



IMAI Farming Cooperative : South Africa

Processing unused surplus crop yields into value-added products

Project description

The IMAI Farming Cooperative has developed a sustainable business processing surplus vegetable crop yields into the value-added food product "achar". This avoids wasting surplus vegetables and generates additional income.



Business model

Non-sustainable farming techniques and post-harvest storing methods are responsible for the loss of large amounts of crops in South Africa. IMAI has developed an innovative approach to fighting these losses, chopping the surplus vegetables into small pieces and storing them in an acidic solution to create different types of "achar".

The shared agro-processing plant and sale of achar brings the value chain one step closer to local farmers, giving them an additional source of income.

Scaling up activities in 2012

- Start operation of the first agro-processing plant
- Sign first contracts for the supply of achar
- Install the first water tanks for harvesting rainwater on farms

Immediate needs

- Financial support for developing the first vegetable-processing plant
- Help monitoring and enforcing quality controls at a local level
- Help with additional training in skills for community members
- Expertise on the sustainable use of renewable energy sources





Partnership

- **IFACO** initiated the project and has started processing the first vegetables to produce achar
- **The Independent Development Trust (IDT)** is helping the initiative to acquire funds to develop the first vegetable-processing plant
- **The South African Department of Agriculture** supports farmers with the necessary resources and training to enable them to work productively and sustain their livelihoods



Social, environmental and economic impacts

Social impact: The project improves food security, contributes to poverty alleviation among members of the community and provides support on the effective use of distributed land that was acquired through government support programmes such as land claims and restitution.

Environmental impact: The initiative encourages community members to adopt organic farming practices

that reduce the use of toxic chemicals. Additionally, harvesting rainwater reduces depletion of groundwater.

Economic impact: Local farmers' self-reliance is strengthened by the cooperative: members of the community are provided with additional sources of income and the chance to improve their skills as the initiative expands.

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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