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Session n°22:

Exploring international and intra-regional market opportunities for Caribbean agrifood MSMEs



Caribbean Agrifood Business Series ...



Funded by
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GOPEX INTERNATIONAL N.V.

Who we are

A family-owned agribusiness from Suriname

- Established in 1998
- Based in Saramacca, Suriname
- We grow, pack and export fresh agricultural products
- We also supply the local market

Our commitment to quality & food safety

- ISO 22000 certified since 2013
- Our customers also carry out regular audits at Gopex
- This means we are continuously monitored throughout the year
- Food hygiene is a culture at Gopex

Our customers

- Healthcare institutions
- Mining companies
- KFC and Pizza Hut – according to YUM! international standards
- International buyers, mainly in the Netherlands

Food hygiene is a culture at Gopex.

OUR PRODUCTS & MARKETS

What we produce

- Fresh vegetables
- Okra
- Kouseband
- Peppers
- Antroewa
- Boulanger / eggplant
- Leafy vegetables
- Ready-to-cook fresh-cut vegetables

Our current markets

- Suriname – local market
- The Netherlands – our main export market

Our next step

With our experience, production capacity and food safety systems, we are ready to expand into the Caribbean market.

We are looking for reliable business partners who can build long-term relationships with Gopex.

WHAT BUYERS EXPECT

What matters most to buyers

- Quality comes first
- Competitive price
- Food safety
- Consistent product quality
- Reliable supply and volumes
- On-time delivery
- Proper packaging and labelling
- Traceability and documentation

Our standards

- ISO 22000 certified since 2013
- YUM! standards for KFC and Pizza Hut
- Regular customer audits at Gopex
- Continuous focus on food hygiene

Our approach

For us, quality comes first — but quality must also come at a competitive price.

CHALLENGES WE FACE WHEN EXPANDING EXPORTS

Logistics

- High transportation and shipping costs
- No direct flights to all Caribbean countries
- Cold-chain requirements

Production costs & Competitiveness

- High labour cost in agriculture
- High production costs
- Our products can be more expensive than products from some competing countries
- We need to remain competitive while maintaining our quality standards

Market access & phytosanitary requirements

- High phytosanitary requirements
- Regular monitoring of export fields
- Special treatment of crops when required
- Certification and documentation requirements
- Meeting different buyer standards

Our recent experience

A recent trial export to Barbados showed us the practical challenges involved in meeting the phytosanitary and market-access requirements of a new Caribbean market.

WHAT WE ARE DOING

Strengthening our production

- Improving production planning and supply consistency
- Working with trained outgrowers
- Increasing our production capacity

Investing in quality & food safety

- Maintaining our ISO 22000 certification
- Preparing for FSSC certification
- Strengthening traceability and field monitoring
- Improving our packing and cold-chain facilities

Adding value

- We have a complete IQF line for fast-frozen vegetables
- The line is not yet operational due to logistical challenges
- Developing ready-to-cook fresh-cut vegetables

Building stronger export partnerships

- Looking for reliable, long-term buyers
- Building direct relationships with customers
- Expanding into Caribbean markets

We are investing in the capacity and systems needed to serve international markets.

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

Our key lessons

- Quality comes first — but price must remain competitive
- Food safety must be part of the company culture
- Export starts with the farm: field monitoring, traceability and consistency are essential
- Reliable logistics are critical for fresh products
- New markets require preparation and understanding of buyer requirements
- Long-term relationships are more valuable than one-time orders

What we are looking for

Reliable buyers and business partners who value quality and are interested in long-term cooperation.

Our message

Be ready, know your market, understand your buyer and build your business step by step.



Our farm and harvest

08



Innovation in growing

09



Our field production

10



Working in the field

11



Thank you

