



MINISTER REDDY ASSURES FIJIANS OF REGULAR SUPPLY OF FRESH PRODUCE



Minister for Agriculture, Waterways and Environment – Hon. Dr. Mahendra Reddy (2nd from right) PS Agriculture – Mr Ritesh Dass (2nd from left) with other Senior Officials from the Agriculture Ministry and Police Officers at the Logani checkpoint in Tailevu.

Government is assuring Fijians will continue to receive their fresh produce despite the lockdown of a number of areas.

The announcement was made early this week by Minister for Agriculture, Waterways and Environment, Hon. Dr Mahendra Reddy.

The Minister said the Ministry of Agriculture was working with vendors' associations, municipal councils, middlemen, and producers to facilitate farm produce at the checkpoints to the markets.

"From last week, we initiated the 'Green Supply Chain' operation whose ultimate aim is to maintain the produce supply link.

"We are working to ensure that we are able to pass on the green produce from one end of the border to the other till it finally reaches the markets, where Fijians can access it," he said.

However, Dr Reddy said Government was also mindful of the COVID-19

safety measures, hence the exchanges at the borders were strictly monitored under the watchful eyes of the Fiji Police Force.

"Whilst we are asking our people to be at home, we also acknowledge the fundamental need for food and nutrition to ensure the wellbeing of all Fijians.

"Produce from farmers in several borders around Fiji are proceeding smoothly across and are adhering to the COVID-19 border transaction protocols," he said.

The Minister said it was critical to ensure the fresh produce reached the markets in a short period of time due to the high demand with suppliers able to receive cash immediately.

He said the 'Green Supply Chain' was important for the supply of fresh food to major and satellite markets within the lockdown and containment zones.



Senior Agriculture Officers and Police at the Logani checkpoint distributing food crops across the borders of the Nausori/Tailevu containment zone.

SEED DISTRIBUTION UNDERWAY, ANNOUNCES MINISTER REDDY



Seed distribution along the Suva corridor

Ten thousand Fijian families will be provided vegetable seed packages to assist with their food security as well as a way to maintain physical exercise during these COVID-19 restrictions.

In announcing the initiative, the Minister for Agriculture, Waterways and Environment, Hon, Dr Mahendra Reddy said they would be working with the Fiji Police Force Community Policing in the distribution exercise.

"Assigned Agricultural officers together with your community police will bring those seeds to your doorsteps, please stay at home, we will visit you with your home gardening seeds," he said.

The Minister acknowledged those households that were flourishing with their home gardens.

"This assistance is for those who need to establish or re-establish their home garden."

But of vital importance, he added, were the strict observation of COVID-19

protocols during the distribution from both the officers who would be conducting the door-to-door exercise and households who would be receiving them.

"To be able to collect the seed packages which will be limited to one package per household you will have to wear a mask and observe social distancing.

"We will be delivering packages to homes, we do not want them to come out, we want them to stay at their homes and seed packages will be delivered to them," Dr Reddy said.

He said the initiative would be ongoing for the Ministry so if households do not receive any during this exercise, do not worry, as they would not leave anyone behind.

Areas that would receive these seed packages were Suva, Lautoka, Nadi, Ra, Tavua, Ba, Sigatoka, and Tailevu.