

ZIMTRADING

Post



TOP STORIES

- ▶ LOCAL COMPANIES EYE NEW MARKETS AT CHINA IMPORT EXPO
- ▶ ZIMBABWE SHOWCASES GROWING SERVICES SECTOR AT GLOBAL EXPO BOTSWANA 2025
- ▶ HOW ZIMTRADE IS HELPING A CHIVI ARTISAN REACH THE WORLD

OCTOBER
2025



1 LOCAL COMPANIES EYE **NEW MARKETS AT CHINA IMPORT EXPO**

By Kupakwashe Midzi

ZIMBABWEAN COMPANIES are set to exhibit at the forthcoming China International Import Expo (CIIE), showcasing the country's growing economic diversity and capacity for value-added exports.

The participation is organised by ZimTrade, the national trade development and export promotion organisation.

Sixteen companies drawn from horticulture, tobacco, heritage-based foods and oils, leather, arts and crafts, and e-commerce will feature under the Zimbabwe National Pavilion.

The presence of these firms reflects a deliberate effort to strengthen the country's export base and to connect local producers with international buyers.

Exhibiting firms will engage directly with buyers, distributors, and investors, promoting quality products that reflect Zimbabwe's natural and cultural endowments.

The event will also provide an opportunity to

promote investment in manufacturing and processing industries linked to the export sector.

The Zimbabwe National Pavilion will carry a contemporary design that integrates cultural identity with modern trade presentation.

This approach aims to project the country as a competitive and innovative trading partner within the global marketplace.

ZimTrade Chief Executive Officer, Mr Allan Majuru said participation at the CIIE provides an important opportunity to deepen trade with China.

"CIIE is a global platform that allows us to showcase the best of Zimbabwe, from our heritage-based products to our forward-looking industries.

"We are here to tell the world that Zimbabwe is open for business."

Mr Majuru noted that increased exposure at such a high-profile event will help raise awareness of Zimbabwean products and attract sustainable buyers.

"Participation at this level gives our exporters

direct access to buyers who make decisions for large retail chains and distributors.

“The goal is to secure orders during the expo, and to establish trade partnerships that will grow over time.”

He also underscored the broader impact of Zimbabwe’s participation on national export development.

“Every exhibition of this nature builds confidence in Zimbabwe as a reliable trading partner.

“It opens the door for value-added products, encourages investment in processing industries, and creates opportunities for employment across the value chain,” he said.

China has emerged as one of Zimbabwe’s most important trading partners and is now the country’s third-largest export destination.

Figures show exports to China reached US\$2,44 billion in 2024, up from US\$766 million in 2015, marking a 217.9 percent increase over the past decade.

This strong growth highlights the potential for further cooperation in trade, and technology

exchange.

Zimbabwe has also made steady progress in opening agricultural markets through bilateral protocols with China.

The Citrus Protocol, signed in 2022, led to the first exports valued at US\$469 000 in 2023.

The Avocado Protocol, concluded in 2024, is expected to support shipments in the coming export seasons.

The Blueberry Protocol, signed this year, is anticipated to enable pilot exports from 2026.

Negotiations are continuing for additional commodities such as sesame seeds, chillies, and pecan nuts.

These initiatives aim to expand agricultural exports, reduce informal trade leakages, and improve returns for local farmers.

ZimTrade has been preparing participating companies through capacity-building programmes on export readiness, packaging, and compliance with international standards.

The intention is to ensure sustained export growth beyond the duration of the exhibition.





2 ZIMBABWEAN COMPANIES TO SHOWCASE AT DUBAI'S NATURAL AND ORGANIC EXPO 2025

By Archford Mabuka

ZIMTRADE IS facilitating participation of Zimbabwean exporters at the Middle East Natural and Organic Expo 2025, which will take place from 17 to 19 November at the Dubai World Trade Centre in the United Arab Emirates.

The event, to be held under the theme “Redefining Clean and Sustainable Living,” is recognised as the region’s largest platform for organic and natural products and attracts suppliers, buyers, and consumers from around the world.

Participation at the Expo will strengthen Zimbabwe’s trade presence in the Asian and Middle Eastern markets, which have become key growth frontiers for global exports.

