

Success for organic products from Ethiopia on the EU market

IPD PROCURES NEW TRADE PARTNER FOR THE ETHIOPIAN EXPORTER GREENPATH FOOD

October 2019



GreenPath Food is Ethiopia's first – and, up until now, its only – certified EU-organic producer and exporter organisation in the fruit and vegetable sector. Import Promotion Desk (IPD) added the company to its export promotion programme in 2017. With support of IPD, GreenPath Food was able to raise awareness for its products at European trade fairs and to establish successful trade relations. For two years now, they have been in close cooperation with the Hamburg-based import organisation ElbeFruit Europe, which markets EU-organically certified avocados, vegetables and fresh herbs from GreenPath Food in German-speaking countries. Their cooperation in the organic trade sector opens up new opportunities for both partners.



FRESH ORGANIC HERBS

GreenPath Food has its head office in Addis Ababa. Since its foundation in 2015, the company has advocated the sustainable cultivation of high-quality organic foods, working together with a network of more than 150 smallholder farmers around Butajira in the southern highlands of Ethiopia who traditionally subsist on the cultivation of monocropped cereals. The GreenPath Food experts impart the necessary know-how in organic farming and in regenerative agriculture to the farmers. As a consequence, GreenPath Food meets the necessary EU quality requirements and has already obtained organic certification for many of its products. The company also fully complies with the standards for GLOBALG.A.P. and GRASP certification.

Of especial interest for the EU market is the Ethiopian company's supply of fresh organic herbs. The GreenPath Food portfolio includes parsley, rosemary, sage and lemongrass. In order to ensure the high quality of the herb products, continuous cooling of the products is important, for any interruption of the cooling chain would result in the goods being spoiled. To that end, GreenPath Food has equipped the smallholders in the infrastructurally weak →



Linda Mense, Expert Sourcing + Markets, Import Promotion Desk

»GreenPath Food is committed to expanding sustainable farming and to creating product and value chains in the rural regions of Ethiopia. GreenPath Food ensures that hundreds of farming families participate in our export promotion programme and are able to improve the income they earn from the sale of their produce.«

More information about Import Promotion Desk:



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Edgar Günther,
Managing Director,
ElbeFruit UG

»Together with GreenPath Food, we have a mission: We seek to link up smallholders to the global organic supply chain and, at the same time, to produce foods that support and enhance the natural environment rather than being a burden on it.«

regions with specially developed cooling systems, as well as establishing a cold chain with Ethiopian Airlines.

VEGETABLES IN PREMIUM QUALITY

Besides fresh herbs, GreenPath Food also produces high-quality vegetables such as fine and extra fine green beans, spring onions, snow and sugar snap peas. In addition to this, the company also offers the avocado varieties "Hass" and "Fuerte" as well as lesser known varieties such as "Ettinger", "Nabal" and "Pinkerton", all in EU-organic quality.



Thanks to IPD export promotion programme, GreenPath Food has been able to further improve its competitiveness. IPD has supported the Ethiopian company in certification processes and prepared it for the EU market by workshops and training courses. In 2017, IPD assisted the company to participate for the first time at Fruit Logistica fair in Berlin. In the same year, IPD invited European importers on a buying mission to Ethiopia and organised a visit to GreenPath Food for them. The Hamburg import company ElbeFruit also made use of the opportunity to get to know the Ethiopian exporter and to gain information on site on their products. This was intended as the start of a fruitful partnership for both companies. Further negotiations followed and first business deals were sealed at the 2018 Fruit Attraction fair in Madrid and the 2019 Fruit Logistica in Berlin, at both of which GreenPath Food successfully presented its product portfolio with support of IPD.

"Back then, I was won over by the commitment of the GreenPath Food team and their mission," Edgar Günther, managing director of ElbeFruit, recalls. "Right from that very first encounter, we made the decision to enter into cooperation with GreenPath Food. We are very grateful to IPD for having brought us together with GreenPath Food. That way, we have gained a reliable business partner."

COOPERATION WITH A WIN-WIN EFFECT

The cooperation between ElbeFruit and GreenPath Food demonstrates once again that IPD's win-win strategy does indeed pay off. ElbeFruit was able to close a supply gap thanks to its partnership with the Ethiopian exporter and, over and above that, to expand its product range with the addition of some highly promising niche products. For GreenPath Food, the cooperation with the German partner constitutes an important step towards further developing their company and translating the experience gained from this cooperation into the provision of customised product ideas for the EU market.



Ele Gower,
Marketing Manager,
GreenPath Food

»The IPD has paved the way to Europe for us. The partnership with ElbeFruit provides us with new opportunities to develop our products further and to extend our contacts on the EU market.«

BEST PROSPECTS

GreenPath Food continues to develop further. In the summer of 2019, the new solar-powered packing house went into operation. The cultivated acreage is being extended in order to increase the production volume. These are ideal conditions for GreenPath Food to continue to meet the quality requirements of customers in Europe and to access the international market.

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