In a press release dated July 19, 2017 Belize Sugar Industries Limited (BSI) declared that “BSI is unable under law to accept cane from farmers who do not have a cane purchase agreement in place. Therefore, if the agreement is terminated, BSI will not be able to accept cane from Belize Sugar Cane Farmers Association (BSCFA) farmers”

This reckless declaration by BSI signifies a serious intimidation and a great threat to the members of the BSCFA. The principal motive for this declaration is simply to provoke fear and anxiety in our humble and small cane farmer members. The perverse objective is to oblige our members to accept the amendments to the existing commercial contract between BSI and BSCFA as non-negotiable conditions for the proposed investment by BSI.

The existing commercial contract between BSI and BSCFA is a cane purchase agreement, and as long as BSCFA does not terminate this contract, BSI has to accept the cane of our members. As members of BSCFA, cane farmers automatically have a cane purchase agreement by means of the same cane purchase agreement which BSCFA has with BSI. However, BSCFA is taking legal action to counteract any attempt by BSI to not accept the cane of our cane farmer members. We were successful in the legal claim we made against BSI in order to recover the cost of the loss of molasses which BSI deducted from the cane payment of our members. And we are confident that we can stop BSI in carrying out its harmful declaration and intention to not accept cane from our cane farmer members.

**BSCFA has informed BSI that it has no intention of terminating this contract. On the contrary, in the same manner that BSI is interested in making some amendments that will benefit them, BSCFA is also interested in making some amendments for the benefit of BSCFA and its members.**

However, we have received reports that BSI is harassing our members and reaping group leaders to abandon the BSCFA and form another association with the objective of accepting the amendments to the commercial contract. Taking advantage of its financial power, BSI is energetically fuelling fear and anxiety in our cane farmer
members. But this fear can be transformed into a fierce resistance by the oppressed cane farmer, the likes of which BSI will regret, since the cane farmer will feel trapped and desperate against the wall knowing that all his efforts, all his savings, all his investments and hard work are being threatened by the false and reckless declaration by BSI of not being able to accept his cane even though there is an existing commercial contract in force with BSCFA. This threat can put our humble cane farmers in dire the poverty and misery.

On the other hand, BSCFA is trying to have BSI accept the cane of its members under conditions that are just and not oppressive. BSCFA cannot be responsible for any reaction of the cane farmer to this senseless intimidation and threat by BSI. BSCFA has indicated to BSI that the best way to resolve these amendments is through the process of negotiation and not imposition. BSCFA is committed to negotiate in good faith and conclude all these amendments as soon as possible before the commencement of the 2017/2018 crop.

BSCFA denounces the glaring and shameless maneuvers of BSI to break up the BSCFA and implores that the voice of reason reigns so that both BSI y BSCFA can come together to resolve these amendments as equal business partners without recourse to dirty and destabilizing tricks.

We advise all our members and reaping group leaders to be attentive and alert to these deceitful maneuvers by BSI and its officials and to carefully review any document which BSI attempts to have them sign. We suggest that our members immediately inform and consult with their respective Directors or the Committee of Management about any document which BSI and its officials present to them for their consideration and/or signature.

**DO NOT ALLOW BSI TO DECEIVE US! LET US REMAIN UNITED AND IN SOLIDARITY FOR A BETTER FUTURE AND THE WELLBEING OF OUR CANE BUSINESS!!!!!!**

*Issued by the Committee of Management*
*Belize Sugar Cane Farmers Association*
*Orange Walk Town*
*July 31, 2017*

“To serve, promote and protect the interest of all its members transparently, representing and negotiating on their behalf, working in Union to improve the quality, quantity and efficiency of sugar cane production, processing and marketing.”