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Message from Editorial Committee

Dear colleagues we are proud to present to you our second issue of this electronic newsletter to communicate to staff on any activity of the Sugar Insurance Fund Board. Other articles which we have received from internal staff are also included.

A positive response has been noted among the majority of the staff. We feel flattered when some of the staff loudly qualified the first issue published as "une grande premiere" and undoubtedly it highlights that SIFB is on the go for modernisation, lots of them have started to show great concern when they express the wish to share some of their articles as it is a golden platform for innovative ideas, unity and diversity.

In this issue, we have devoted a space to keep you informed on the activities of the HR section. As mentioned in the first issue, we are giving an insight on leadership at all levels. Other achievements such as talks organized by the CEO are being brought to your attention.

As you are aware, nowadays everybody wants to consume food obtained from plants which have been grown through organic farming. In this respect a brief explanation has been given to you on what it is all about, and you can put it into practice at home for a better living.

Before ending we would like to convey our thanks to the CEO and the AS for their constant support, criticism and guidelines to make this newsletter a real success.

Our sincere thanks also go to you- readers of this newsletter.



Mr Soopramanien
Ramsamy



Mr Narainsamy
Pydiah



Mrs Shashimala
Servansingh

Leadership

A leader must have the flair, the smartness, thought and dedication so as to keep the business/organisation at its pinnacle. Leadership itself is an overarching topic that makes the difference between success and failure of a business or an organisation.

The concept of leadership has evolved over the past decades. Various styles of leadership have emerged and are applicable at various levels of organisations. Leadership is no more the leader/CEO giving directives and expecting subordinates to comply "a la lettre". Leadership now involves all the personnel in an organisation coming together to brainstorm so as to render the organisation more effective and efficient for the benefit of one and all.

Leadership also reflects the blend of innovative ideas, practices and inclusivity which put people at the centre of all progress. In Mauritius The Honourable Prime Minister has enunciated his vision 2030, the blueprint which will lay the foundation to graduate Mauritius from an upper middle income country to a higher income one. This vision involves all the stakeholders including the ONG to come together in a collective effort to make our country a better place to live where income inequality will be reduced drastically and the unemployment issue be addressed in an effective manner. A top to bottom v/s bottom up approach collective decision. Similarly at the SIFB the leaders from different departments namely administrative, finance, inspectorate, operations and ISS are moving forward by implementing some of the styles of leadership such as ambidextrous, democratic, innovation, transactional and transformational in order to achieve their goals which henceforth contribute to the proper running of the organisation.

Leaders have the ability to engage in innovation and operation equally well. They influence people positively, they encourage all to take a more participative role in the decision making process. The leaders embrace reciprocity in relationship and make the environment a better work place by treating all on the same level. They can take any risk and face any challenge. They encourage transparency so that others don't get blind sided and momentum is not disrupted.

Leadership (cont.)

They are ready to listen to others, they value people by giving them room to express themselves. As they are role models, they are eager to share their knowledge with everyone through their wisdom and get all to work together efficiently and effectively.

They also focus on supervision, organisation and group performance. They also promote compliance by followers through both rewards and punishments. They take tough decisions as it goes with the job and every decision they take is for the best of the entire organisation even if it does not please the whole community. They always look for constructive solution and focus on moving forward for a bright future of the organisation.

They inspire employees towards new ways of doing things thus motivating and building much confidence in them so that can take risks fearlessly and seize great opportunities at work in order to enhance their performance.

Ultimately leadership should be more inspirational, dynamic, creative, transparent, innovative, flair and aim for the betterment of the workers of the organisation and improvement in the quality of life of all people.

Zero Budget Natural Farming

In the early 1980's, large commercial producers used to increase food production by making use of inorganic fertilizers (NPK) and herbicides. At that time those producers had to maximize food production in order to feed the growing population. Nowadays, the area under cultivation keeps decreasing due to rapid process of industrialization, road & building construction, ERS & IRS etc Likewise, soil fertility (Capacity of the soil to maintain production) is being decreased, leading to decrease in food production & quality as well. Now, the question is:- how to maintain/increase food production to feed the ever growing population? the answer is ZBNF .

