



Solar Fruit Drying : Tanzania

Improving smallholder farmers' access to profitable markets through solar fruit drying

Project description

The initiative tackles the problem of post-harvest losses by solar drying fruit and vegetables which can subsequently be stored or sold. Drying agricultural products helps to ensure food security during the rainy seasons and creates opportunities for local farmers to access new markets.



Business model

Rift Valley Foods provides the farmers with solar fruit-drying technology and training. Local farmers use the technology to process the harvest surplus, making it possible to store and sell produce that would otherwise be wasted.

The solar dryer enables control of the drying process so that high-quality dried products can be sold in distant markets. This creates new business opportunities for smallholder farmers in remote areas.

Scaling up activities in 2012

- Restart fruit drying operations in the mothballed commercial facility and in addition with ten smallholders
- Attract donor money to expand the commercial facility and establish 90 micro-solar drying enterprises with smallholder families (training and construction of micro-dryers)
- Train ten young people in fruit-drying technology and employ them in the expanded commercial facility

Immediate needs

- Investment to support small-scale individual operations and expand the refurbished commercial facility, specifically:
- Expand the refurbished facility from 300 to 700 kg/d
- Construct 90 micro-dryers and train 90 smallholder families
- Create a toolkit to facilitate the training of more smallholder families





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Partnership

- ❶ **FADECO Community Radio** is used for marketing purposes, to announce training sessions and to raise general awareness about the potential value to smallholders of solar fruit drying
- ❷ **SIDO-KAGERA** a government organisation, provides support and training to the future Rift Valley Foods staff and helps ensure exposure at trade fairs
- ❸ **The Sokoine University of Agriculture** is a research institution that will contribute by assigning interns to conduct training and assist with technical issues related to product development
- ❹ **The Kenya Institute of Organic Farming** seconds staff to Rift Valley Foods to carry out the training of farmers and its future staff
- ❺ **The Tanzanian Bureau of Standards** has worked with Rift Valley Foods to create national standards for dried fruits



Social, environmental and economic impacts

Social impact: The initiative enhances nutrition and food security for participating smallholders during the rainy seasons, which last seven months in total. The initiative will also make a substantial contribution to sustainable incomes for a large number of farming families (initially 100, growing to 300 within 5 years).

Environmental impact: Solar fruit drying and the use of solar PV-driven equipment is an excellent example of the sustainable use of natural resources.

Economic impact: The initiative creates self-employment opportunities in rural farming communities: individual smallholder farmers are able to start small-scale businesses and significantly increase their family incomes and nutrition levels. Jobs will also be created at the commercial facility.

Contact

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SEED Partners

SEED's founding partners are the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) and SEED is hosted by UNEP-WCMC. Other current partners are the governments of Germany, India, the Netherlands, South Africa, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States of America; the European Union; Conservation International; and SEED's corporate partner, Hisense.

About the SEED Initiative

The SEED Initiative identifies and supports promising small scale social and environmental entrepreneurs around the globe, entrepreneurs that while working towards a greener economy also tackle poverty, marginalisation and social exclusion.

SEED provides these social entrepreneurs with know how and networks, taking the lessons learnt at local level up to decision-makers to promote evidence-based policy making.

More information: www.seedinit.org

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