



ZIMTRADING

Post



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1 ZIMTRADE PREPARES FOR MIDDLE EAST NATURAL & ORGANIC EXPO DUBAI 2025

By Archford Mabuka

ZIMTRADE IS leading Zimbabwe's debut participation at the Middle East Natural and Organic Expo 2025, taking place from 17-19 November at the Dubai World Trade Centre in the United Arab Emirates.

ZimTrade is coordinating the participation of eight export-ready SMEs and large enterprises from across the natural and organic value chain.

These firms were selected for their readiness to export and the uniqueness of their products, with a focus on key categories such as organic food and beverages, herbal teas and health drinks, essential oils and natural cosmetics, as well as organic herbal remedies and wellness products.

This premier trade event, held under the theme "Redefining Clean and Sustainable Living", is the Middle East's largest platform dedicated to organic and natural products.

It brings together global suppliers, buyers, and health-conscious consumers, offering Zimbabwean exporters an exceptional opportunity to position their products in one of the fastest-growing niche markets worldwide.

Participation in the Expo aligns with Zimbabwe's strategy to diversify its exports and expand its presence in high-value international markets and complements Government's efforts to grow non-traditional exports and reinforces Zimbabwe's

commitment to green, value-added trade.

At the Expo, ZimTrade, together with participating companies will promote Zimbabwean natural and organic products in the UAE and wider GCC markets, creating export linkages that can lead to long-term distribution contracts for local producers.

The platform also offers an opportunity to present Zimbabwe's strengths in sustainable and organic production, while gathering valuable insights into consumer preferences, market standards, and emerging trends.

The initiative is designed to strengthen the visibility of Zimbabwe's natural products brand in the Middle East and position the country as a reliable supplier of premium, health-focused goods.

The mission is expected to go beyond generating orders, as it will build enduring partnerships that will anchor Zimbabwean products in the region. Consumer demand for natural and organic products has increased significantly worldwide, with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region leading the way in adopting healthier, more sustainable lifestyles.

The UAE, in particular, has become a hub for premium organic foods, beverages, cosmetics, and wellness products, making it a strategic entry point for Zimbabwean exporters.



2 ZIMTRADE, PARTNERS TO HOST AFRICA-NORDIC BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE

ZIMTRADE, AND partners including the Zimbabwe Investment and Development Agency (ZIDA), the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries (CZI), the CEO Africa Roundtable, the Zimbabwe National Chamber of Commerce (ZNCC), and the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA), will host the Africa-Nordic Business Roundtable from 2-3 October 2025 at Elephant Hills, Victoria Falls.

The Business Roundtable, organised on the sidelines of the 22nd Africa-Nordic Foreign Ministers Meeting, presents a rare and strategic opportunity for local businesses to engage directly with Nordic companies seeking partnerships across Africa.

The meeting will provide a high-level platform for African and Nordic executives to share experiences, explore opportunities, and design solutions for unlocking growth through industrialisation, digital transformation, and sustainable business models.

Delegates will gain insights into strategies for de-risking business environments while strengthening cross-border trade and investment linkages.

Beyond immediate business opportunities, the Roundtable reflects a new paradigm in Africa - Nordic relations.

Whereas the Nordic region traditionally focused on development aid, there has been a marked shift

in recent years towards mutually beneficial trade and investment partnerships.

Finland's 2021 Africa strategy explicitly aims to double trade with African countries by 2030, while Denmark is expanding its diplomatic presence on the continent to facilitate investments in green technology and sustainable infrastructure.

Zimbabwe has emerged as a key focus under this strategy, with particular interest in horticulture, aquaculture, agricultural inputs and machinery, agricultural services, biomass energy, solar, manufacturing, and processed foods.

The country's strategic location as a gateway to southern Africa has further heightened investor interest, positioning Zimbabwe as a central hub for trade and industrial cooperation.

The programme will also spotlight young innovators from both Africa and the Nordic region who are successfully scaling impactful ventures, offering inspiration and practical lessons for driving sustainable growth.

