

MEDIA RELEASE

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2019 Crushing Season Update #8

After 12 weeks into the crushing season, for Lautoka and Labasa Mills, and Rarawai having completed its eight week, FSC's three mills have to date crushed a total of 768,459 tonnes of cane. This enabled a production of 74,396 tonnes of sugar for the same period, with an average tonnes cane to tonnes sugar (TCTS) ratio of 10.3

LAUTOKA MILL

Lautoka Mill had a good week of crushing, with three days in the week, the daily crush exceeded 5,000 tonnes. Lautoka Mill has crushed a total of 285,880 tonnes of cane to date. This has allowed for a sugar production of 26,535 tonnes.

Specifically, for the week, Lautoka crushed 27,859 tonnes of cane. The crush improved from the previous week, due to a smoother crushing rhythm signified with lesser stops.

Three days in the week, on 29th August, 30th August and 31st August, daily crushing exceeded five thousand tonnes, standing at 5,956 tonnes, 5,732 tonnes and 5,353 tonnes respectively for the three days.



Above: an FSC truck and harvester operating in the Drasa sector in Lautoka, this week.

Cane quality continues to be a concern. The increase in mechanical harvesting has also meant a 20% increase in the extraneous matter that is collectively harvested with the sugar cane. Burnt cane remains a growing concern, which this week registered at 50%. Increasing levels of dextran brought on by the growing incidence of burnt cane, has meant that the mill has had to employ more chemical additives to control the sugar quality parameters. This in turn is affecting the mill's TCTS.

Efforts are continuing on the education of our growers and harvesting gangs on the dangers and harmful effects of burnt cane on the crop and sugar make.

RARAWAI MILL

Rarawai Mill was pleasingly consistent for the week. To date Rarawai has crushed 161,265 tonnes of cane.

Three days in the week, daily crushing at Rarawai exceeded four thousand tonnes. This contributed to Rarawai crushing 26,524 tonnes of cane for the week. Sugar make now stands at 14,965 tonnes whilst TCTS recorded 9.7. Much like Lautoka Mill, burnt cane and extraneous matter in cane is on the rise, thus negatively impacting molasses production. Although Outside Stops was nil, Inside Stops amounted to 33.9 hours, largely attributed to a pump impeller issue.

LABASA MILL

Labasa Mill's crushing momentum for this season continues to strengthen, and to date the mill has crushed 321,314 tonnes of cane.

With uninterrupted good weather in Week 12, Labasa Mill satisfactorily crushed 35,408 tonnes of cane. Three days in the week, daily crush at Labasa went over five thousand tonnes. These were 28th, 29th and 30th August, with daily crushing recording 5,729 tonnes, 5,310 tonnes and 5,441 tonnes respectively. Outside Stops stood at only 2.8 hours while Inside Stops were 24.2 hours, with the latter being attributed to cumulative scheduled stops to install an external steam line. The sugar make for the week was 3,735 tonnes, with a TCTS of 9.5. Similar to Lautoka and Rarawai, burnt cane and extraneous matter is on the rise, with increasing levels of dextran now evident in cane.

BURNT CANE ON THE RISE

FSC continues to reiterate its advice on the dangers of cane fires or burning of cane trash. During the week, Lautoka Mill registered 50.1% burnt cane, with Rarawai and Labasa at 39.3% and 3.7% respectively. Not only is there a direct environmental impact but it also deteriorates the quality of sugar cane. Specifically, as a result of burnt cane, a bacterial substance called dextran develops. Dextran reduces the quality of sugar cane through bacterial activity and has a negative impact on sugar quality. Cane fires and the burning of cane must be discouraged at all costs.

ENDS

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