

NEWS RELEASE

Sugar Milling Update (2020 Crush pushes past 720,000 tonnes of cane)



25 August, 2020

OVERVIEW

For the period ending 24th August 2020, a total of 722,004 tonnes of cane had been crushed by the three FSC sugar mills which continue to crush at throughput better than last year. The cumulative crush to date compares to an equivalent tonnage of 621,431 tonnes crushed in 2019 – an increase of 16% year on year.

Mill performance remains steady, with operating time efficiency 13% higher than last year, and average weekly mill stoppages 39% lower, driven by strong cane supply and mill breakdowns that are 23% lower than in 2019.

Sugar production at 62,827 tonnes to date is higher than for the equivalent period in 2019 (59,908 tonnes). Sugar recoveries continue to improve slowly, with the cumulative tonnes cane to sugar ratio (TCTS) dropping to 11.5 compared to 11.6 and 11.8 for the last two weeks respectively.

Loading of two bulk sugar cargoes – 11,500 tonnes to the USA and 30,000 tonnes to Spain is in full swing. Loading is nearing completion and the vessels will have sailed by end of the week.

Lautoka Mill

Lautoka Mill crushed a total of 32,665 tonnes of cane for the week. This was higher than the weekly target, and also the highest cane tonnage crushed in one week for this season at Lautoka. This was despite the crushing rate being reduced to allow for replacement of the bearings for one shredder motor. A total of 2,903 tonnes sugar was produced for the week with a TCTS of 11.3. This is an improvement from last week. Cane quality improved but dipped again over the weekend, likely due to cane delivered from Rarawai. The percentage of burnt cane increased to 44.2% from 29.6% in the past week. This is a 15% increase, and is now a concern -especially with mechanical harvesters in full operation.

Rarawai Mill

Rarawai mill crushed a total of 20,818 tonnes of cane for the week. This was below the weekly target and was also the lowest for the same period in the past three years. The main cane carrier headshaft (which failed a week ago) broke again on Friday evening resulting in a full factory shutdown. As a result of this, Rarawai Mill's operations stopped to allow the team to properly stiffen and strengthen the repair work. During this time cane lorries were diverted to Lautoka. The mill resumed operation on Sunday afternoon and has crushed steadily since, with the headshaft being closely monitored by the factory team. A new headshaft is being fabricated at the Lautoka workshops and will be fitted next week. A total of 1,731 tonnes sugar was made for

the week with a TCTS ratio of 12.0. Cane quality is still a concern and the percentage of burnt cane has increased to 54%, compared to 43% for the past week.

Labasa Mill

Labasa Mill throughput was affected by low cane supply mid-week and again at the end of the week following rain. Operations were interrupted on Wednesday due to heavy rain, and the factory stopped again over the weekend due to weak cane supply. Labasa Mill crushed a total of 31,109 tonnes of cane for the week. Mill inside stoppages were low at 3.5 hours. A total of 3,244 tonnes of sugar was produced for the week with a TCTS ratio of 9.6units. TCTS improved from last week and this should improve further following an improvement in the quality of sugar cane currently being received for processing. Burnt cane in Labasa has now increased to 14.8% compared to 5.6 % for the past week.

--ENDS--

For more information, please contact:

Sereima Sokidrau | EA to FSC CEO | Email Sereima.Sokidrau@fsc.com.fj | Mobile: 999 0245