



Nature's Way Cooperative (Fiji) Limited

P.O Box 9825 Nasoso Road, Nadi, Fiji.
Nadi Airport
TIN No. 50-11763-0-5

Tel: (679)6724566
Fax: (679)6724569

Email: nwc@connect.com.fj



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Fiji Papaya Industry on the road to recovery after devastating floods

Post-flood papaya rehabilitation planting have seen planting numbers almost double the pre-floods count according to figures compiled by the Fiji Papaya Project.

According to the MPI Flood Damage Assessment report, a total of 81 acres of papaya was completely destroyed by the floods in the Nadroga/Navosa and Ba provinces.

Figures compiled by the Fiji Papaya Project indicate that an estimated 80,930 papaya seedlings have been supplied as flood rehab direct assistance to affected farmers by mid August 2012. With a planting density of 500 trees per acre, these seedlings represent around 161 acres of papaya that have been established following the floods.

"Our papaya exports to Australia have been reduced to zero following the January and March 2012 floods and exports to NZ are only negligible, based on these rehabilitation figures we are optimistic that the export industry will be back to normal in early 2013", says Nature's Way Cooperative (NWC) Chief Executive Officer, Michael Brown.

"The rehabilitation has been a collaborative effort between the Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI), NWC, the Fiji Papaya Project (FPP) and the Taiwan Technical Mission (TTM)," said NWC Disaster Preparedness & Rehabilitation Programme Fund Coordinator, Kyle Stice.

"This positive outcome would not have been possible without the financial assistance from our major donor, AusAID," he said.

Papaya rehabilitation efforts have been boosted by several private seedling nurseries contracted by NWC to grow papaya and eggplant seedlings.

Financial support provided by AusAID through NWC, has also allowed the Cooperative to have a much more active role in natural disaster rehabilitation and preparedness activities.

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For more information, contact Kyle Stice (Ph: 9306645; E: kyle@kokosiga.com)