ZimTrade encourages local companies to register for this landmark event, which provides an unprecedented opportunity to showcase Zimbabwe's strengths on a global stage.



3 LOCAL EXPORTERS EYE BIG AT WINDHOEK FAIR

By Kudakwashe Tirivavi

ZimTrade is facilitating the participation of local companies, for the second consecutive time at the Windhoek Agricultural and Livestock Show (WALS), running from 30 September to 4 October 2025.

The Show remains one of Namibia's largest exhibitions, attracting more than 100,000 visitors annually, including buyers, government representatives, farmers, and consumers from across the region.

Its unique combination of trade exhibition, cultural showcase, and livestock displays makes it an essential platform for countries seeking to access the Namibian market and wider Southern African region.

Zimbabwe's participation last year marked its 4th coordinated presence at WALS in recent years.

The pavilion attracted considerable foot traffic last year and generated positive interest in the quality of Zimbabwean products.

Exhibitors secured promising leads, held direct engagements with Namibian retailers, and established distribution contacts.

The show also provided invaluable market intelligence that informed this year's strategy, highlighting sectors where Namibia's import demand was high and where Zimbabwe could realistically

supply competitively.

That foundation has set the stage for a stronger and more targeted participation in 2025.

What makes WALS unique is not only the sheer size of the audience but also its regional reach.

The show attracts buyers and businesses from Namibia as well as neighbouring Angola, Botswana, and South Africa.

This provides Zimbabwean exhibitors with a platform to access not just one market but several.

With ZimTrade coordinating business-to-business meetings and facilitating introductions to key distributors, the expectation is that this year's participation will move beyond raising awareness to closing tangible deals and building long-term trade partnerships.

This year's delegation will include thirteen companies spanning leather and footwear, agri-processing, horticultural inputs, poultry, beverages, and lifestyle products.

Compared to last year, which had fewer exhibitors and a more exploratory focus, this year's group is more diverse and sector-specific.

Leather producers from Bulawayo and Harare are expected to build on last year's visibility by negotiating concrete supply agreements in a market where imports of leather goods continue to grow.

Food and beverage companies specialising in honey, fruit spreads, ice cream, and gin will showcase heritage-based products that resonate with Namibia's demand for differentiated, high-quality goods.

In agriculture, poultry producers and hydroponics specialists will introduce technologies and livestock inputs that respond to Namibia's emphasis on food security and sustainable farming practices.

Trade statistics from Trade Map reveal that Namibia imported goods worth US\$8,8 billion in 2024, with processed foods, beverages, and agricultural equipment featuring prominently.

Zimbabwe's exports to Namibia in the same year were still modest in value terms, but the alignment between Namibia's import profile and Zimbabwe's current export offerings highlights clear potential.

For example, imports of processed foods and beverages exceeded US\$500 million, yet Zimbabwe's footprint in that category remains small.

By positioning honey, fruit spreads, and specialty beverages through WALS, Zimbabwean SMEs have the chance to capture a share of this demand.

Similarly, the growing imports of horticultural inputs create a pathway for hydroponic solutions to secure buyers.



4 LESSONS FOR ZIMBABWEAN COMPANIES FROM MALAYSIA

By Runyararo Mukahanana

THE RECENT participation of Zimbabwe at the 20th Malaysia International Halal Showcase (MIHAS), held from 17-20 September, has positioned the country as a reliable supplier of value-added products, including processed foods.

The showcase also provided participating companies with an opportunity to learn from emerging and leading trends in the halal market.

This exposure is expected to enhance the production of goods destined for Malaysia, ensuring that Zimbabwean products meet the evolving expectations of international consumers.

Zimbabwe's presence at MIHAS was a strategic statement of intent, designed to anchor its agro-food and value-added industries in a lucrative global halal economy.

The engagement also marked a crucial step toward building a robust domestic halal ecosystem capable of meeting the strict standards demanded by international buyers.

