



Ministry of Multi-Ethnic Affairs and Sugar Industry

New Farmers and Lease Renewal Programme

2023-2024

Government is committed to reviving the sugar industry through its strategies and ongoing reforms. Considering the challenges faced by growers in securing land to venture into cane farming, the government had introduced New Farmers Program in the 2017/2018 budget for Ministry of Sugar Industry and this continued till 2020/2021 financial year

The Government has resumed the program in the 2023-2024 budget with an allocation of \$2.0 million. From this, a total of \$1.5 million will be allocated to pay for lease renewals for existing growers and \$0.5 million to potential growers that are willing to purchase or lease land to establish cane farms.

The Ministry of Sugar Industry is, therefore, inviting applications from interested individuals to apply for the grant under the New Farmers and Lease Renewal Programme.

Criteria and Guideline for Application of NFA grant:

- (a) Grant will be provided on first come first serve basis.
- (b) SRIF can re-assess farms if: i) it's been fallow and no production, ii) New land which has never been used for sugarcane cultivation.
- (c) The applications will be open on 1st October 2023 and close on 30th April 2024.
- (d) The applicant must submit the completed grant application form with accurate information and all supporting documents as required by Ministry of Sugar Industry.
- (e) The applications will be evaluated as received by Ministry of Sugar Industry.
- (f) Grant Conditions:
 - i. Grant is available to growers for lease renewals. They need to be issued offer letters for lease renewals from iTaukei Land Trust Board or Lands Department or any other bona-fide lessor.
 - ii. The grant may apply for purchase of sugar cane farm (only for new growers that purchase cane farm for the first time);
 - iii. The grant will not apply to the lease transaction between the immediate family members.
 - iv. For new farmers, the applicant should not own any agricultural land or agricultural lease under his/her name;
 - v. Only one applicant shall be assisted per household;
 - vi. The applicant should have knowledge, experience, crop plan and succession plan in the management of sugarcane farms;
 - vii. The land purchased should have a minimum of **2 Ha** of sugarcane land for cane planting; and
 - viii. The farm needs to be strategically located.
- (g) The Ministry of Sugar Industry will pay only **30%** of the lease offer cost stated

in the lease offer letter or maximum of **\$7,500**; whichever is lower. Same payment limit is for purchase of new farms.

- (h) The farm purchased or lease renewed under the New Farmers or Lease Renewal Program should not be sold in the next **5** years. In cases where the land is required to be sold before end of 5 years, the grant assistance given to the applicant/grower must be paid back to the Ministry of Sugar Industry in full by the grower.
- (i) There will appropriate charge on the farm for the amount and any charges or out of pocket expenses will be deducted from the grant amount.
- (j) The farm to be productive within 18 months from the time COR is issued.
- (k) Any growers that got sugarcane lease renewed between 2020-2022 and were not assisted under the New Farmers Assistance shall **only** be assisted if any funds are left unutilized from the 2023/2024 allocation. However, those with pending lease renewal will be given first-priority.

Interested applicants will obtain NFA Programme grant application forms from the Ministry of Sugar Industry, FSC, Sugar Cane Growers Council, and Sugar Cane Growers Fund.

For further clarifications on the NFA Programme, please contact Grant Analyst Renu Dayal or Executive Support Officer Grants - Mr. Rusiate Veikoso on 6664724 or 9904703.

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PERMANENT SECRETARY