ZBNF is a method of growing plants without making use of fertilizers, pesticides and weedicides of inorganic origins. Instead, natural fertilizers, pesticides are being used to grow crops. In such a practice of cultivation, cane growers maintain soil fertility by effecting crop rotation that is after a crop cycle of 8 to 10 years, leguminous crop such as groundnut, haricot beans etc. is grown for a minimum period of one year thus allowing the soil to regain its fertility. It has been proved by research scientist that in the roots of those leguminous plants there are certain bacteria which can fix nitrogen in the atmosphere and release in the root zone. When the leguminous crop decayed accumulated NPK is released in the soil.

In Mauritius, as per research findings of scientists of Ministry of Agro industry and Natural Resources, it was observed that the dung and urine of the local cow (*Bos Indicus*) are very rich in Nitrogen, Phosphorus and other minerals which are necessary for the proper growth and development of the sugar cane plants. Other additives such as sugar and "Besan flour" are added to the cow dung and urine to complement the requirement of sugar cane plants. As far as pest and disease control are concerned, neem (lilas) juice are sprayed on the growing plants. Dry sugar cane leaves are left in the interline of sugar cane rows to prevent growth of weeds, better water retention and enhancing growth of soil organisms which are essential for the improvement of the soil structure.

Zero Budget Natural Farming (cont.)

As opposed to inorganic fertiliser, cow dung mixtures promote the proliferation of bacteria in the root zone. Sugar contains in the mixture act as a source of energy for the bacterial population to increase rapidly. The more bacteria we have more will be the amount of nutrient mobilized in the soil thus favour rapid growth of sugar cane plants. Also more worms will be present in the soil. Worms will drill the soil leaving tunnels in which water will pass through. In a nutshell, water retaining capacity within the root zone will be ameliorated which is a sine qua none condition for normal growth.

Research findings in India have proved that the tonnage of cane per acre can be around 100 tons and extraction rate can be increased as well. Sugar produced through this ZBNF can fetch higher price in the world market. In an era of price uncertainty of sugar, the solution will be ZBNF. We are confident that shifting from traditional system of cane cultivation towards ZBNF, planters will be able to increase their revenues and also to maintain their profitability in the years to come despite the market challenges looming ahead.

Now, the question is whether to adopt this method of growing crop or continue to consume foods obtained through inorganic farming practices. It is believed that pesticide residues are still present in vegetables despite the fact that those food commodities have been properly washed with clean water.

FAIRTRADE

On 29th June 2016 at 13.00hrs Mr. Devesh Dukhira and Chetanand Dookhony gave an overview on Fair Trade at Vacoas sub office on 29th June 2016 at 15.00hrs for the attention of Field Officer/Senior Field Officers only. The Facilitator was Mr. Devesh Dukhira who is Chief Executive Officer of Mauritius Sugar Syndicate.

Fairtrade is an alternative to traditional trade. Fairtrade is based on a partnership between producers and consumers. Producers do not always get a fair share of the benefits of traditional trade. Fairtrade offers small producers and workers a better deal and improved terms of trade. To attain this objective, Fairtrade encourages consumers worldwide to pay a guarantee minimum price (fairer price) plus a premium for products being sold by producers on Fairtrade terms.

The guaranteed minimum price enables producers to cover the cost of sustainable production and the premium is to be used by the producers for economic, environmental and social development.

Fair Trade Label Products

The range of the products includes , inter-alia, coffee, tea, sugar, spices , pepper, salt, vanilla, honey, bananas, as well as processed foods such as rice, coffee, tea, fruit juice , wine , and also cotton.

