. Labasa has crushed 3% more than last year, Lautoka 1% more and Rarawai 11% more.

Mill throughput and performance to date continues to be better than for the past two seasons, with average weekly mill stoppages 19% lower, driven by strong cane supply and mill breakdowns that are 19% lower than in 2019.

Sugar production of 135,142 tonnes to date compares to production for the same period in 2019 of 138,758 tonnes. Sugar recoveries measured by the cumulative tonnes cane to sugar ratio (TCTS) remains at 11.2, still impacted by ongoing low cane purity, which to date remains the lowest in three years. Cane purity has been adversely affected by weather, high extraneous matter in billet cane and continuing high levels of burnt cane deliveries compared to 2019.

The final bulk sugar export for 2020 completed loading of a full cargo of 30,000 tonnes of bulk raw sugar on 31st October 2020. The bulk vessel Jiangmen Trader departed Fiji the same day, destined for the UK.

Lautoka Mill

Lautoka mill crushed 26,051 tonnes of cane and produced 2,376 tonnes of sugar for the past week. Both cane and sugar were slightly lower than target for the week, although the TCTS of 11.2 units was marginally better. Cane supply started thinning from the beginning of this week, and resulting Mill stops for shortage of cane recorded 16.1 hours for the week. Factory stops were 7.7hrs. A cleaning & maintenance stop was taken over the weekend to chemically and mechanically clean the evaporators. Cane quality remains depressed as a result of 91% burnt cane received.

Rarawai Mill

Rarawai mill crushed 20,851 tonnes of cane and produced 1,552 tonnes of sugar, recording a TCTS ratio of 13.4 units for the week. Both throughput and the recovery were lower than target due to problems with the C3 mill which is the last extraction mill at Rarawai. To keep operations running the mill was bypassed until it was rectified over the weekend. A milling engineer was flown in from Labasa to assist in the remedial works.

Labasa Mill

Labasa crushed 30,712 tonnes of cane and produced 2,929 tonnes of sugar for the week. Both were above target for the week as a result of improved weather and consistency in milling operations. Cane stops were 16.5 hours which was mainly due to low cane supply and factory inside stops were only 1.9 hours. The TCTS ratio at Labasa was 10.5 units which has remained the same for the past 3 weeks.

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