These regions are witnessing rapid population growth, rising disposable incomes, and a growing appetite for healthy and environmentally friendly products.

For Zimbabwe, participation in this Expo provides a unique gateway into Asia’s vast consumer base, where demand for premium organic foods, herbal products, and natural cosmetics continues to expand.

Access to the Asian market is increasingly important for Zimbabwe’s economic diversification.

As traditional export destinations become more

competitive, new opportunities in Asia offer local producers a chance to establish stable export channels and earn foreign currency.

The event will also allow Zimbabwean firms to connect directly with Asian and Middle Eastern distributors, retailers, and investors, creating opportunities for sustainable trade partnerships and market linkages.

Further to this, the Expo will enable participating businesses to gather vital information on consumer trends, packaging requirements, and certification standards in the Asian market.

This knowledge will help Zimbabwean companies refine their export strategies, tailor their products to meet international expectations, and enhance competitiveness in global value chains.

Their participation will showcase Zimbabwe’s commitment to sustainability and ethical production, reinforcing its image as a trusted supplier of authentic, high-value goods.

The Middle East Natural and Organic Expo 2025 forms part of ZimTrade’s broader effort to position Zimbabwe as a significant player in emerging markets.

Through this Expo, ZimTrade is promoting the country’s capacity to supply high-quality natural products including food and beverages, herbal teas, essential oils, natural cosmetics, and wellness items.

As Asia continues to drive global demand for natural and organic products, Zimbabwe’s involvement in this event is expected to deepen trade relations, attract investment, and contribute to sustained export growth across the region.





3 ZIMBABWE DEBUTS AT GLOBAL FRUIT ATTRACTION

By Tatenda Machirori

ZIMBABWE PARTICIPATED for the first time at the Fruit Attraction Show 2025 in Madrid, Spain, one of the world's leading fruit and vegetable trade fairs.

The country's presence, coordinated by ZimTrade and the International Trade Centre, supported by United Kingdom's Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, is part of efforts to strengthen horticultural exports and enhance market access in Europe.

The exhibition provided an opportunity for local producers and exporters to engage directly with buyers, distributors, and investors from across the globe.

Consistent engagement in major international trade platforms helps local businesses identify new opportunities while strengthening Zimbabwe's image as a reliable source of high-quality, sustainably produced horticultural products.

Zimbabwe's stand featured a variety of high-quality produce including avocados, blueberries, peas, asparagus, macadamia nuts, and chillies, which drew consistent interest from visitors throughout the three-day event.

Participating companies engaged in a series of business-to-business meetings during the exhibition, generating leads for potential trade partnerships and investment.

The event also created opportunities for networking with potential partners in logistics, certification, and technology services.

Discussions focused on improving logistics, packaging, and quality standards to ensure Zimbabwe's produce remains competitive and meets international market requirements.

These partnerships are expected to improve the country's export readiness by addressing key challenges such as cold-chain infrastructure, post-harvest handling, and access to modern production inputs.

Participants also attended technical sessions that covered developments in innovation and sustainability, including the use of artificial intelligence in grading, automated harvesting systems, and traceability technologies.

Such exposure is expected to assist local exporters in upgrading their production systems and aligning operations with global best practices.

The Fruit Attraction Show is regarded as one of the most important events on the global horticultural calendar.

It attracts more than 90 000 participants from over 140 countries, including buyers from major European retail chains and importers from emerging markets in the Middle East and Asia.

Zimbabwe's participation placed the country alongside leading horticultural producers such as Kenya, South Africa, and Morocco, providing valuable benchmarking opportunities and access to the latest trends in production, marketing, and export compliance.

For Zimbabwe, the exhibition is a strategic platform for advancing the national export agenda under Vision 2030.



Increased participation in such events contributes to the Government's goal of expanding the horticultural export base and supports initiatives under the Horticulture Recovery and Growth Plan, which emphasises market development, value addition, and competitiveness.

Stakeholders in the sector view the Madrid exhibition as a practical step toward integrating Zimbabwe more deeply into global horticultural value chains.



