

Endorsement of the Citrus Export Plan



13 September 2022 – Biosecurity Authority of Fiji (BAF) Board Chairman Mr Naushad Ali and The Chief Technical Officer of New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries (NZ MPI) Mr Peter Thompson endorsed the Citrus Export Plan for the export of fresh Citrus fruits from Fiji to New Zealand. Present at the ceremony were BAF Board of Directors, The First Secretary of the New Zealand High Commission Mr Hone Patrick, Senior Economic Resilience Adviser at the New High Commission Mr Kartik Pratap, Acting Chief Executive Officer Mr Surend Pratap and senior members of BAF. The NZ MPI Specialist Advisor for Pacific Imports Mr Nacanieli Waqa and other members of the NZ MPI team joined virtually.

BAF Board Director Jay Whyte, in his opening remarks, said that the official endorsement of the Citrus Export Plan will pave the way for the export of Fiji-grown citrus into the New Zealand market. This means that New Zealanders will soon have an additional tropical fruit on their plate from Fiji.

Mr Whyte added that a new market for Fiji means growth in foreign exchange earnings for the country and additional income for exports and citrus growers. The Citrus Export Plan for Fiji's endorsement is the first of many more export plans to be prepared and implemented for enabling fruits and vegetable exports into New Zealand. The Export Plan emphasises commercial production and quality system, and captures standard cultivations, pest management, harvests and packaging activities.

He further elaborated that BAF, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, will work with Citrus growers and Exporters to facilitate the export of fresh citrus fruits in compliance with export plan requirements.

The First Secretary NZ High Commission Mr Hone Patrick said over the years, through the New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) and BAF, have strengthened the institution-to-institution relations under the Enhanced Pacific Market Access Partnership and the broader Duavata Partnership signed by both Governments earlier this year.

This has led to a high level of engagement, cooperation and knowledge sharing and capacity building across both institutions.

"Fiji is New Zealand's largest trading partner in the region. Today is a very special day with the signing of the Export Plan we collectively would ensure that Fijian exporters and farmers can export additional commodity to New Zealand".

"I am sure this news will be welcomed by exporters and farmers. And we are told some exporters have already earmarked buyers in New Zealand," said Mr Patrick.

He further stated that NZ MPI, under the Enhanced Pacific Market Access Partnership, is working with Fiji NPPO to make improvements to the horticulture imports system.

New Zealand MPI Specialist Advisor for Pacific Imports, Mr Nacanieli Waqa, acknowledged the partnership in this project between NZ MPI and BAF, and not forgetting the contributions from the regional development partners and MFAT especially for their funding support.

"The signing today depicts a new beginning in the effective management of Fiji's export facilitation system by BAF and all stakeholders involved," Mr Waqa said.

“MPI is committed to delivering the outputs and expected outcomes of the programme to contribute towards Fiji’s sustainable economic future in horticulture trade. Additionally, New Zealand importers will also benefit from improved export systems in the Pacific as there will be reduced risks of costs associated with non-compliances.”

He further stated that MPI acknowledged the ongoing efforts of the Biosecurity Authority of Fiji, the Ministry of Agriculture, exporters, growers, service providers and everyone involved in maintaining the value chain between our two countries.

The first shipment of citrus export from Fiji to New Zealand is expected early next month.

Ends

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