



New Products for the Market

FRIEND has launched three new products into the market. *Friend's Fiji Style® 7-Grains*, sundried grated cassava and *Friend's Fiji Style® Desiccated Coconut* join the range of quality local jams, pickles, chutneys, teas and spices resulting from Sustainable Livelihoods Initiatives of the Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises & Development.

Friend's Fiji Style® 7-Grains is made from a blend of roasted cereals and is a high protein powder suitable for all ages. It can be eaten straight as a breakfast cereal or added to smoothies. *Friend's Fiji Style® Desiccated Coconut* is the only brand being produced in Fiji from local coconuts from Labasa. Sun dried grated cassava is readily available now and can be used for variety of recipes.

“We are continually working on developing products that can utilize local resources. Our focus has always been identifying produce that can replace the imported items and thus fulfill the needs of the market locally allowing our people to capitalize on the market opportunities that exist within the country,” says Founder/Director Sashi Kiran.

FRIEND assist communities in mapping out their resources including soil type etc to be able to plant what is easy and weather resistant. Products are then developed from local existing resources and connected to the market for sustainable income for the community.



Founder/Director Sashi Kiran flanked by Board Member Mr Deo Saran and Governor Reserve Bank Mr Barry Whiteside

The Governor of Reserve Bank Mr Barry Whiteside officiated at the launch in Tuvu as he headed a delegation of around 60 senior banking officials from around the region on a field trip to look at successful micro enterprises established through FRIEND.



Sashi with visitors Christian DesRoches, Janna Vyas and Chantal Hickey

Canada Fund Visit

FRIEND has equipped its production centre in Tuvu using FJD 85,000 Canadian Grant. Canada Funds Political and Economic Counsellor, Christian DesRoches, and Policy and Public Affairs Officer Chantal Hickey visited FRIEND this week to officially handover the equipment for Sue Ni Vakhatokho.

The Quality Control facility for production of Friend's Fiji Style Products was constructed with assistance from the European Union after FRIEND HQ sustained major damage in the wake of TC Evan in December 2012.

“We are very grateful that Canada Fund has stepped in to help us equip the facility. This includes cooking facilities, stainless steel fittings to ensure compliance with International Food Regulations, specialist equip-

ment like refractometers for large scale jam production and much more,” says Founder/Director Sashi Kiran.

“We have had a long standing partnership with the Canada Fund. When FRIEND first started they had provided office equipment for start up. It was the only donor to offer assistance to FRIEND to rebuild its capacities after we lost almost everything in TC Evan. While other donors provided funding for us to serve the communities, Canada Fund was the only one to allow us to replenish and add on to the much needed office equipment like desks, chairs, computers for setting up of our office after the damage.

Now they have come forth with more funds to allow us to equip our newly constructed Food Production Facility.”

STAR Training

FRIEND engaged trainers from US based Eastern Mennonite University Center for Justice and Peacebuilding for a five day workshop in Nadi this month

The five-day training is the foundation to STAR and introduced the theory, processes and tools for addressing trauma, breaking cycles of violence and building resilience.

Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience (STAR) is a research-supported trauma

awareness and resilience training program.

FRIEND Founder Director Sashi Kiran says the training is for individuals and organizations whose work brings them in contact with people dealing with current or historic trauma and this includes development workers, who need to be trauma-informed in order to do trauma-sensitive programming.

Selected FRIEND staff from Lautoka and Labasa offices and some community representatives had a



STAR Participants Group Photo

chance to participate in STAR training conducted by Vernon Jantzi as the Lead Facilitator and Donna Minter as the co-

Facilitator. "We hope to bring them back for the next level of training soon," says Sashi.

Permaculture @ FRIEND



Lautoka Permaculture workshop participants

Australian Permaculturist arrived at FRIEND this month to work with local communities and introduce them to a Permaculture way of living and growing food that sustainable and efficient.

"I was invited by the Director and this seemed a wonderful opportunity to share a system, developed by Bill Mollison and David Holmgren in Australia, with people of Fiji Islands to help them improve the efficiency and yield as well as other aspects including water harvesting and reuse, swales, recycling, integration and use of animals in the system, soil, etc. Permaculture puts a structure around the system that is often already in place in order to minimize work and increase productivity," says Elizabeth Crichton who volunteered her time in Fiji to provide the training.

