

Fiji's NGO launches organic certification



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A leading non-government organisation (NGO) in Fiji has launched its “home-grown” organic certified lemon grass tea.

The project, which took nearly two years to complete, was certified by FRIEND Fiji through a participatory guarantee system.

According to FRIEND Fiji director Shashi Kiran, the farmers certify themselves through peer review and FRIEND supervised and assisted in the training.

“Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community overlooks the processes, that they are being followed and provide the Organic Pasifika mark.

“We are very honoured that we launched our organic mark. It's very apt because this is the International Year of Soils and for us, sustainable soils mean sustainable families and agriculture.

“We are very happy that this is our first organic product in the market and hopefully, we will introduce

more products that are organically certified for Fiji and the global market.”

The launch was conducted by European Commissioner of International Cooperation and Development, Neven Mimica.

Meanwhile, increasing agriculture production in a sustainable way will assist the population of developing countries, says European Commissioner of International Cooperation and Development Neven Mimica.

Mimica commended the organisation for reaching out to farmers and encouraging sustainable practices.

“Clearly, the support from EU is making a significant impact on the ground when it partners with the right organisations,” he said.

He said FRIEND Fiji had successfully assisted about 2000 people and the niche market for local produce would provide additional revenue for Fijian farmers.

“Supporting farmers and agriculture produce results in providing better access to sufficient nutrition and healthy foods also helps preserve the environment. This is what we would like to achieve.

“It has wider economic benefits through job creation. As an island of many unique environments and culture, Fiji has a high potential for promoting sustainable agriculture.

“Organic certification, fair trade and geographic identification are different ways that could increase resilience of small islands developing states,” he said.

Source:

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