

MEDIA RELEASE

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LABASA MILL 2018 CRUSH IS HIGHEST FOR FSC

Labasa Mill ended its 2018 crushing season last week, having crushed the highest volume of cane amongst the three FSC mills.

Labasa crushed 620,000 tonnes of cane for the season. A major contributing factor to this has been the increase of the use of mechanical harvesters in the region, which has doubled this season.

FSC Chief Executive Officer Graham Clark says “the use of mechanical harvesters in the Labasa cane supply areas has been very encouraging. We can see the gradual transformation into mechanization taking place in Labasa, as a model for the industry as a whole”.

Labasa commenced crushing in June 2018, and has over twenty-five weeks of crushing, produced over sixty-four thousand tonnes of sugar. Additionally, the mill's tonnes cane per tonnes of sugar, or TCTS, has been maintained at 9.6.

The mill experienced a number of minor stoppages early in the season. Outside stops, due to shortages of cane, were maintained at 32.3 hours for the season.

The production of molasses increased slightly by 2% to 27,879 tonnes for the season.

Clarks ends “Labasa has already planted 1715 hectares of cane for the 2019 season and with the introduction of two new joint venture projects in the North, cane production for our next season is showing a lot of promise”.



Above: Land preparation at FSC's new joint venture, in Nakiko, Seaqaqa, in the province of Macuata, Vanua Levu.

Mechanization will continue to play an increasingly important role for FSC going forward not only for harvesting but also in other activities such as irrigation and transportation.

As the mill now embarks on its off-season maintenance program, mill management is optimistic that they will rectify the mechanical issues faced by the mill this season, so as to improve production targets next year.

As we bring the year to a close, FSC extends its gratitude to the northern growers and transportation contractors, and lorry drivers, and our own mill management and staff, for their efforts in concluding the 2018 crushing season.

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