Fairtrade Standards and Certification

Producers willing to sell their produce on Fairtrade terms should be Fairtrade Certified. To obtain Fairtrade Certification, producers should comply with a set of stringent Fairtrade Standards comprising, inter-alia:

Good governance of their respective organizations;

Protection of the environment;

Respect of social standards;

No child labour or force labour;

No discrimination of any type pertaining to gender , race , religion etc; and

Submission of a Fairtrade Premium Plan democratically approved by the members of their respective organisations, defining clearly the projects for which the Fairtrade Premium will be used. Such projects, which are meant to improve the quality of life of the farmers and their community, may extend to areas as diverse as production facilities, transport, education, training, and health care to name but few.

(Source: Ministry of Business,Enterprise and Cooperative).

Past Event: Crop 1975

Active cane growth during the vegetative stage started rather late with the December rains and stopped abruptly with the advent of cyclone Gervaise. Gusts of over 100m.p.h coupled with copious rainfall battered every nook and corner of the island.

Damage to standing canes was considerable. Plantations on the central plateau and along the mountain slopes suffered the most. Crop loss as high as 60 % has been recorded in many individual cases.

Although the cyclone had left Mauritius on the 7th February, weather conditions were not conducive to proper cane recovery. The bad effects of Gervaise were further worsened by cyclone Ines and the droughty condition following it. The maturation stage was rather dry with slightly higher than mean temperatures. Cane quality although not bad did not make good for the loss in cane quantity.

The harvesting season started on the 5th July ended on the 24th December. 4,316,115 tons of canes were milled and 468,256 tons of sugar manufactured resulting in an island extraction rate of 10.8 %. The average loss in each factory area was as under:

Factory area	Average % crop reduction	Factory area	Average % crop reduction
Bel Ombre	43	Reunion	34
Britannia	33	Medine	33
Mon Tresort Mon Desert	27	Beau Champ	34
Riche en Eau	35	Constance	30
Rose Belle	39	F.U.E.L	37
St. Felix	33	Beau Plan	37
Savannah	32	Belle Vue	44
Union St Aubin	29	Mon Loisir	30
Highlands	28	The Mount	28
Mon Desert Alma	44	St Antoine	50
		Solitude	44

Payments of advance compensation started in September 1975 and by the time the harvest was over Rs. 141 million and Rs 39 million had been paid to planters and millers respectively out of a total of Rs. 365 million payable for the crop. Practically all claims on the Board had been settled by the end of August 1976.

(Source : Annual report SIFB 1975)

Safety and Health Basics

The Management of Sugar Insurance Fund Board is aware that it has a duty to care for all its employees and visitors towards ensuring so far as is reasonably practicable the Safety and Health of one and all through commitment:

- To provide a healthy and safe workplace.

- To eliminate conditions and incidents at the work-sites that can lead to personal injury and illness.

- To conform with statutory regulations pertaining to Safety, Health and environment.

- To establish, implement and review safe working practices without endangering people in and around the premises.

- To manage Safety and Health strategies through dissemination of information and establishment of a functional Safety and Health communication system mainly through the Safety and Health Committee.

- To adopt an integrated approach towards Safety and Health at work by seeking the collaboration, co-operation of all employees.

Safety and Health is all about minimizing risks at work by anticipating precautionary measures thus providing a safer and healthier working environment. The Occupational Safety and Health Act 2005 has been set up for employers and employees to adhere by its rules and regulations.

The Management of the Sugar Insurance Fund Board is working hard to enhance the Safe and Healthy working environment at our office.

With the merging of all sub offices at the Head Office the number of staff in the building has increased from 90 to 126 approximately. The Safety and Health Officer is working in collaboration with the Management to ensure the Safety and Health at work by being in accordance, so far as is reasonably practicable with the Occupational Safety and Health Act 2005.

The Management has set up a Safety and Health Committee since 2009 for the proper flow of Communication between the Management and the members of staff. The Committee is held bimonthly. Members of the Committee will be reviewed as per the Section 21 of the OSHA 2005.

