

Organic farming project - Fiji Times Online

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TWELVE villages in the Saivou district of Ra are participating in an organic farming project initiated by the Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises and Development (FRIEND) Fiji.

Funded by the UN Sustainable Development Fund, the Farm to Table project is about establishing systems where people can purchase food directly from the villagers.

While launching the project in Tokaimalo Village yesterday, UNDP Pacific Inclusive Growth Team Leader and Private Sector Development specialist Asif Chida said the project would directly benefit villagers.

"Fiji can become a flagship by showing this as a niche product that we can market to the world," he said.

"We have Fiji Water or Pure Fiji and we can also have a brand called Organic Fiji where we can also show to the world that we are producing such products.

"That brand has to maintain the consistency, the quality and the price and that is where we are working with our partners."

Nabalabala Village headman Mario Keni said a new day had dawned with hope for a prosperous future after the devastation of Severe TC Winston.

"There is so much excitement again, we mostly just planted root crops but our plantations were destroyed and it was hard to start again," he said.

Roko Tui Ra Mosese Nakoroi said the program was a blessing for the people of Saivou where some were still living under tents after the destruction by Severe Tropical Cyclone Winston in February.

"The project goes well with the existing projects that Government is trying to revive in Saivou and the Tokaimalo area," he said.

"Ra is going through a three year spiritual program where we are trying to see its fruits and I believe that this is one of them.

"We are grateful to UNDP and the Pacific Community (SPC) and FRIEND Fiji who are bringing this project to the province of Ra."

FRIEND Fiji partnered with the Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community of the Pacific Community in implementing the two-year project that involves the organic certification of farmers' vegetables and root crops and connecting them with domestic markets.