MIHAS is the world's premier trade platform for halal goods and services, serving as a critical hub for deal-making that connects global halal buyers and suppliers.

The 2025 edition of MIHAS attracted a diverse

array of government bodies, certification agencies, buyers, and service providers from various sectors, including food, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, finance, tourism, and fashion.

Led by ZimTrade, the Zimbabwean delegation showcased a compelling selection of natural, agricultural, and processed goods, including honey, horticultural exports like blueberries, herbal products, teas, and popular local beverage brands.

Participating companies from Zimbabwe engaged in business-matching sessions, sample distribution, and buyer meetings aimed at converting interest into tangible orders.

A consistent takeaway from the event was the central role of halal certification and traceability in securing high-value contracts.

Buyers at MIHAS require more than just a natural product; they demand verifiable compliance and assurance that production, processing, storage, and packaging adhere to accepted halal standards.

While many Zimbabwean producers already follow good agricultural and manufacturing practices (GAP/GMP), a recurring recommendation from buyers was to build on this foundation by obtaining internationally recognized halal certification and implementing transparent supply-chain documentation.

To effectively translate the leads from MIHAS into a sustainable market presence, participating countries were encouraged to take several practical steps.

There is need to streamline halal certification pathways by collaborating with local and international accredited certifiers to establish clear and affordable routes for SMEs.

Public-private partnerships can play a crucial role by subsidising certification for export-ready firms.

Furthermore, strengthening traceability and quality systems is paramount.

This involves encouraging the adoption of basic GMP/GAP, robust packaging, and documentation for batch records and cold-chain management, especially for perishable exports.

Encouraging clustering and value-addition, for example, by standardising honey jars or creating ready-to-brew tea sachets, will also help firms command higher margins.

A fully functioning halal ecosystem, with certification, cluster services, and digital market access, offers multiple benefits, including diversified exports, higher unit prices for certified goods, job creation in rural processing, and enhanced resilience through broader market access.



5 ZIMTRADE HOSTS THE MANICALAND BUSINESS MARKET ACTORS SYMPOSIUM

By Dorcas Makotore

ZIMTRADE, in partnership with Mercy Corps, hosted the Manicaland Business Market Actors Symposium from 3-4 September 2025 in Mutare.

The symposium was organised to foster dialogue across different sectors in recognition of the importance of collaboration in driving economic outcomes.

Running under the theme “Strengthening Resilient Market Systems for Women and Women-led Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through Strategic Public-Private Partnerships,” the event brought together 150 participants, including government officials, private sector representatives, development partners and women and youth led enterprises.

It created a platform for cross-sector dialogue on innovative ways to empower women-led businesses.

Over the two days, the symposium allowed market actors to showcase best practices while also offering an environment for participants to learn from diverse experiences and adapt successful approaches to their own contexts.

Particular attention was given to sectors such as waste management, agro-processing, small-scale

manufacturing, renewable energy, and access to finance, areas where women play an essential role both as service providers and as clients.

The business symposium featured thematic sessions that addressed critical aspects of enterprise growth and competitiveness.

During its presentation at the symposium, ZimTrade highlighted the vast opportunities available across regional and global markets.

The presentation underscored the importance of export readiness, with emphasis placed on areas such as organisational resources, product quality and packaging, access to market information, financing and logistics, as well as production capacity for exports.

Participants were encouraged to take advantage of existing trade blocs to which Zimbabwe is a signatory, as these provide easier access to new markets.

Value addition was also stressed as a critical pathway for competitiveness, particularly for enterprises in agro-processing and manufacturing.

On MSME formalization, experts highlighted that while Zimbabwe’s MSMEs contribute greatly to GDP, with 60 percent being women-owned, their growth is hindered by challenges in registration, compliance, and certification, all of which are prerequisites for accessing finance and broader markets.

Government and key stakeholders reaffirmed their commitment to creating an enabling environment for MSMEs.

