

## **NEWS RELEASE**



# **Locals up-skilled to operate mechanical sugarcane harvesters**

Wednesday 03 June, 2020

This sugarcane crushing season has presented new opportunities for 86 locals who are now being trained to operate mechanical sugarcane harvesters, a job usually reserved for specialist overseas workers.

Utilising overseas vendor support via online lessons and on-the-ground expertise, the 96 trainees are being upskilled to operate the mechanical harvesters so that this season can start on time.

The trainees will be operating CASE and Shaktiman Harvesters once they complete the classroom and practical training modules.

“We’ve introduced this initiative which has created new opportunities, fulfilled a need and helped build local skills all while ensuring that the start of the season would not be impacted due to the COVID-19 restrictions still in place for global travel,” Fiji Sugar Corporation (FSC) CEO, Graham Clark said.

“We are very pleased that we will soon have skills in the country to operate the mechanical harvesters ourselves, as it not only creates more local job opportunities but it also helps us improve operational efficiencies as we continue to build a sugar industry for the future.”

The FSC’s Training Department is working closely with Mr Sivakumar, a Harvester Operator and expert recruited by FSC, who is helping facilitate this training for FSC operators as well as those engaged with sugar co-operatives.

The technical teams from CASE and Shaktiman, the India-based vendors, are utilising technology and are hosting training via Microsoft Teams during the classroom training modules.

The workshop is run in two modules - classroom and on-the-job training. All theory will be covered in class, including instructions on driving, maintenance and servicing, plus safety procedures and protocols.

The new local mechanical harvester operators are expected to start the harvest on 10 June in Labasa.

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Captions:

1. Practical training on Mechanical Harvester
2. New Trainees in the field with the Mechanical Harvester

***For more information, please contact:***

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