4 GLOBAL EXPO BOTSWANA 2025 SPOTLIGHTS ZIMBABWE'S SERVICES SECTOR

By Nozipho Maphala

ZIMBABWEAN COMPANIES made a strong impression at the Global Expo 2025 held in Gaborone, Botswana, from October 8 to 11.

The exhibition highlighted the country's growing capabilities in service exports, an area that is fast emerging as a key pillar of Zimbabwe's trade diversification efforts.

The national participation, coordinated by ZimTrade, featured a mix of enterprises from manufacturing, horticulture, and fast-moving consumer goods.

However, the most notable trend at this year's event was the strong presence of Zimbabwean firms offering technology-based and specialised business services.

These included companies involved in agri-tech, software development, and business consulting, sectors that are increasingly defining the country's competitiveness in the region.

The shift toward service exports reflects a growing recognition of their ability to overcome traditional trade challenges, particularly those linked to logistics and transport costs.

Unlike physical products, services can be delivered across borders with minimal infrastructure constraints, allowing for scalability and faster market entry.

At the Zimbabwe Pavilion, several firms showcased innovative solutions designed to improve agricultural productivity and business efficiency across Southern Africa.

Among these were precision agriculture and drone technologies developed by Zimbabwean companies, which are helping farmers in Botswana adopt data-driven and sustainable farming practices.

Such innovations demonstrate the capacity of local enterprises to contribute to regional

agricultural modernisation and food security.

The exhibition also underscored the growing regional demand for Zimbabwean expertise in technology, training, and advisory services.

These offerings are not only creating new trade opportunities but also strengthening regional cooperation in knowledge transfer and innovation.

Service exports, by their nature, offer greater value addition and promote digital inclusion, aligning well with Africa's broader development and integration goals.

ZimTrade's support for service-oriented enterprises at the Expo formed part of its ongoing drive to broaden the country's export base in line with the country's export growth strategy.

The strategy identifies high-value, innovation-driven sectors as critical for achieving sustainable export growth and competitiveness in the knowledge economy.

During the Expo, Zimbabwean firms engaged with a range of regional partners and potential clients,

generating leads that are expected to translate into long-term contracts and collaborative projects.

Many of these engagements focused on the provision of digital solutions, technical training, and consultancy services tailored to the needs of regional industries.

The participation also reinforced Zimbabwe's growing reputation as a source of regional solutions rather than simply a supplier of physical goods.

Local enterprises are increasingly positioning themselves as contributors to innovation in areas such as agricultural technology, information systems, and environmental management.

As follow-up engagements continue, the focus will be on turning the interest shown at the Expo into tangible business outcomes that support the growth of Zimbabwe's service export sector.

ZimTrade continues to encourage companies seeking to enter regional markets to take advantage of its support programmes in capacity building, export readiness, and market intelligence.



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5 BUILDING READINESS FOR AFRICA'S INTEGRATED MARKET AT ZIMBABWE EXPORT WEEK 2025

By Melisa M Ncube

WHEN ZIMBABWEAN SMEs consider expansion, Africa is often disregarded.

Many assume the continent has little to offer and see it as a distant market best left for another day. During Zimbabwe Export Week, the Export Capacity Training for Emerging Exporters demonstrated that this perception underestimates what the African Continental Free Trade Area has made possible.

Africa is no longer a disconnected patchwork but a functioning economic ecosystem where one factor determines who thrives and who merely participates.

The training brought together 43 SMEs and youth-led enterprises seeking practical guidance on competing in Africa's integrated market.

Early sessions revealed a common blind spot.

Many businesses approach regional trade as if it were a secondary priority, while major strategic decisions are reserved for markets in Europe or Asia.

The lesson was quietly powerful. Success in Africa begins not with external markets but with mastery of the continent's rules, procedures and opportunities.

Certificates of origin, tariff schedules and trade compliance proved not to be administrative chores but instruments for positioning, negotiation and credibility.

Documentation and logistics often treated as back-office concerns were also reframed during the training.

Small errors in invoices, mislabelled certificates or even misunderstood codes can quietly erode market access.

On the other hand, consistency in delivery, reliability and attention to operational detail can transform a business from a cautious participant to a trusted partner.