A 3 day introductory workshop was held with 30 participants from 9 communities.

"Those attending appeared to be excited about the concepts and indicated they would be interested to try them out. Much of the workshop focused on practical application with the making of a no-dig garden, soil sampling and testing, the use of an A-frame to check contours, site and sector analysis on the land around the FRIEND offices, to name a few," says Elizabeth. Ms Crichton commended the support of FRIEND staff.

"Opeti, in particular took the concepts on board and was able to interpret and explain in the local language. The next step took Opeti and I out to each of the villages and farms represented, to see what design ideas the folk were thinking of and to help with further ideas and initiatives. We then left them to put their design on paper and to commence implementation, with a further follow up visit planned."

The Permaculture Team at FRIEND was also able to put together a permaculture design for the FRIEND land area with plans for its implementation.



Mela Salacakau does soil tests on garden soil samples



EU Team's M & E Visit

A six member EU Team led by Mr Xavier Canton-Lammouse of EU Delegation of the Pacific in Suva visited a number of GROW projects in Ba and Lautoka Area this month.

Talking to the youths at a YEN workshop in progress, Mr Canton Lammouse congratulated the youths on being granted the opportunity to be part of the YEN Programme and wished them the best of luck for the future endeavors

The team visited the ladies at the new Food Production Center before heading off into the communities to visit an irrigation project and a poultry set up.

The EU Funded GROW Project is scheduled to round up at the end of this year.

“However this does not mean that the work started with farmers and communities would end. Be it cash crop farms and orchards, poultry, food processing, apiary or YEN, all projects are designed to ensure sustainability of activities into the future. We are very grateful to the EU for providing funding to expand on our dream of creating sustainable livelihoods opportunities for the marginalised in the community,” says Founder/Director Sashi Kiran.



Recipe Corner—Cassava Pancakes

Ingredients:

- 1 pkt Friend's Fiji Style Cassava Flour
- 2 medium sized eggs
- Sugar
- Water/Milk



Method:

Mix all ingredients together in a thick batter consistency .

(You can open up 2 teabags of Friend's Fiji Style ® Cinnamon Tea and add it to the batter for a festive taste).

Spread and cook pancakes over hot girdle/frypan.

Product of the Month—Cassava

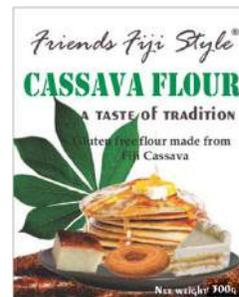
Cassava is a long time staple of choice in Fiji families.

While it is enjoyed freshly boiled, it also makes for delicious bakes and desserts.

When it comes to grating cassava, the chore can be a little bit of drag, so for the ease of the cooks, Friend's Fiji Style® has introduced Fiji Cassava in grated and flour packs.

While the gluten free Cassava Flour can be utilized for all the delights that need finer cassava like rotis, pancakes and lotes, the grated Cassava is perfect for more textured dishes like porridge, vakalolo and cakes.

Friend's Fiji Style® Cassava Products use “Kuli Piqi” cassava variety fresh from farms.



March Birthdays @ FRIEND



Sakaia

Kusum

Yvonne

Unaisi

Maraia

Josephine

Food Fair at Hilton Fiji Beach Resort



Friend's Fiji Style® products on display at the Food Fair



Executive Chef Clinton Webber with Friend's Fiji Style® Tamarind Chutney

FRIEND was invited to participate in the Hilton, Denerau's first ever Festival of Food this month.

Executive Chef Clinton Webber and expert cuisine team showcased the very best of locally sourced and premium imported products in a day of taste sensations.

"We had a number of visitors dropping in on us through the day wanting to know more about the products and how it is made," says Sandhya Narayan. "Many already knew FRIEND and had come across our products before. The Fair provided opportunity for them to stock up their pantry's at warehouse prices."



HOLI 2014 @ FRIEND
The play of colors serves to remind us we are all alike under our skins. Staff, friend's and communities joined in the afternoon of celebrations in Tuvu and Labasa.

