

Aromatic Coffee



SNAPSHOT: SHOWCASING FOOD HEALTH & HYGIENE STANDARDS

Introduction

Quality control systems that provide minimum quality assurances are a pre-requisite for the production of high-quality consumer goods. As one of Sierra Leone's oldest coffee processors and the producer of one of the most popular beverages in country, Aromatic Coffee is well positioned to showcase its newly-launched safety and hygiene assurance system and to influence other businesses to follow suit.

Aromatic Coffee is one of the oldest and largest locally owned coffee companies in Sierra Leone. They buy coffee beans directly from about 300 small farmers in Kenema, Kono, Bo and Moyamba and clean, roast, process, and package the beans at their factory in Waterloo. Aromatic Coffee processed 46.6 MT in 2016 and 30 MT as of June 2017. Their coffee can be found in small packages at retail locations across Sierra Leone.

SOBA's Intervention

Together SOBA and Aromatic developed minimum quality standards, initiated a process to improve food and health safety at the factory, and established quality assurance mechanisms for Aromatic Coffee products.

With the help of Dr Philip Kanu, CEO of Centre for Development and Food Safety (CDFS), Aromatic staff completed a basic food safety and hygiene course, which included modules on personal and factory hygiene and the importance of food safety. The factory and company management also established strategic policies and targeted factory improvements.

Before this, the factory did not follow food safety policy or utilize a production flow that would prevent cross-contamination. Staff lacked basic personal hygiene, a prerequisite for food safety, and didn't understand behavioural linkages to the quality of the product.

Following the intervention, factory workers now have a clear understanding of their responsibility toward food safety and the quality of the products they are producing. Staff clean

factory equipment daily; cleaning the factory and often spraying for pests that could contaminate the product. A food safety policy is also in place.

Additionally, a production flow chart has been developed. The foundations have now been laid for the future development of a 'hazard analysis and critical control points' (HACCP) plan, a systematic preventative approach to food safety as well as improved ventilation. This will ensure the continual improvement of health and safety standards at Aromatic Coffee, improving the quality of all products produced.

Replication

SOBA and Dr Kanu have worked with a number of processed foods and consumer goods companies in Sierra Leone, helping them to raise quality standards – in some cases targeted to meet quality standards for European import. To date, 19 companies have benefitted from training and strategic guidance. Moreover, Dr Kanu has gone on to formally register and to launch his food and hygiene safety business. So far, he's attracted two new clients.

Before & After

SOBA took before and after pictures to showcase the changes that came about from the intervention. The photos can be viewed [here](#) or by going to: <http://sobasl.org/snapshot-aromatic-coffee-food-health-and-safety-intervention/>

SOBA has invested to improve food and consumer goods processing and trade activity since 2015. Here, SOBA has worked to improve customer orientation, marketing and sales tactics, processing and production practices, as well as sourcing practices and farmer engagement.

To learn more about the SOBA programme visit: sobasl.org
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