The aha moment for many participants was realizing that operational discipline is itself a competitive strategy.

Delivering on promises signals trustworthiness in a way that price alone cannot.

Trade finance commanded intense attention, drawing participants into discussions that went beyond theory.

Facilitators from Afreximbank and ImpactHer explored practical instruments such as letters of credit, export guarantees, invoice financing and blended financing options.

The insight was subtle but decisive, access to finance rarely fails because of product quality but it fails when preparation is weak.

Well-prepared financial statements, precise export documentation and structured business plans often mean the difference between approval and missed opportunity.

Many participants left the session recognizing that discipline and clarity in financial planning are themselves strategic tools.

The introduction of the Africa Trade Gateway provided a forward-looking perspective on digital trade.

The platform integrates market intelligence, payment systems, and trade connections into a single digital framework.

SMEs accustomed to fragmented information sources and slow manual processes saw that digital adoption is no longer optional.

Early use of platforms like this enables businesses to anticipate market demands, secure timely payments, and establish credibility across borders.

One participant remarked that ATG effectively acts as a passport into African trade and the room quietly nodded in recognition of its potential.

Throughout the two days, the training cultivated a broader mindset shift.

Participants began to see Africa not as disconnected markets but as an interlinked ecosystem.

Opportunities exist in operational rigor, financial readiness and adoption of emerging trade tools.

This perspective does not guarantee success but reveals a landscape where calculated preparation determines who thrives.

The quiet takeaway for readers is that Africa is navigable.

Complexity is manageable. What seems daunting today can become tomorrow's strategic advantage.

These lessons intersect directly with Zimbabwe's Vision 2030 goals of export-led industrialization, value addition, and regional integration.

The training illustrated that building capacity is not a matter of policy statements or abstract ambitions.

It is measured in operational reliability, in understanding finance as a strategic lever, and in adopting tools that translate insight into action.

SMEs equipped in this manner are positioned to convert latent potential into tangible growth.

As the Export Capacitation Training concluded, the narrative became clear.

Competing in Africa requires no magical formula. It demands focus on the details that shape credibility, the discipline that signals reliability and the foresight that turns data into strategic decisions.

Zimbabwean exporters now face a choice that is as simple as it is profound.

They can continue treating Africa as a secondary market or apply the frameworks, insights and tools introduced during the training to actively shape their trajectory in the continent's emerging trade ecosystem.

The AfCFTA offers access to a vast integrated market.

For Zimbabwean SMEs, the real challenge lies not in opportunity but in execution that will be quiet determinants of success.

Africa's markets are open, but the question remains, which businesses will move beyond observation to action and which will continue to watch from the sidelines as others define the future of African trade.



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6 WEAVING A BRIGHTER FUTURE: HOW ZIMTRADE IS HELPING A CHIVI ARTISAN REACH THE WORLD

By Kingstone Gwatidzo

AMAI TAFADZWA is a basket weaver from Chivi.

Her intricate patterns, made from natural fibers, represent more than just beautiful art; they are the foundation of her family's livelihood.

Amai Tafadzwa takes care of her grandchildren, while her children are employed in Harare; although they send some money, it is sometimes not enough for the upkeep of her grandchildren and others.

The baskets, trays, and lidded containers she skilfully creates have long been a source of local income.

However, given her responsibilities, Amai Tafadzwa wants to expand and reach customers beyond her community to better provide for her family.

That dream is now closer to reality, thanks to an export awareness workshop hosted by ZimTrade for her collective, Zienzele Basket Works.

The session was designed to equip women like Amai Tafadzwa with the knowledge and tools necessary to access lucrative international markets.

Previously, Amai Tafadzwa knew little about the complexities of exporting.

Now, she understands the essential documents,

like the Commercial Invoice, Packing List, and Certificate of Origin, required for her baskets to clear customs in countries like the United States or the United Kingdom.

She also learned how certifications for eco-friendly and fair-trade products could make her work more credible and appealing to global buyers who value sustainability.

"For me, the most exciting part was learning about packaging and telling our story," Amai Tafadzwa shares.

The workshop encouraged artisans to use eco-friendly packaging and include story tags with each product.

