

NEWS RELEASE

2020 Season - Sugar Milling Update (Cane crushed exceeds 1.2 million tonnes to date)

06 October, 2020



OVERVIEW

As of Monday 05th October 2020, the volume of cane crushed to date by the three FSC mills had reached 1,216,429 tonnes. The cumulative crush to date is 8% higher than for the equivalent period in 2019, and compares to a tonnage of 1,124,161 tonnes crushed in the same period in 2019. The three mills have all crushed more than for the same period last year – Lautoka 11% more, Rarawai 13% more and Labasa 3% more.

Mill throughput and performance to date remains better than for the past two seasons, with operating time efficiency 5% better than last year, and average weekly mill stoppages 26% lower, driven by strong cane supply and mill breakdowns that are 17% lower than in 2019.

Sugar production of 109,642 tonnes to date is similar to the equivalent period in 2019 (110,029 tonnes). Sugar recoveries measured by the cumulative tonnes cane to sugar ratio (TCTS) continues to improve, currently measuring 11.1 (11.2 last week), but impacted by ongoing low cane purity, which to date is 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 second bulk molasses shipment for 2020 completed loading and departed during the week. The cargo will be delivered to Vietnam and Korea. Bulk sugar exports for 2020 continue with completion of loading of the bulk vessel **MV Kodiak Island** with 30,000 tonnes of raw sugar for export to the United Kingdom. The vessel departed on Monday 05th October 2020.

Lautoka Mill

Lautoka Mill operations were affected in the past week by widespread rain during the weekend, in all mill districts. However the mill managed to crush 26,024 tonnes of cane and produced 2,721 tonnes of sugar for the week. The cane crushed was inline with the previous week's crush, however the sugar make was significantly higher than last week. As a result, the TCTS improved to 9.6 for the week. This was the lowest recorded since the start of the year. Outside stops were 22.5 hours due to rain and Inside stops were 13.0 hours. The mill had some issues with their 12MW TG set which was rectified. Burnt cane received in the week went up to 91%. The issue with high extraneous matter in mechanically harvested cane plus advanced harvesting continues, and this impacts negatively on cane quality and sugar processing efficiency. Lautoka has been crushing for 13 weeks and to date has crushed 346,222 tonnes of cane, producing 28,469 tonnes of sugar.

Rarawai Mill

Rarawai mill crushed 22,059 tonnes of cane and produced 2,135 tonnes of sugar for the past week. Rarawai district also received a substantial amount of rain over the weekend. Inside stops were 36.9 hours, with a stop to fix a broken pre-feed elevator runner in the cane feeding

station. The TCTS was 10.3 units for the week. Cane quality was slightly above target for the week, however lower than last week. Cane quality remains depressed, affected by the rain during the weekend. The percent burnt cane received at the mill has increased to 93.0%. This is affecting sugar processing efficiency. The percent extraneous matter in mechanically harvested cane also remains high. Rarawai has been crushing for 15 weeks and to date has crushed 384,178 tonnes of cane, producing 32,934 tonnes of sugar.

Labasa Mill

Labasa mill crushed 26,381 tonnes of cane and produced 2,749 tonnes of sugar for the past week. Labasa was most affected by rain, stopping for 56.0 hours in the week due to rain. However, cane crushed and sugar make were both higher than last week. The TCTS ratio was 9.6 units for the week. Inside stops were only 2.1 hours. An issue now for Labasa is the increased percent burnt cane received at the factory, up to 66% in the week. All efforts are in place to reduce cane cut to crush delay to minimize the impact on cane quality. The weather pattern seems to be similar to the 2018 season, and the district may expect more rain for the balance of the season if the pattern continues. Labasa has been crushing for 17 weeks and to date has crushed 486,029 tonnes of cane, producing 48,239 tonnes of sugar.

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For more information, please contact:

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