Presentations by stakeholders such as the Standards Association of Zimbabwe (SAZ), the Ministry of Women Affairs, and the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA) further deepened the dialogue.

SAZ emphasised the importance of certification in reducing trade barriers and enhancing competitiveness, while outlining the step-by-step certification process.

The Ministry of Women Affairs clarified pathways to formalisation, explaining the structures available to MSMEs, including cooperatives and private business corporations, while also acknowledging the need for reforms to reduce bureaucracy and costs.

ZIMRA addressed taxation for MSMEs, highlighting the advantages of business registration, proper recordkeeping, and compliance with statutory obligations, while stressing that these steps also enhance business credibility and client trust.

As the symposium concluded, participants highlighted the importance of sustained collaboration across sectors in strengthening market systems.



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6 ZIMTRADE ADVANCES AGRICULTURAL SERVICES EXPORT READINESS

By Maxmillan Chikwati

ZimTrade facilitated the Agricultural Services Export Engagement on 7 August 2025 at Sabre Business World, bringing together entrepreneurs in the agricultural services sector under one platform.

The engagement focused on critical issues necessary for market entry such as intellectual property management, strategies for entering regional markets, and digitisation for export excellence.

This initiative reflects a strategic shift in ZimTrade's export development work by deliberately supporting service-based enterprises alongside traditional product exporters.

The engagement laid the groundwork for increased earnings, stronger market presence, and a diversified export portfolio driven by agricultural services.

The engagement attracted representatives from notable agricultural service enterprises, including Agri Rocket, Afrostain, Vita Grow, Free Trader, Hurudza AI, and Talazo Agritech.

The interactive components included group exercises analysing IP portfolio values and practical discussions of contract clauses.

Participants particularly welcomed real-world case studies and requested additional examples of dispute resolution methods, confidentiality protections, and quality control clauses in distribution agreements.

Three core export readiness pillars were covered in the program through specialised sessions led by professionals in the fields.

Market entry strategies and regional opportunities

The market entry session focused on practical strategies for penetrating regional markets, with particular emphasis on Zambian opportunities.

The session highlighted the key role of extensive market research, including GDP analysis, demographic features, commodity trends, and patterns of purchasing behavior.

Participants realised that successful market entry calls for understanding the cultural environment, compliance laws, and developing a close network with business partners, embassies, and government attachés.

The session focused on major possibilities for Zimbabwean agricultural service providers to access regional markets as consortia, exploiting collective strengths to overcome individual capacity constraints.

To mitigate export risks, key recommendations included attending critical calendar events, establishing connections with regulatory agencies, and conducting both desktop and field research.

Digital transformation and global competitiveness

Digital services session introduced participants to the KDG (Know, Design, and Grow) Model of digital transformation, which focuses on technology product and service innovation while ensuring regional and global scalability.



A new concept introduced was the creation of “born global” companies, small to medium-sized agricultural service organisations aimed at achieving regional market penetration within two years of their formation.

This approach acknowledges that digital technology can enable rapid worldwide expansion when used appropriately from the outset of a business, rather than as an afterthought.