"When a buyer overseas learns that this basket was woven by my hands in Chivi, using techniques passed down from my grandmother, it connects them to our culture. It makes the basket more special."

Amai Tafadzwa and the other weavers were advised to strengthen their group coordination to compete effectively.

Forming a formal cooperative allows them to combine their efforts for bulk production, share costs, and streamline logistics.

Assigning roles for quality control, marketing, and export planning will help them present a unified and professional brand to the world.

The workshop further opened her eyes to new sales avenues.

She was introduced to online platforms like Etsy and Amazon Handmade, which allow her to sell directly to international consumers.

Furthermore, ZimTrade's support in connecting artisans with trade fairs and international buyers means her baskets could soon be showcased to a global audience, turning interest into sustainable export partnerships.

This support extends beyond the workshop.

Through ZimTrade's Provincial Cluster Programme, Amai Tafadzwa and her group will receive ongoing training to improve product quality and ensure they become export ready.

This includes guidance on adapting to global design trends, like incorporating popular patterns or colourful, dyed fibres, to make their traditional crafts appeal to a broader market.

For Amai Tafadzwa, this initiative is more than just business; it's a transformative opportunity.

Combining her traditional skills with modern export strategies, she is poised to increase her sales significantly.

Each basket she weaves now carries not only the pattern of her heritage but also the promise of a better education for her grandchildren, a more secure home, and a meaningful contribution to Zimbabwe's economy through export.



7 EXPORT POTENTIAL IN WILD FRUITS AND SUPERFOODS

By Pamela Surumete (Opinion)

ZIMBABWE'S DIVERSE natural ecosystems are home to an impressive variety of wild fruits and plants with exceptional nutritional and functional properties.

The iconic baobab and nutrient-rich moringa stand out as leading examples of indigenous resources with significant potential to compete in the international superfoods market.

As international demand for natural and health-promoting food products grows, Zimbabwe is strategically positioned to supply high-value, sustainably sourced superfoods to discerning consumers worldwide.

These products demonstrate the richness of the country's biodiversity and reflect the innovation and resilience of local communities involved in their harvesting and processing.

This emerging sector presents an opportunity for Zimbabwe to strengthen its export diversification efforts, enhance rural livelihoods, and showcase its commitment to sustainable, inclusive trade.

Zimbabwe's wild fruits and herbs have significant export potential due to their classification as superfoods, which are in high demand across international markets.

These products often require less capital-intensive

input than large-scale commodity crops, making them accessible for rural communities to participate in production.

This inclusivity can drive economic growth and improve livelihoods in remote areas, ensuring that communities benefit directly from the country's natural endowments.

Promoting wild fruit production for export in rural areas offers numerous benefits.

It provides a sustainable income source for smallholder farmers and cooperatives, reducing economic hardship and enhancing livelihoods.

The sector encourages sustainable agricultural practices, preserving biodiversity and preventing land degradation.

It also fosters community cohesion and resilience by creating local employment opportunities and promoting skills development.

This integration of rural communities into the international value chain allows the country to ensure inclusive growth and equitable distribution of economic benefits.

This approach boosts local economies and positions Zimbabwe as a key player in the international superfoods market.

Wild fruits often need to be processed into

value-added forms such as powders, packaged goods, or dried products to reach premium international markets.

This enhances marketability and extends shelf life and convenience for consumers abroad.

Obtaining certifications such as Organic certification, Fair-trade certification, and GlobalGAP certification can significantly strengthen their global competitiveness, as these standards assure buyers of product quality and ethical production practices, key considerations for health-conscious consumers.

Equally important is building brand awareness and trust.

It is crucial to educate international buyers about Zimbabwe as a reliable source of unique, sustainably harvested superfoods.

Through strategic marketing and storytelling, exporters can highlight the authenticity, traceability, and community impact behind each product, positioning Zimbabwean superfoods as premium and purpose driven.

This will allow local producers to easily tap into export markets.

The global superfood market continues to expand rapidly, driven by increasing health and wellness awareness, with Zimbabwean products gaining traction in regional and international markets.

For example, Zimbabwe's baobab is celebrated for its exceptional vitamin C content, and moringa, valued for its rich profile of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants.

