



	<p>KENTASTE PRODUCTS LIMITED KENYA <a href="#">SITE WEB</a></p>
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## ABOUT KENTASTE PRODUCTS LIMITED

- Company status: Limited
- Year of registration: 2014
- Number of employees: 200



**Joanne Murunga, Chief Operating Officer**

Joanne Murunga is a sales professional with extensive experience in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Rwanda. She has a strong background in business development, holding a Master of Business Administration from UCD Michael

Smurfit Graduate Business School in Ireland. Joanne's expertise spans sales, strategy, marketing, and governance, with a proven track record in the service industry. She is passionate about developing sustainable, impact-driven businesses.

Currently, Joanne serves as the Chief Operating Officer at Kentaste, a leading producer of coconut products in Kenya.

## BUSINESS MODEL

Kentaste was established to provide smallholder farmers with a reliable and fair income from the millions of coconut trees growing along Kenya's coast. For many years, this crop was neglected, leaving farmers with no choice but to sell through informal markets.

When Kentaste introduced value-added processing, farmers realized that their coconut trees could become a sustainable source of income for their households.

Kentaste aims to unlock the potential of the coconut economy by connecting rural farmers to an international supply chain, strengthening their capacities to grow only the best coconuts to produce

high-quality, all-natural coconut products for customers worldwide.

The coconut value chain has been significantly impacted by climate change, and Kentaste is actively working to reduce food loss and waste.

Kentaste controls the entire product value chain, from harvesting and dehusking to transportation, packaging, and quality control. Kentaste uses every part of every coconut purchased, maximizing the operational efficiency and promoting a culture of zero waste.



Funded by the European Union

Additionally, Kentaste is committed to empowering women, with 50% of their senior management being women.

Driven by a relentless passion to meet tomorrow's market needs with new and innovative products, Kentaste is always open to what the future may bring. Regardless of what they produce, it will always be

creative and authentically Kenyan. Nowadays, Kentaste has grown into the largest coconut manufacturer in East Africa.

**Mission:** To bring healthy, affordable, and delicious coconut products to the masses while creating thousands of jobs in the process.

## STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH SMALLHOLDERS, COOPERATIVES...

Kentaste sources all their coconuts from over 4,000 (and growing) smallholder farmers, 50% of whom are organic and fairtrade certified, across more than 63 rural villages along the Kenyan coast. 28% are women, 22% are youth. 35% have no formal education.

Recognising the challenges faced by rural smallholder farmers, Kentaste has developed a robust pipeline over the years to help them sell their products. This has provided farmers with access to capital, leading to

better education, improved healthcare, and an enhanced quality of life.

These farmers are the foundation of Kentaste. By helping them thrive, Kentaste invests considerable resources in training them in organic farming practices. These practices are designed to promote transparent, profitable, and sustainable growing methods while also protecting the well-being of the farmers.



Coconut producer, Kwale, Kenya © Alterfin

## PRODUCTS AND MARKETS

Kentaste processes a wide range of coconut products and continually expands its product portfolio. From food to personal care items, their products are manufactured to the highest quality standards, adhering to international production standards.

Kentaste exports its products internationally. In retail, Kentaste's products are available in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Mauritius, Rwanda, the USA, and the UK. In bulk, the products are found in the Netherlands, France, Egypt, and the USA.

Certifications:

- The ECOCERT certification, complying with both EU and USDA organic standards, gives customers the highest level of assurance in organic quality and authenticity.
- The FSSC and ISO certification ensures that customers and consumers always receive top-of-the-line products.
- The Fair for Life certification guarantees human rights are safeguarded at every stage of production. Kentaste's employees enjoy good working conditions, smallholder farmers receive a fair share, and the enterprise funds development projects in local communities.



Coconut milk



Coconut oil



Coconut cream



Coconut flour



Desiccated coconut



Coconut chips

## INNOVATIONS: MILESTONES AND EXPANSION PLANS

In their early days, Kentaste produced virgin coconut oil, milk, and cream. Over the years, they have discovered new and exciting ways to bring coconut goodness into consumers' homes. As the company has grown, so has their product range, which now includes desiccated coconut, coconut flour, coconut chips, and more to come.

Currently, they are capable of processing hundreds of thousands of coconuts per month, and this number is continually increasing. Their commitment to innovation means their production lines are structured to leverage the amazing versatility of the coconut.

Kentaste is dedicated to preserving the local ecology, ensuring that future generations can enjoy this beautiful corner of the world, and that growers can continue to make their livelihoods from their cherished "tree of life." Kentaste is firmly committed to becoming a zero-waste company. They have developed systems

to minimize waste as much as possible, utilizing almost every part of the coconut, from the kernel to the water.

Through their seedling program Kentaste provides farmers with indigenous crops that help maintain the local ecological balance. They work with these very same farmers to ensure they are organic certified which minimizes the use of harmful pesticides and maintains a good soil base in the local ecosystem. By supporting local farmers with an additional revenue stream, Kentaste actively supports the blue economy and helps prevent the overfishing of Kenya's marine ecosystems.

Additionally, Kentaste utilises solar energy at their facilities to support the day-to-day operations of their factory. Furthermore, Kentaste is committed to creating positive social change in the community. They are deeply connected to and invested in the well-being of the people around them, working closely with them to build a better future.

## SUCCESS FACTORS AND LESSONS LEARNED

In 2021, USAID, via the INVEST initiative, AlphaMundi Foundation and Value for Women, helped Kentaste identify gender-smart solutions to their business challenges. Kentaste has been proactive in creating a working environment where everyone can thrive. They strive to achieve gender equality, including initiatives such as a nursing room, daycare facility, a women's locker room to provide a safe changing area, and introducing a shift schedule that would better align with school hours, enabling working mothers to pick up their children at the end of the workday.

Recognizing the need for upscaling, Joanne Murunga joined Invest in Africa's SME upscaling program to explore opportunities for expanding the company. Implemented in partnership with GIZ Business Scouts for Development, the programme

involved capacity building and technical support. Joanne also attended the Anuga Food Tec trade fair in 2022, where she witnessed cutting-edge manufacturing technology and identified the best machines to acquire for Kentaste.

The company has achieved a significant milestone by winning the prestigious New Product of the Year award at the Africa Food Awards 2023. Their remarkable coconut creation, the Kentaste Coconut Chips, has been recognized for its exceptional quality and taste.

Globally, Kentaste believes in running a company where everyone gets their fair share of the rewards, as their purpose goes far beyond profit, and continuously strive to have a positive impact on the communities they serve.



Kentaste's employees



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