

Marketing Help for Ginger Growers in Same District

By Enirisha Magohe and Masasa Makwasa¹

Ginger Growing in the Same District

Ginger was introduced in Same District over ten years ago. Current yearly production is around six thousand tons. A third of its population are involved in ginger production. They also grow some cardamom coffee and cinnamon.

In August and September ginger plots are prepared and the ground is dressed with manure. From September to November small pieces of sprouted ginger are planted with one foot between each plant and 2 feet between rows. The ginger is planted before rains on floodable terraces which can be irrigated. A complex system of pipes and ditches connect the mountain streams to the terraces.



Irrigation for the ginger terraces

Between September and October the terraces are flooded. Then the fields are weeded and irrigated as the ginger grows. After 8 months the ginger is ready and about one kilo per small piece of ginger planted can be harvested. The raw ginger is harvested from April to August and put into 250 kilo bags ready for sale.

The crop is increasing yearly at an average of 46%. In 2005/2006, six thousand tons were produced from six hundred hectares. The yield per hectare is low farmers as farmers are only getting 10 tonnes per ha instead of a possible 20 tonnes. About 90% of the ginger is

cultivated organically only using farm yard manure for inputs.



Harvesting ginger

Marketing Ginger

At the moment the ginger is being sold to the middlemen from Kenya and Dar es Salaam and sent to Zanzibar. The middlemen go direct to the farmers and the price range is from 260-400 Tsh per kilo for raw ginger. Also Ugandans take ginger from Same when they cannot get enough to fulfil their export quota.

There are various selling points for the raw ginger along the road where the trucks pick up the ginger. We have between seven and eight trucks per week collecting fresh ginger from Same. Here up in the hills the roads can be badly affected in the rainy season. A few farmers instead of selling as individuals now sell as group to get a better price.



250 kilo bags ready for collection

Our marketing is very inefficient. Farmers are disorganized, getting no reliable market information and domination by speculative middlemen. Moreover, there is no quality management, no quality standards, and no grading.

¹ Interviewed by Anne Dennig in August 2007

The ginger market chain appears to be in a deadlock. Farmers are reluctant to invest because their market outlets are unreliable, and market agents are reluctant to invest because farm production is sub-optimal.

AMSDP Coordinating Marketing

The district is attended by local service providers in finance (RFSP), water management (TIP) and marketing (Faida Mali). Considering these resources it can be expected that coordinated action by the chain actors and supporting agencies will give a decisive push to the ginger chain and trigger significant economic growth and poverty alleviation in the district. The AMSDP core group in Same has started bringing key players together with farmers to improve marketing.

As a result new potential buyers have been found in Unifine (a Dutch export company) and Kenya Jambo biscuits in Nairobi. The biscuit company needs powdered ginger and demands 1.5 tons per month. Unifine needs dried and chopped ginger.

A better price has been negotiated with Unifine. In farm gate prices it offers 567 Tsh/kg versus the local price of 349Tsh/kg. Farmers can double their profits from 218 to 475 Tsh per kilo.

Future Potential with Value Addition

To realize these new market opportunities farmers must dry and slice their raw ginger product. Recently, AMSDP has organized training for producers in processing sliced, dried ginger with Devotu Shenyoo the Food Processing Trainer from the Small Industry Development Organisation.



Packed dried ginger ready for market

Dried ginger gets a better price. It is sent to the local markets of Dar, Moshi, Tanga and

Arusha where the price per kilo of chopped dried ginger is 1,000 Tsh.

SIDO started with training for forty producers on chopping, drying and packing ginger. Already more than ten solar driers have been bought and installed through SIDO loans. The resulting dried produce has been shown at the Nane Nane in Arusha. Price for the dried sliced ginger sold at the Nane Nane was 1,500 Tsh for 100g!



In Myamba – lady cutting ginger for drying

AMSDP' core group in Same are now helping farmers draw up plans for processing equipment which will enable the farmers to produce ginger powder in the ward. This will ensure a higher price and lessen the problems of transporting the raw ginger. The farmers have set out plans for the business explaining the market research they need from AMSDP.

Possible Impact

Ginger provides 50% of the income in the district. Any improvement in the ginger market chain will have huge impacts on the local economy and quality of life. Villagers would like to have water in the village and would like to use any extra income for schools and a dispensary. Finding ways to sustain the coordination, collaboration and other roles played by AMSDP's core group in Same becomes a critical challenge.

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