

TAMTECO

Fragrant Herbs

Organic exports of Lemongrass herbal teas and Rosemary essential oils from Uganda



TAMTECO

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EXPORT PROMOTION OF
 ORGANIC PRODUCTS FROM AFRICA

Supported by the Sida programme
 Export Promotion of Organic Products from Africa

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Toro Mityana Tea Company (TAMTECO) is a company whose core business is to produce and export tea. The production of fragrant herbs and essential oils is a secondary enterprise aimed at diversifying the company's business. The production sites are in Mityana and Kabarole districts, in the central and western parts of Uganda.

The major objectives of the fragrant herbs project are; processing lemon grass for herbal teas and distillation of rosemary and second grade lemongrass for essential oils. Production is at two levels, at the estates and at out grower level.

Products

Lemongrass and rosemary are produced under natural conditions. The climatic conditions in the project area favour the production of both crops with negligible pest and disease problems.

Lemongrass is harvested 4 times per year. The grass is dried in a controlled environment and only the superior quality is exported as tea. Grass that does not meet the best standards is used for the distillation of lemon grass essential oil.

Rosemary oil production is only expected in the last project year, as rosemary is a relatively new crop for many farmers and is yet to come to full maturity.



Certification

The products are in the process of being certified against EU organic production regulation, inspected by Institute for Marketecology (IMO) with additional Naturland certification.

The producers

The project is estimated to reach about 300 out growers for lemon grass and 100 out growers for rosemary. There are different types of out growers; company staff producing on allocated estate land,



squatters producing on estate land and out growers planting on their own land. All these out growers will be treated in the same way and will receive the same benefits and prices for their products.

A win win project

Tamteco has large estate lands, some of which had not been used for several years. Consequently, squatters occupied these lands and started cultivating the land with food crops. TAMTECO has made an agreement with these squatters to produce lemon grass for the company which in return allows them to stay on the land. They are paid and have the same rights as other out-growers.

Expected result

In 2008 it is expected that TAMTECO will export 109 tonnes of organic lemon grass for tea, 2600 litres of lemon grass oil and 237 litres of rosemary oil. Organic growers will receive an organic premium of 20% on their produce.

