

NEWS RELEASE

2020 Season - Sugar Milling Update (Cane crush of 882,905 tonnes – 12% higher than 2019)



08 September, 2020

OVERVIEW

For the period ending 07th September 2020, a total of 882,905 tonnes of cane had been crushed by the three FSC sugar mills. The cumulative crush to date compares to an equivalent tonnage of 787,491 tonnes crushed in 2019 – an increase of 12% year on year. Each of the three mills have crushed more than for the same period last year – Lautoka 10% more, Rarawai 20% more and Labasa 8% more.

Overall Mill throughput to date remains acceptable, with operating time efficiency 9% better than last year, and average weekly mill stoppages 32% lower, driven by strong cane supply and mill breakdowns that are 12% lower than in 2019.

Sugar production at 77,702 tonnes to date is slightly higher than for the equivalent period in 2019 (77,016 tonnes). Sugar recoveries measured by the cumulative tonnes cane to sugar ratio (TCTS) is currently measuring 11.4.

Having exported three cargoes of bulk sugar and one of molasses so far this year, a fourth sugar vessel is expected later in the month to load from Malau and Lautoka. A second molasses tanker will also arrive to load in September.

Lautoka Mill

Lautoka Mill crushed a total of 32,472 tonnes of cane for last week. This was 8% higher than the target figure and the highest for the same period in the past three years. Lautoka Mill encountered a stop on Wednesday evening due to damaged and burnt out boiler cables. This was rectified by the electrical team with throughput picking up well towards the weekend. A total of 2,411 tonnes of sugar was produced for the week with a TCTS of 13.5. POCS in cane dipped again to 9.7 units for the week. This was well below the target figure 12.0 units and the lowest for the same period in the past two years. Low cane quality was possibly also caused by Rarawai cane delivered during the weekend which was several days old. This reflected in the sugar production and TCTS ratio. The percent burnt cane increased to more than 66% during the week also impacting negatively on cane quality and TCTS.

Rarawai Mill

Rarawai mill crushed a total of 13,346 tonnes of cane for the past week which was only 49% of the mill target for the week. Mill operations were hampered by various issues in the crushing, feeding and boiler stations during the week. The C3 mill feed chute choked and had to be bypassed early Wednesday morning. The damaged and temporarily repaired Cane Carrier head shaft also broke on Friday causing the mill to close in order for a new shaft to be installed. Machining works for the new shaft were completed over the weekend. Parallel repair work was also carried out on the C3 mill feed chute and a problematic boiler conveyor was replaced. Other cleaning and maintenance works were carried out during this stop. During the weekend over

400 cane lorries from Rarawai were diverted to Lautoka for crushing. Mill Operations restarted Tuesday afternoon. Cane deliveries will normalize by Wednesday. Sugar production was affected by the long mill downtime (with a TCTS ratio of 12.5 units for the week). POCS in sugar cane remains low at 9.5 units and the percentage of burnt cane is now 71%, compared to 63% for the past week.

Labasa Mill

Labasa mill crushed a total of 30,699 tonnes cane for the week. This was 11% more than the target figure and higher than for the same period last year. Labasa mill ran well despite a halt to operations for 20 hrs on Wednesday due to rain which affected cane supply to the mill. The Mill had to stop again for 14hrs on Sunday to carry out normal maintenance and other shut down works. A total of 3,105 tonnes of sugar was produced for the week with a TCTS ratio of 9.9units. POCS in sugar cane improved to 11.0 units for the week. This is positive for Labasa and should assist in improving sugar production. The Percent burnt cane continues to increase reaching 20.4% for the week.

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For more information, please contact:

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