



MINISTRY OF MULTI-ETHNIC AFFAIRS & SUGAR INDUSTRY

Notice to Sugarcane Farmers – Planting of Unapproved Cane Varieties

The Ministry of Multi-Ethnic Affairs & Sugar Industry (**‘Ministry’**) in consultation with industry stakeholders has made policies for all growers that have planted unapproved cane varieties including mixing unapproved with approved varieties on same plots and accessing grants and subsidies from Government. As per regulation 2.4 of the Master Award, farmers are not allowed to grow any cane that is not approved by Sugar Research Institute of Fiji (SRIF) and the regulation 2.5 of the Master Award gives powers to Fiji Sugar Corporation (FSC) to reject any cane variety delivered by farmers that are not permitted on his/her farm.

To ensure that the requirements of Master Award are strictly adhered to, the Ministry has considered withdrawing all grants and subsidies from farmers that are growing and supplying unapproved varieties to the mills. However, considering financial hardships and loan commitments of the farmers the Ministry is allowing time until 31st July 2026 for farmers to remove all unapproved varieties from their farms to access Government grants and subsidies.

All farmers growing unapproved cane varieties are required to take note of the following:

1. No Cane Planting Grant will be given for any freshly planted or replanted unapproved cane varieties or mixture of such varieties from 1st August 2023 and onwards.
2. No subsidies or grants of any sort as provided under the capital grants programs of the Ministry – Fertilizer, Weedicide, Production Incentive, New Farmer and Lease Renewal, Small Grants and Manual Harvest Incentives will be given for any freshly planted or replanted unapproved cane varieties or mixture of such varieties from 1st August 2024 and onwards.
3. All growers must refrain from planting / replanting unapproved cane varieties or mixture of approved and unapproved cane varieties with effect from 1st April 2024 and FSC will reject such cane for crushing in 2025 and in ensuing seasons.
4. Growers are required to remove all existing unapproved varieties including mixed varieties of unapproved and approved cane planted on same plots by 31st July 2026 and all grants and subsidies as cited above (depending on availability) will be ceased from 1st August 2026 for existing (ratoon cane) unapproved cane varieties or mixtures planted.
5. FSC will reject all existing ratoons of unapproved cane varieties from 1st June 2027 (or) from 2027 crushing season.
6. All farmers planning to remove unapproved, and plant approved cane varieties shall be assisted with cane planting grants on first-come-first-serve basis. Due to limited grants, all farmers requiring cane planting grants must immediately register their interests with their sector offices by 30th April 2024.
7. All seed cane must be certified by SRIF, and farmers are required to contact their sector officers to obtain seed cane certification before planting new cane. No grants will be given to farmers that fail to obtain seed cane certification before planting.
8. The FSC, SRIF and Sugar Cane Growers Council will ensure that approved seed cane is available in each locality to be accessed by farmers on a timely basis.

For further information regarding unapproved varieties and grants and subsidies, please contact the nearest SCGC, SRIF and FSC offices or Ministry on 6664724 or 9904703.

Yogesh J. Karan
PERMANENT SECRETARY