

NEWS RELEASE

2020 Season - Sugar Milling Update (Cane crushed remains higher to date, despite rain.)

13 October, 2020



OVERVIEW

As of Monday 12th October 2020, the volume of cane crushed by the three FSC mills had reached 1,274,909 tonnes. Despite the heavy rains received during the past week, the cumulative crush to date is 6% higher than for the equivalent period in 2019, and compares to a tonnage of 1,200,853 tonnes crushed in the same period in 2019. The three mills have all crushed more than for the same period last year – Lautoka 5% more, Rarawai 13% more and Labasa 2% more.

Mill throughput and performance to date remains better than for the past two seasons, with operating time efficiency 3% better than last year, and average weekly mill stoppages 23% lower, driven by strong cane supply and mill breakdowns that are 17% lower than in 2019.

Sugar production of 114,138 tonnes to date was affected by rain impacted operations, and compares to production in the same period in 2019 of 110,029 tonnes. Sugar recoveries measured by the cumulative tonnes cane to sugar ratio (TCTS) slipped due to the rain to 11.2 (11.1 last week), still 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.

Lautoka Mill

Lautoka Mill operations this week were affected by weather, as it rained throughout the week. Cane crushed was only 17,595 tonnes. A total of 61 hours of rain stops were recorded. A scheduled Cleaning & Maintenance stop was taken in the weekend. Inside stops were only 4.0 hours for the week. As a result of high cane stops, mill operating hours were only 76.0 hours. Therefore, the sugar make was depressed to 1,167 tonnes. Burnt cane was 87%, high extraneous matter in mechanically harvested cane and the rainy weather further depleted cane quality. The cut to crush delay was also high due to the rain as it impacted on movement of cane from the field to the mill. To date TCTS is 12.3

Rarawai Mill

Rarawai mill operations were not as badly affected by the rain in the past week, as cane supply comes from its 3 diverse cane districts. A total of 8 hours of rain stops were recorded and 34 hours Cleaning & Maintenance were taken during the weekend to address issues which were disruptive to operations during the week. This also allowed the factory to build up its depleted fuel stock. Inside stops were 19 hours due to problems with the processing stations. As a result of the stop start nature of operations, both the cane crushed of 23,978 and the sugar make of 1,964 tonnes were lower than the target for the week. Percent burnt cane received at the mill rose to 93.0%. The percent extraneous matter in mechanically harvested cane also remains high. TCTS to date is 11.7.

Labasa Mill

Labasa milling operations again suffered this past week from the lack of cane supply caused by the rain which has been affecting the northern division for almost 3 weeks. The mill crushed only 16,908 tonnes of cane and produced 1,365 tonnes of sugar for the week. This has been the worst 3 weeks of operations for the season which could result in a delay to the end of crush in Labasa. The rain stops for the week totaled 90 hours. Inside stops of 3 hours was associated with issues at the boiler and crushing stations. As a result of the stop start nature of operations and the rain, plus cane delays and burnt cane of 68%, TCTS to date is 10.1.

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For more information, please contact:

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