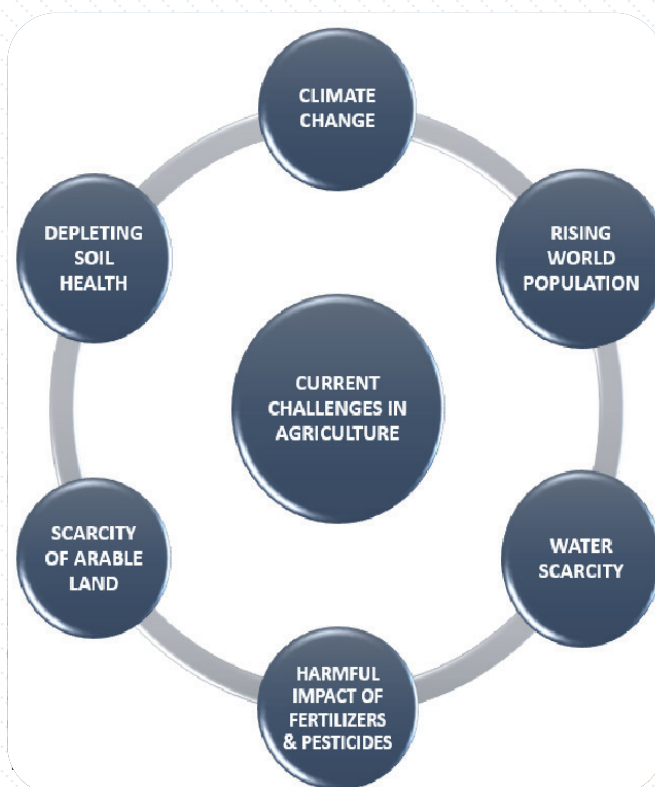
Intellectual property management in agricultural services

The intellectual property session touched on trademark registration processes, as well as key

contract clauses for seed licensing agreements, distribution contracts, and research collaborations.

Participants learnt how to navigate IP legislation in various export markets and how AI-generated content ownership affects agricultural software applications.

The engagement addressed emerging challenges in agricultural IP management, including protecting agrarian data, managing open-source software implications, and balancing transparency requirements with trade secret protection.



Participants developed action plans that encompassed IP audits, implementation of non-disclosure agreements, scheduling of registration timelines, and establishment of internal IP management protocols..



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7 LEVERAGING REGIONAL BLOCS: A STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE FOR ZIMBABWEAN EXPORTERS

By Karen Bvurere (Opinion)

ZIMBABWE, BEING a land-linked nation, possesses significant untapped potential for its exporters.

While geographical constraints like limited direct port access present challenges, the country's membership in key regional trading blocs such as the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), provides a powerful strategic advantage.

These blocs are more than just associations, they are critical platforms that offer preferential trade terms, simplify customs procedures, and provide access to vast regional markets, all of which are essential for enhancing Zimbabwe's export competitiveness.

Using regional blocs allows businesses to effectively circumvent logistical and tariff hurdles.

COMESA and SADC facilitate smoother and more cost-effective access to ports in neighbouring countries like Mozambique and South Africa through agreed-upon protocols.

The preferential tariff treatment and simplified

customs procedures under these blocs substantially lower the overall cost of doing business, giving Zimbabwean exporters a distinct edge over their non-member counterparts.

The presence of simplified cross-border trade regimes and legal protections further encourages SMEs to venture into export markets, knowing their goods and investments are protected. COMESA, a 21-member trading bloc, is designed to foster economic integration by removing trade barriers.

For Zimbabwean exporters, this translates into a gateway to a regional market of over 540 million people with a substantial trade value.

The most significant benefit is the Free Trade Area (FTA), where goods originating from member states, including Zimbabwe, are exempt from tariffs.

This zero-tariff status makes Zimbabwean products more competitive and appealing to buyers across the bloc.

Furthermore, the COMESA Simplified Trade Regime (STR) is a game-changer for small-scale traders and SMEs.

It streamlines customs clearance and reduces the administrative burden for goods valued under US\$2,000, effectively lowering the barrier to entry into the export market.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) offers similar, yet distinct, benefits for Zimbabwean exporters.

The SADC Free Trade Area eliminates tariffs on approximately 85 percent of products among member states.

This is a key element that helps lower export costs and significantly improves the competitiveness of Zimbabwean goods.

Beyond tariff reductions, SADC's focus on regional cooperation is crucial for a landlocked country.

It supports infrastructure development and promotes initiatives like one-stop border posts, which are vital for reducing logistical delays and costs at border crossings.

SADC membership also provides Zimbabwe with strategic access to economically stronger neighbors, particularly South Africa.

This, combined with existing bilateral agreements, amplifies the opportunities available for

local companies looking to expand their footprint. To fully realise the benefits of these trading blocs, Zimbabwean companies must take proactive steps.

