



Success story

Dates from Tunisia

IPD supports Demeter producer in setting up lasting trade partnerships

Beni Ghreb is the first company in Tunisia to be certified for its organic and biodynamic dates. Initially, however, it proved impossible to obtain the price for Demeter-certified dates for the entire production. Beni Ghreb therefore applied for admission to the IPD programme with the aim of increasing sales of its products, especially to the organic sector in Europe. Since 2018, IPD has successfully liaised new business partners for Beni Ghreb.



Products

- Deglet Nour dates, whole and stoned
- Chopped dates
- Date syrup and paste

Certifications

- Demeter
- EU organic logo, Bio Suisse
- Fairtrade
- ISO 9001, ISO 22000
- IFS/BRC in process

Deglet Nour dates in Demeter quality

Beni Ghreb S.A.R.L. was founded in Hazoua in Tunisia in 2002. The “Groupement de Développement de l’Agriculture Biodynamique” cooperative produces dates in Demeter quality. The smallholder farmers deliver the dates to Beni Ghreb, where they are sorted, cleaned and dried in the company’s modern plant, and packed for exporting. The fact that the cooperative and Beni Ghreb work closely together ensures a stable income for the smallholders. At the same time, locating the processing plant in the Hazoua oasis in immediate proximity to the producers has created job opportunities for the local community.

Challenge



Fostering demand for certified products

As a company, Beni Ghreb already exported its dates to customers in the EU before being accepted into the IPD programme. However, only very few customers were willing to pay the higher price for the produce as organically or Demeter-certified goods. The special aim of the company’s cooperation with IPD was therefore to find new business partners who were also willing to honour the certification in financial terms.



Promotion



Matchmaking with an organic focus

IPD has supported the company since 2018 in the form of a specific matchmaking programme within which the prime focus has been on networking with European importers in the organic sector and with buyers of Demeter-quality goods.

Shortly after the start of the programme, company representatives from Beni Ghreb already took part in the IPD "Dried Fruits & Nuts" selling mission in Germany and the Netherlands, where they made their first valuable contacts to potential buyers. In both of the following years, 2019 and 2020, IPD organised successful participation for Beni Ghreb at BIOFACH – the world's leading trade fair for organic food in Nuremberg as well as at the International Green Week Berlin in 2019.

In addition to sales training sessions in advance of the trade fairs, IPD experts also trained the Beni Ghreb staff with regard to the challenges of the European organic market and the potential of corporate social responsibility (CSR) as well as the systematic marketing of CSR activities for the positioning of the company.

Effect



Successful cooperation between Beni Ghreb and IPD

Thanks to the IPD support, Beni Ghreb has undergone a very positive development over the past years. The customer base has been widened, especially to include as newly-gained trading partners companies who place great importance on certification and lasting business relations.

This sustainably secures the approximately 80 jobs that Beni Ghreb offers in the remote Hazoua region for the future. In addition to the 440 farming families, whose sales market is guaranteed by Beni Ghreb, the company is also working on training further farmers in the requirements for certification with the aim of increasing its production. Investments in logistics mean it is possible to react more flexibly to the challenges of the European market: Plans have been successfully expedited for additional storage capacities in the EU, from which smaller order quantities and goods samples can be sent directly.

More information about Beni Ghreb at: www.ecohazoua.org

Results



- Business transactions 
- Export volume 
- Investments in production 



Sadok Saidi
CEO of
Beni Ghreb SARL

»Thanks to the IPD programme, we were able to vastly increase the visibility of our company and our products. We are now recognised on the European market as a Demeter-certified partner. Summing up, you could say that our present strong position on the market is not even remotely comparable to our company's position prior to the IPD programme. The support given by IPD has paid off in more ways than one.«

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