



Sugar Cane Growers Council

Serving the Cane Growers of Fiji



TOWARDS AN EFFICIENT AND PROSPEROUS SUGAR INDUSTRY

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Progress on readiness for 2007 Season

The Sugar Industry Stakeholders had briefing with the Minister for Sugar on 5th April, 2007 at the SCOF conference room. All mills appear to be a reasonable state of readiness. Further, tentative starting dates for the 4 mills have been indicated as follows;

Lautoka	29th May, 2007
Rarawai	29th May, 2007
Labasa	5th June, 2007
Penang	29th June, 2007

The Minister for Sugar has suggested that there is a need revive rail cane transportation. This follows recommendations from several experts that rail is the cheaper mode of bulk transfer of cane. FSC will be facilitating the transition in consultation with the SCGC within the next three years.



Message from CEO's Desk for Planting

Some simple tips to establish good plant crops

We are in the planting season and we need to carefully assess our planting programme. Planting cane is one of the most expensive and important agenda in any season for growers. Huge financial losses occur when cane planted is not well established. Three important ingredients needed to establish a good plant crop are as follows:

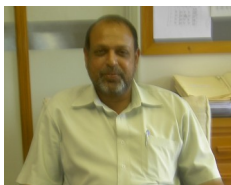
- Land preparation
- Good planting material
- Take note of weather condition

There is no one simple answer for the success. However, some basic steps followed carefully on the three important parameters given above could improve establishment of plant crop. It is important to appreciate that either poor land preparation or poor planting material or both will never come close to yields produced on farms where good quality planting material is placed on well prepared land that is conducive to good germination.

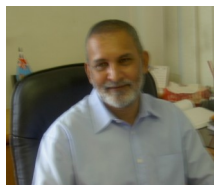
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NEW LINE UP AT THE SCGC HEAD OFFICE

A number of changes occurred after the Military take-over on December 5th, 2006. The eight nominated government councilors, the CEO and the Chairman was terminated. A special General Meeting of the full Council was called on 19th Jan to determine the future of the Council's administration. This resulted in the formation of a new board with Mr Jain Kumar as the Chairman. The position of the CEO was advertised on 10 February 2007.



Chairman
Jain Kumar



New CEO
Jai Gawander

NEW CEO

Jai Gawander was appointed as the new CEO on 3rd April 2007. He was the former Manager of the Sugar Cane Research Center and has spent approximately 25 years in the industry and has considerable knowledge and experience in various facts of the industry. His in depth knowledge of plant nutrition research, sugarcane agronomy and management skills would be an asset to the SCGC. He has impeccable academic credentials and has contributed considerably through his various research projects to the study of climate change and its impacts on sugarcane production and loss of soil and nutrients from hilly cane areas due to erosion and surface run off. Mr Gawander has also considerable international experience and is also the V. President of International Association of Professionals in Sugar and Integrated Technologies (IAPSIT).

NEWS & CURRENT AFFAIRS

Crop Affected by Rain & Flooding.

Floods badly affected the cane crop in low lying areas in both the major cane growing island. The Council did its own assessment of the damage and estimated a decline of **50,000 tons of cane** equivalent to \$2.5m. The government has provided some cash relief to the farmers affected, and the Council has donated \$4000 worth of school equipment to affected school children through its 'Disaster Relief Assistance Fund'



Establishment of an Independent Sugar Research

Institute of Fiji (SRIF).

The Sugar Research Institute Act was passed by the previous government in October 2006

The new Interim Minister for Sugar finalized the appointment of the SRIF board of directors in March, 2007. Mr. Philip G Atherton, a former prominent scientist in the Australian sugar industry was appointed as the Chairman of the BOD. Among the priority objectives of the SRIF is the revival of its extension activities. Thirteen new extension officers have now been recruited and are undergoing intensive training. They will be posted to various sectors and districts and commence farmer assistance programs in order to improve crop production and farm yields.

ACP Ministerial Meeting.

The 24th ACP Ministerial Meeting will be held at the Sheraton, Denarau from 30th April to 3rd May, 2007. Discussion are expected to focus on the EU accompanying measures. Minister for Sugar Mr. M P Chaudhary is expected to address the meeting

EU Assistance Funding for the Sugar Industry.

A high powered delegation comprising of Minister for Sugar, Mr. M P Chaudhary, AG, Mr. Aiyaz S Khaiyum, Foreign Minister, Mr. Epeli Nailatikau, and his PS Mr. Mataitoga were in Brussels to presents Fiji's case for continued collaboration on the EU's financial assistance agreement to the Fiji Sugar Industry. It is hoped that a favorable outcome will result from these discussion to allow the sugar industry to proceed on its path of recovery. A total of \$350m is at stake and the stakeholders remain confident that discussions will go well.

New Board of Directors

A re-constituted Board of Directors was elected with Mr Jain Kumar as the Chairman and Paras Somaiya and Kamlesh Prasad as the 2 new Vice-Chairmen. Appointed on 19th of January, 2007.

New District Directors are as follows:

Director Ba	Suresh C Raj
Director Rakiraki	Marika Silimaibau
Director Tavua	Umesh Prasad
Director Lautoka	Pramod Kumar
Director Nadi	Shiu Narayan
Director Labasa	Jawala Prasad
Director Seaqaqa	Leakat Begg
Director Sigatoka	Shiu Ram