Firstly, it is crucial to improve awareness and knowledge of the specific trade benefits and compliance requirements of COMESA and SADC.

Secondly, businesses should actively utilize the simplified trade regimes for their small-scale exports to minimize costs and administrative burdens.

Collaborating with national trade promotion bodies like ZimTrade is a must for gaining market intelligence and receiving capacity-building support.

Furthermore, investing in product quality and standards is essential to meet the diverse requirements of regional and international markets.

Finally, engaging in regional infrastructure projects and actively exploring bilateral and multilateral agreements within these blocs will provide further avenues for tariff preferences and investment incentives.

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8 UNLOCKING THE CHINA MARKET FOR ZIMBABWE'S FRESH PRODUCE

By Gugulethu Mpofu (Opinion)

ENCOURAGING SIGNALS are emerging from China for Zimbabwe's exporters of horticultural produce.

This came out during the Seminar on the Establishment on the Entire Agricultural Chain for Zimbabwe, held from 7-21 August 2025 in Beijing, China.

The seminar revealed that Zimbabwe's produce is well-positioned to meet the changing demands of Asia's most dynamic food market.

China's appetite for fresh, high-quality produce is growing rapidly.

Rising disposable incomes and a health-conscious urban middle class are driving demand for fruits such as citrus, avocados, and blueberries, as well as premium nuts like macadamias and cut flowers. Citrus fruits remain household staples, avocados are gaining prominence as a healthy lifestyle product, and blueberries, once a niche fruit, are now part of the mainstream.

Macadamia nuts, already valued as a luxury product in Asia, are benefiting from growing consumer interest in healthy snacking options.

Meanwhile, cut flowers are experiencing a surge in sales as more households invest in ornamentals and special occasions.

Import data confirms that demand across these categories continues to rise, providing a strong case for Zimbabwean exporters to strengthen their presence.

Zimbabwe is fortunate to have a firm base to build upon.

Export protocols are already established for citrus, blueberries, and avocados providing growers with formal access to China's markets.

This is a crucial enabler, but access alone is not enough.

Exporters need to match the scale, consistency, and quality demanded by Chinese buyers.

ZimTrade has been working with producers to support this journey, promoting compliance with international standards, improving supply chains, and helping exporters understand evolving consumer expectations.

Success in China hinges on meeting expectations at every stage of the value chain.

Buyers place a premium on reliability and produce must be consistent in appearance, with fruit uniform in size and colour.

Traceability is another major factor, with consumers and retailers alike demanding transparency on sourcing and farming practices.

Food safety remains non-negotiable, with strict adherence to maximum residue limits and pest-free standards.

At the consumer level, packaging is becoming an important differentiator, influencing not just how produce looks on the shelf but also how it reflects the brand behind it.

Alongside this, cold-chain logistics are critical to ensure that Zimbabwean produce arrives fresh and maintains its quality in highly competitive retail environments.

This means that investment in packhouses, cold storage facilities, and efficient transportation networks must remain a top priority.

Partnerships can help accelerate this process, whether through technical exchanges, infrastructure collaboration, or joint ventures.

Chinese stakeholders have expressed interest in such arrangements, and long-term initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative may provide pathways to streamline logistics and improve access to ports and customs facilities.

While horticulture remains at the centre of Zimbabwe's immediate opportunity, China's most substantial import dependence lies in oils and oil crops

. Products such as soybeans and edible oils account for a significant share of agricultural imports.

For Zimbabwe, this signals a potential long-term growth path.

While fresh produce such as citrus and berries can deliver early wins and market visibility, the volumes that come from oil crops could, in time, complement horticultural exports and provide the scale that builds a stronger, more resilient export base.

Even macadamias, which straddle both the horticulture and oil segments, may find expanded opportunities in value-added oil markets as demand grows.

This is not to suggest that Zimbabwe shifts its focus away from fresh produce.

