



PRODUCER PROFILE



DRIED FRUITS



Name: FRUITS OF THE NILE GROWERS ASSOCIATION

FLO ID: 19701

Type of Organization: Hired Labor Organization



Introduction

The Fruits of the Nile Growers Association is a 2nd grade organization supporting 5 Fairtrade certified Community Based Organisations (CBOs). These CBOs are based across the districts of Kayunga and Luweero in central region of Uganda as well as in Mbarara, Isingiro and Ntungamo in the Western region.

There is a mixture of subsistence and commercial farmers in these multi-ethnic communities. Agriculture is the main source of income. With assistance from Fruits of the Nile (U) Ltd the CBOs organized themselves into a strong umbrella organisation in 2009 known as Fruits of the Nile Growers Association FONA. They have created job opportunities, involved women and youth in their activities, and developed skills and long-term peace in their communities. FONA at the moment exports its dried fruits namely dried banana, dried pineapple, dried papaya and dried cape gooseberries (physalis) through their exporter Fruits of the Nile (U) Ltd and they are looking forward to start exporting directly.

Members also grow other crops like cooking banana (Matooke) , maize, sweet potatoes, and keep livestock, particularly cattle and goats. FONA supports farmers through trainings to practise sustainable farming, protect natural environments and manage natural resources. They do organic farming and are Fairtrade certified.

Growing, processing and export

Producers harvest and solar dry their fruit at the farm, then deliver it to their relevant CBOs. The CBOs are responsible for transporting the dried fruit to their umbrella organisation FONA. The umbrella organisation FONA validates the organic and Fairtrade status if satisfied then weighs, records and takes the product to the exporter Fruits of the Nile (U) Ltd. Where sorting and packing for export is done and there after the product is transported to the port of Mombasa in Kenya for shipping.



Benefits of Fairtrade

Governance

The umbrella organisation is managed by an Executive Committee of 9 people who are democratically elected by the farmers during the AGM (Annual General Meeting).

There are 3 delegates from each CBO at the AGM. The day to day work is managed by the FONA Secretariat.

Environment

In an effort to confront Fusarium wilt disease in banana, a number of CBOs are investing Fairtrade Premium in acquiring and growing disease free plants and distributing them to members.

Quality and Productivity

The umbrella organization has used its Fairtrade Premium to help farmers construct good solar dryers and improve their drying sites in order to improve quality and meet food safety standards.

Challenges

- Despite the steps to support farmers with disease free banana plantlets, production is still being affected by Fusarium wilt disease.
- The organisation needs more markets.



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