The Committee is a platform for discussing all the Safety and Health issues and finding solutions thus breaching the gap between the Management and members of staff.

Customer Service skills

An explanatory session on above subject was held at Vacoas sub office on 29th June 2016 at 13.00hrs for the attention of Field Officer/Senior Field Officers, Confidential Secretaries and also staff from the Claims Section. The Facilitator was Mr. Swaraj Ramasawmy who is Assistant Permanent Secretary, Ministry Civil Service Affairs and administrative reforms. Find below a brief of his expose ;

When dealing with clients there should be Face-to-Face Communication. We think of the importance of the spoken word – how articulate we are. Our body language and tone of voice accounts for most of the interpretation of our message by the customer. Our customer won't believe you if you don't show it in our body and tone of voice. We may also greet them by a smile, a nod or even eye contact and hello is always welcomed!

Our customers expect you to be there to help satisfy them, we should give them the benefit of the doubt when things don't seem the way you think they should. Perhaps they don't know the rules or how things work. "Seek first to understand and then be understood."

First find the solution rather than spending time on why it happened. Your customer does not care why – s/he just wants it fixed. Ultimately, when they leave your premisses, they are happy.

Go the extra step for your customers to get that B or even A experience. Rather than just telling them "how", "show them how," when possible. Do you recall what is A experience?

Say what you will do and do what you say! Never tell someone something and then drop the ball. Take the time to follow-through on your promises. It's what the customer expects!

Customer Service skills (cont.)

A simple “thank you” is a powerful message to the customer –Remember, that you are there – to serve the customer – without him/her, you wouldn’t have a job.

Be honest with customers even though it may be a difficult message you have to give. In the end, both you and the customer will be better off.

How do you deliver that difficult message tactfully?

Knowing how to say "no" calmly and properly is often the key to dealing with an upset customer. You will Hear - Let him/her talk until s/he has finished and also acknowledge the facts and the feelings.

The job is yours. Thus take responsibility for every encounter you have with your customers! It’s up to you to manage the customer’s experience!

A “Defining Moment” is when that customer first enters your place of work – it’s that moment that makes the first and sometimes final impression. It can make all the difference.

Remember; It is your job to manage the customer’s experience. Do what you can to make it a good one!

I am King Sugar

I am King Sugar.
My reign is sugary,
My rule sweet.

They wanted competition:
Sportsmanly I agreed
And played the game!

New technologies,
Prolific breeds,
Special sugars.

The country I raised,
And nurtured,
And started off.

I am King Sugar
My reign is Sugary
My rule sweet.

I am King Sugar:
My reign sugary
My rule sweet.

The poor man
Toiled and thrived:
I rewarded him.

Sensing lassitude sure,
I accepted replacements.
Unfortunately none took the relay!

Garments, computers, hotels
Failed the mark
To my dismay!

He came for milk,
For honey, by
Turning over rocks.

The slave desired freedom:
I helped him
A freeman to be.

If I come down
The country swoons
With everybody down!

I am King Sugar.
My reign is sugary,
My rule sweet.

I am Sugar King
My reign is sugary
My rule sweet.

I must carry on
For the country,
For the people.

The state wanted freedom:
I bestowed it
With dignity and liberty.

Derelict chimneys
Old mills, obsolete machinery:
What a heritage?

I am King Sugar;
My reign is sugary
My rule sweet.

Ancillary products
Fed on my residues:
Regally I condescended.

New websites,
On line markets,
Modern trends.

- A poem from Mr. Shaheed DARGAHE



*People are often unreasonable and self-centered,
Forgive them anyway.
If you are kind, people may accuse you of ulterior motives.
Be kind anyway.
If you are honest, people may cheat you.
Be honest anyway.
If you find happiness, people may be jealous.
Be happy anyway.
The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow.
Do good anyway.
Give the world the best you have and it may never be enough.
Give your best anyway.
For you see, in the end, it is between you and God.
It was never between you and them anyway.
- Mother Teresa*