On the contrary, citrus, avocados, blueberries, and macadamias already have a proven foothold in China.

But planning means recognising that volume will be key, and the edible oil segment is where China's reliance on imports is most entrenched.

Diversification into this space over the longer term, whether through crop expansion, processing, or niche oils linked to horticulture could give Zimbabwean exporters both scale and resilience.

For now, however, the immediate task is straight-forward.

Exporters must consolidate the progress made in citrus and expand strongly into avocados, blueberries, and macadamias under the existing protocols.

Building compliance systems, modernising infrastructure, and investing in branding will allow Zimbabwe to stand out in a crowded marketplace.

At the same time, attention should be given to laying the foundation for larger-scale exports by monitoring China's edible oil trends and aligning future production strategies accordingly.



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9 STEP-BY-STEP TO EXPORTING FRESH PRODUCE

Fresh produce!

Yes, this is one of the low hanging fruits for local exporters, particularly smallholder farmers whose participation in international markets has been increasing over the past few years.

Zimbabwe is home to good soils and climatic conditions conducive for growing an array of produces that are usually competitive in international markets.

These conditions make it easy to grow exports in traditional and non-traditional markets.

The interest in export markets has been growing, with some farmers moving towards horticultural produces such as peas, fine beans, and blue berries.

For some farmers who are considering export markets, the question is always, “where do I start?”

Access to reliable information, capacity development and market linkages are some of the critical areas for consideration.

Further to this, documentation and certification are also critical processes as they form some of the initial basis for market penetration.

Decision and market research

When deciding about which product to venture into, it is important to consider several factors, such as capacity to meet and satisfy market requirements.

A thorough research is required before a decision is made and local farmers can utilise a Guide to Export Market Research, prepared by ZimTrade – the national trade development and promotion organisation – which is available on its website.

Export market research is the process of gathering and evaluating information in a target foreign market with the objective of identifying market opportunities and constraints.

Key areas to note include capacity to produce required amount, consistency in supply, availability of buyers, standards certification and associated costs, such as cold chain facilities and air freight.

Regardless of the market, some of the expectations that cut across all buyers is the ability for a manufacturer or exporter to constantly supply the agreed quantities, in the exact specifications and at the right prices.

So, without capacity to meet market requirements, it is always advised that an export take time to develop their capacity, working closely with ZimTrade and its regional and international partners.

Documentation

When exporting fresh produce, the requirement is that the exporter should register with Agriculture Marketing Authority (AMA), which is the national authority that regulates the marketing of agricultural products in Zimbabwe.

For registration with AMA, which is done annually, there are two types of registration and these are:

1. Agro-producer for actual farmer who would like to export
2. Agro-dealer for merchants who would be exporting fresh produce

Next step is to apply for an export permit with the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement.

The permit is valid for a specific product, maximum quantity, and time.

For fresh produce export, the requirement is also to attain a phytosanitary certificate issued by Plant Quarantine Services.

Phytosanitary requirements ensure control of plant diseases and they are specified by the importing country.

For local farmers, the requirements are normally specified in the import permit and it is important to coordinate well with the buyer before exporting as well as undertake necessary researches on the product.

To improve on accessibility, the phytosanitary certificates can be obtained from the Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate and Rural Resettlement under one roof, and plans are to decentralise the service.

Once requirements are met, this will also protect the image of the country and other exporters from the entire sector, who will risk blacklisting if exported produces are found to have above permissible residual levels.

Another important documentation process is completion of Currency/Customs Declaration Form (CD1) form at any commercial bank of choice.

This is an exchange control requirement with the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ), which specifies the value of the consignment.

Once CD1 forms are ready, exporters need to process their Bill of Entry (Form 21) with Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA) and this is done through clearing agents or an inhouse clearing

system that should be connected to ZIMRA's Asycuda system.

The Bill of Entry specifies the product, quantity, value to be exported, transport and port of exit to be used in the export process.

Although documentation processes might seem a burden, most of them are put in place to protect other players from the sector as well as ensuring that necessary revenue is collected.

