

Edamame Agribusiness and Food Nutrition Seminar Learning Note

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Durban ICC

Given today's socioeconomically challenged local environment status, the demand for developmental and local agribusiness initiatives far exceeds supply. This document presents a review of lessons learned during the Edamame Agribusiness and Food Nutrition Seminar. Conceptualised in this lesson note are good practice insights from both local and international exemplary Edamame soybean agribusiness discussions and key highlights.

Key discussion areas:

Vegetable Soybean | Nutrition | Health Awareness | Small Scale Farming

1. KEY LESSONS LEARNED:

1.1 Background

A historical foundation gave informative learning's on the origin of soybean as a protein food that has been mainly in the diet of East Asian countries for more than 5000 years. Qiuying Zhang shared insights of planting and production practices from South and North China. Seasonal planting periods, seedbed preparation, intercropping, disease/pest control, types of recommended fertilizer and crop rotation were amongst lessons drawn from North and South China best practices. On a note that China is currently the largest production, consumption and export country of vegetable

soybean in the world, drawing lessons will undoubtedly put our locally grown, non-GMO protein food at an advantageous further prospering state.

Throughout the years there has been popularity and demand for soybean as a human food that has gained global recognition and consumption in many parts of the worlds. S. Shunmugasundaram detailed a yearly breakdown dating back from the 6th century BC counting down to the current global production of large seeded vegetable soybean.

1.2 Edamame Development Program

Central to the introduction of the agribusiness and food nutrition seminar was the acknowledgement of the success and progress of Edamame development program. Of particular acknowledgement was the growth, progress and a 'step-up' demonstrated in the reflections of the program's performance which showed the power of partnership and integration being at the heart of local economic development.

Shared positive outcomes of the program include agricultural development, community empowerment, employment opportunities in small scale farming, all greatly contributing in local capacity enhancement. Given the current production and demand of Edamame soybean presented by the program, suggestions of a call for integration with sister cities and neighbouring countries was amongst the suggestions of taking this industry even further. A need

emphasis made was that of eradicating ignorance through proactive promotion and awareness initiatives to educate and inform South Africans on health benefits of Edamame.

1.3 Health and Nutrition

Insights gained on the nutritional value revealed Edamame the 'super food' that contains energy, protein, various amino acids and low levels of fat and sugar. The above nutritional gains can be associated with 'green eating', which in factual terms decreases chances of chronic and life style diseases. Shared research indicated that western countries have high statistics of life-style diseases, further to this; Africa stands at a double risk of suffering from such diseases given the move from traditional African diet to western diet, Professor Walter Veith explained.

1.4 Site Visit

Key lessons captured from the site visit to the Edamame research farm in Marianhill Monastery (Pinetown):

- Processing facility safety systems and equipment to meet health standards and produce quality bean
- Categorisation of the tracking system in the processing phase, e.g. code RED=pre-washed beans, WHITE= skinned beans, ORANGE= rejected beans, and so forth
- The exhibition centre shared insights of how to grow Edamame, land selection, preparation, weed control, harvesting and benefits

- Ingredients and instructions of homemade organic pest solutions
- Recommended seedling, spacing and planting calendar guide for various vegetables

1.5 Conclusion

Food insecurity and unemployment remains amongst the greatest challenges facing rural communities. Developmental initiatives within small scale farming and agribusiness like Edamame development program are exceptional successes that resembles good outcomes from joint efforts in local economic development. The above brief presents good practices and lessons learned during the seminar.