



BUSINESS PROFILE



ESSENTIAL GOODS AND
SERVICES TRADING LIMITED

JAMAICA

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ABOUT ESSENTIAL GOODS AND SERVICES TRADING LIMITED

- **Company status:** Limited.
- **Year of registration:** 2017.
- **Number of employees:** 6 employees, 4 are women.
- **Business sector:** Agrifood manufacturing.



Onel Williams – Business and Product Development

Onel Williams is a food innovator, entrepreneur and marketer who grew up in

Kingston, Jamaica.

He owns and operates the Kingston-based food services company Essential Goods and Services Trading Limited. His distribution business focuses on finding niche suppliers and bringing their products to supermarkets.

Onel Williams has caught the attention of Goddard Enterprises Limited, which is the second-largest conglomerate in the Caribbean, spanning over 23 countries in the Caribbean, North, South and Central America.

Onel Williams is also one of 10 winners in the Goddard Enterprises 100th-anniversary entrepreneurs' awards competition. As part of the award, he receives entrepreneurial mentorship from a Goddard CEO.



Funded by
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CONTEXT

Background

Onel Williams founded Nella's after recognising a gap in the local vegan food market with consumers being prevented from buying commodities like breadfruit flour and sweet potato flour as they didn't know how to use them. Thus, he created vegan pasta, a new value-added product that is scalable

Nella's distributes speciality food products using indigenous Caribbean ingredients. The company aims to improve the food and dietary experience of consumers by creating tasty, healthy and unique vegan and gluten free options of pasta products.

Vision: "Rethink" traditional food by reimagining them into healthier options for consumers, using natural and sustainable indigenous Caribbean food ingredients.

Mission: Become a trusted name in manufactured foods, providing health-conscious consumers with scalable value-add food products made with indigenous Caribbean food ingredients.

Relationships with the community

Nella's champions locally grown agricultural produce like sweet potato, cassava, and breadfruit. By doing so, the company contributes to building the local agricultural industry and supporting local and regional farmers who grow indigenous crops. Nella's products cater to customers who are conscious of food security and healthy eating, particularly those interested in knowing where their food is grown, how it is cultivated, and how it is transported. To meet these market expectations, the company has formed partnerships with local farmers, encouraging them to increase their production for Nella's.

The company also collaborates with local chefs to promote the use of its products. For example, Nella's has partnered with Chef Patrice Harris-Henry, the director of The Reggae Chefs Jamaica. Reggae Chefs is a personal chef service company fusing Jamaican cuisine with Jamaican culture, which makes creative dishes using local foods. On Nella's website, viewers have access to a regularly updated, freely available eBook that features recipes and meal ideas using Nella's products, which are submitted by users and customers including local chefs.

PRODUCTS AND MARKET

Main products

Nella's manufactures vegan-friendly pasta products made with real Caribbean ingredients, made in Jamaica. The products are marketed as fibre- and nutrient-rich functional foods. Their flagship product, Nella's Tendaronis, is an enriched, vegan-friendly, low-gluten line of pasta products made with Jamaican sweet potatoes. The other products include gluten free flours made from breadfruit, cassava and sweet potato; sweet potato waffle and pancake mix; gluten free breadcrumbs made from sweet cassava (original and seasoned) and Jamaican bammy.

Main markets

Nella's products are available in 22 major retailers in Jamaica. They can be purchased online, with worldwide shipping through Caribshopper and Coolmarket. Local consumers can also buy the products via WhatsApp. The company is open to regional distribution, and Nella's Tendaronis now has two international distributors in the United States and in the United Kingdom.



Breadfruit Flour



Sweet Potato Flour



Cassava Flour



Gluten Free Bread Crumbs



Sweet Potato Pancake Mix



Original Jamaican Bammy



Nella's Tendaronis Sweet Potato Pasta

INNOVATIONS: MILESTONES AND EXPANSION PLANS

Milestones

Nella's provides Caribbean consumers with premium, quality, locally manufactured products, serving as alternatives to food imports. To support its success, the business has received funding from entities such as the Development Bank of Jamaica. The founder was also a part of the Jamaica Business Development Corporation (JBDC) Incubator Programme.

The innovation Nella Tendaronis was a major breakthrough for the company, when after pursuing market research and landing on the choice for sweet potato based pasta products, in September 2020 Nella's Sweet Potato Tendaronis hit the market and received positive feedback from customers. Nella's bases its progress on thorough market analysis and

research. The company has developed new packaging and sizes to better meet consumer preferences.

Needs for upscaling

While Nella's has made significant strides in the market, the company faces several challenges, including securing funding, establishing supply chain partnerships, sourcing packaging, and marketing the Nella's brand.



Nella's Tendaronis Sweet Potato Pasta– Old packaging (left) and new packaging (right)

SUCCESS FACTORS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Nella's vision is to tap into the multi-million-dollar global vegan pasta market and become a leading commercial manufacturer and exporter of vegan-friendly food products.

The founder emphasizes the need for a wider network of research and development incubators in the Caribbean to assist in creating value-added food options. He encourages government bodies to understand the evolving needs and characteristics of the agrifood industry, including data and technology developments, and to support achieving international certification and exports.

While promoting Nella's products has incurred high costs, the business has found that these efforts have brought valuable returns, including presence in many supermarkets.

Nella's Tendaronis was awarded Best Food Product 2020/2021 at the Jamaica Observer Table Talk Food Awards and won the Goddard Enterprises Limited 100th Anniversary Entrepreneur Award Competition in February 2022.



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