ZimTrade is also engaging authorities and related institutions to ensure that the documentation process is streamlined, making it easy for exporters to obtain all necessary permits in short period of time.

One of the proposals put forward is the development of a one stop electronic window for exporters, which will reduce the time and resources required to obtain permits.

Fresh produce exporters should also consider registration with regional bilateral and multilateral trade agreements that Zimbabwe is part of so that they enjoy exporting duty free or at a preferential rate.



Available trade agreements include COMESA, SADC, Zimbabwe-Malawi Trade Agreement, Zimbabwe-Botswana Trade Agreement, Zimbabwe-Mozambique Trade Agreement, Zimbabwe-South Africa Trade Agreement and Zimbabwe-Namibia Trade Agreement, ESA-UK Economic Partnership Agreement and ESA-EU Economic Partnership Agreement.

ZimTrade also assist local farm produce exporters to register for any of the existing trade agreements through ZIMRA.

A certificate of origin signed by the exporter or manufacturer of the goods and duly authenticated by ZIMRA should be produced for exporters to benefit from the trade agreements.

For Preferential Tariffs, Certificate of Origin that are required include:

1. EUR1 Movement Certificate - for goods being exported to the European Union countries
2. GSP (Generalised System of Preferences) Certificate Form A - for export to countries that offer tariff preferences

3. Certificate of origin for export to countries which have ratified the COMESA Free Trade Area
4. Certificate of origin for export to countries which have ratified the SADC Trade Protocol
5. Form 18 for export to Malawi
6. Form CE59 for export to Botswana
7. Form CE59 for export to Namibia
8. Zimbabwe/Mozambique Certificate of Origin for export to Mozambique
9. Form DA 59 for export to South Africa

All Certificates of Origin can be obtained at ZimTrade's offices in Harare or Bulawayo after completing a once-off registration with ZIMRA for that particular trade agreement.

For small-scale traders, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa offers the Simplified Trade Regime (STR) to help the small trader to benefit from the preferential rates enjoyed by the commercial trader when importing or exporting goods within COMESA member states.

Currently the regime is operational between Zimbabwe and Zambia, and Zimbabwe and Malawi and goods traded under the regime enjoy duty free status.

This certificate is issued at the border by the customs officer and is for consignments of US\$1,000 or less.

Certification

Some markets especially the European and Middle Eastern markets require the producer of fresh produce to have certification such as the Global gap, EcoCert, FairTrade and Rainforest Alliance, among others.

On this, there might be a need to engage a resource person specialised in the certification schemes or food safety standards required by your export market for the certification process involved.

ZimTrade recently held a webinar on how to export fresh produce to Sweden in conjunction with Open Trade Gate Sweden who also emphasized the need for one to be quality certified should they wish to export to Sweden.

Packaging

One of the critical aspects in exporting is packaging.

Packaging should be able to communicate brand status and be in conformity to the destination market requirements.

It is also critical to note that several countries have packaging requirements that should be adhered to, and it is important for an exporter of fresh produce to ascertain packaging of the final product.

Some markets are moving towards bio-degradable packaging as it is environmentally friendly.

To assist exporters in choosing the right packaging, ZimTrade recently launched in the ZimPackaging portal (www.zimpackaging.co.zw).

Transportation

Fresh produce harvest such as peas requires a cold chain management and the producer of such should be prepared to invest in cold room facilities.

Mode of transport should also consider the life span of the product.

Current exporters of peas to Europe are utilising cargo airlines and these have been making it easier to cut down on delivery time, which is important for most produces.



However, products such as sweet potatoes may need to be ferried through sea for long distance due to bulkiness.

These costs should be thoroughly examined, and all options explored for one to achieve competitiveness in pricing.

Feedback and after-sale support

It is also important for the exporter to attain feedback from buyers and try to see areas of improvement and this should be a continuous process as one tries to achieve the highest quality standard and customer satisfaction

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