

Outspan

Exporter of
Organic Sesame in Uganda

Outspan Enterprises Ltd was established in 1977. The company exports: cocoa, red birdseye chillies, sliced dry ginger, maize and beans for the conventional markets.

In 1999 the company started exporting organic sesame. A few years ago Outspan introduced a new variety – Sesame II – which gives a better yield and has a higher oil content. It has been a big success for all participating farmers.

The main countries the company exports to are Netherlands, France, Germany, Italy and Israel. The sesame that is exported has a minimum purity of 99.5%. The oil content of the sesame is at least 50%.

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Supported by the Sida programme
– **EPOPA** – www.epopa.info
Export Promotion of Organic Products from Africa

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A Win-Win Project

Outspan Enterprises participate in the EPOPA project to enhance their export of organic sesame from Ochero county. They get assistance in finding buyers and to get the product certified. In return they employ field staff to implement the project.

Target group

The direct target groups are poor small holder farmer communities in Ochero county. Indirectly the farmers in nearby Adigo county will also benefit as their field officers will be included in the Ochero Field extension training session.

Expected results

- 60% of the 1,500 registered Ochero farmers will be contracted to supply an organic export crop, besides producing sufficient food crops for their own families.
- Exports of 200 tons of certified organic sesame, which means a four-fold increase of the production of organic export crops (compared to 1999 situation).
- The average farmer's income from organic export crops, is quadrupled (compared to 1999).
- There are at least two other organic export crops with a good market.
- Application of organic farming techniques will enhance the environment in an area where environmental degradation has been severe.

Profile of Ochero farmer

Farmers have on average 9.1 acres of land of which 2.3 are cultivated with millet, sorghum, maize, cassava and cash crops like cotton and sesame. Work is done by hand. Lack of labour is given as the major constraint to cultivate more.

The average homestead has two adults and four children who live in a mud and wattle hut with a grass roof. 50% of the homesteads have one bicycle and 15% have cattle. The average income in this area is low: US\$ 168 per annum per household. 7% farmers have another source of income, usually small trading.



Sesame

(Sesamum Indicum)

Sesame is an annual herb, 1 meter tall. It takes 3 to 4 months to maturity. It is grown in the tropics in areas with a distinct dry period.

The seed is harvested when the first lowest capsules are about to pop open, the stem turns yellow and the leaves begin to drop of.

The edible seeds are rich in oil. The oil is of high quality and used as a salad and cooking oil. It is also used in the manufacture of margarine and soaps.

The fried seeds are eaten in soups. Mixed with sugar, it is a popular sweetmeat in Africa and Asia. The seeds are often scattered on the tops of cakes, bread and pastry. The young leaves are used as a soup vegetable in West-Africa. The stems are burnt as fuel.



EXPORT PROMOTION OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS FROM AFRICA

EPOPA – Development through Organic Trade

Export Promotion of Organic Products from Africa (EPOPA) is a programme created by the Swedish international Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) in 1994. The programme has projects present in Uganda and Tanzania.

The EPOPA programme aims to give African smallholder farmers better conditions through developing the exports of organic products from Africa. The rural communities, thus the farmers, get a premium price for their crop, they get a more transparent price setting from the exporter who buys more directly and they are paid cash in hand.

Participating countries are given the opportunity to increase and diversify their exports, while at the same time expose the agricultural sector to innovative and environmentally sound farming techniques.

The programme has since it started in 1994 proven to be a valid instrument for African exporters to improve their business and for thousands of farmers to improve their livelihood.

The execution of the EPOPA Programme is subcontracted to a consortium of two consultancies, AgroEco from the Netherlands and GroLink from Sweden. Both consultancies have great experience of working with international organic production issues worldwide.

More information

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