Zimbabwean baobab powder has already gained traction in European markets, and moringa products have found a niche among health-conscious consumers in North America and Europe.

These success stories highlight how local natural resources can translate into thriving export industries.

Exporting these products successfully requires attention to quality standards, appropriate packaging, and compliance with international regulations.

Proper labelling, phytosanitary certification, and efficient logistics are essential in maintaining product integrity and meeting buyer expectations.

Understanding market trends and consumer preferences also plays a vital role in determining which products and formats resonate most with target markets

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8 TURNING EXHIBITIONS INTO EXPORT OPPORTUNITIES

By Natalie Franciko

TRADE SHOWS remain one of the most effective platforms for companies to generate business leads, build brand visibility, and establish long-term partnerships.

For export-ready businesses, participation in regional and international trade fairs offers unmatched opportunities to meet buyers, distributors, and investors face-to-face.

The recent Global Expo Botswana 2025 provided an intense case study on how Zimbabwean companies can leverage such events to expand their footprint in regional markets.

This year's alone, ZimTrade successfully coordinated Zimbabwe's participation in significant events, such as the Zambia Agriculture and Commercial Show, the Malaysia International Halal Showcase (MIHAS), FACIM Mozambique, Fruit Logistica in Germany, and, most recently, the Global Expo Botswana.

These platforms have helped Zimbabwean exporters secure valuable business deals, identify distributors, and gather crucial market intelligence.

Participation in trade fairs have allowed companies to directly interact with target markets, gain insights into consumer preferences, and assess competition.

Companies recorded impressive sales and forged lasting relationships with distributors, councils, and investors interested in agriculture, agro-processing, and fast-moving consumer goods.

Beyond immediate sales, trade shows offer opportunities to showcase new or improved products, understand sector trends, identify potential distributors or agents, and strengthen brand recognition and credibility.

Planning for an exhibition

Successful participation in trade fairs requires careful planning and preparation.

The first step is to select a target market that aligns with the company's products and growth strategy.

Market intelligence gathered through desk research or client feedback should guide this process.

Reliable sources of such information include Trade Map for trade statistics, ITC Market Access Map, UN Comtrade Database, ZimTrade market intelligence reports, and input from embassies or trade attachés.

This data helps identify where a company's products are in demand, who its competitors are, and what trade barriers may exist.

Budgeting in advance is also critical to ensure smooth participation.

Companies should plan early for exhibition fees, booth design, flights, accommodation, and transportation of display goods.

When booking accommodation, it is important to check proximity to the exhibition venue and nearby convenience facilities such as restaurants and transport hubs.

Early booking helps reduce costs and allows for better logistical arrangements.

Before travelling, companies must ensure compliance with all entry and customs procedures for both personnel and display goods.

This includes applying for visas within set deadlines, securing temporary import permits for display products, checking whether duties apply, and confirming clearing procedures.

In many cases, engaging the services of a customs clearing agent can save time and prevent delays at borders.

Selecting the right team to represent the company at the fair is another key factor.

The team should be knowledgeable about the company's products and services, professional in conduct, and confident in engaging with international visitors.

They should remain focused and available throughout the show to meet potential clients, distributors, and stakeholders, while also capturing

and managing business leads for follow-up after the event.

Marketing and exhibition materials also play a crucial role in attracting visitors.

Companies should prepare flyers, brochures, and product catalogues that clearly communicate product features, certifications, and contact details.

It is also advisable to translate brochures into the primary language of the host country.

For instance, Setswana or English for Botswana and Portuguese for Mozambique. This helps to ensure better communication and accessibility.

Before the exhibition begins, exhibitors should visit their stands to ensure that the layout, branding, and decorations are properly set up.

This early inspection provides an opportunity to make adjustments, verify that branding materials are correctly displayed, and create a welcoming atmosphere that draws visitors.

A well-arranged and visually appealing stand often leaves a lasting impression and can significantly increase visitor engagement.

With proper market research, budgeting, logistics planning, and team preparation, Zimbabwean companies can maximize their return on investment and strengthen their regional presence.

When approached strategically, trade fair participation becomes not just an event but a powerful tool for business growth and international competitiveness.





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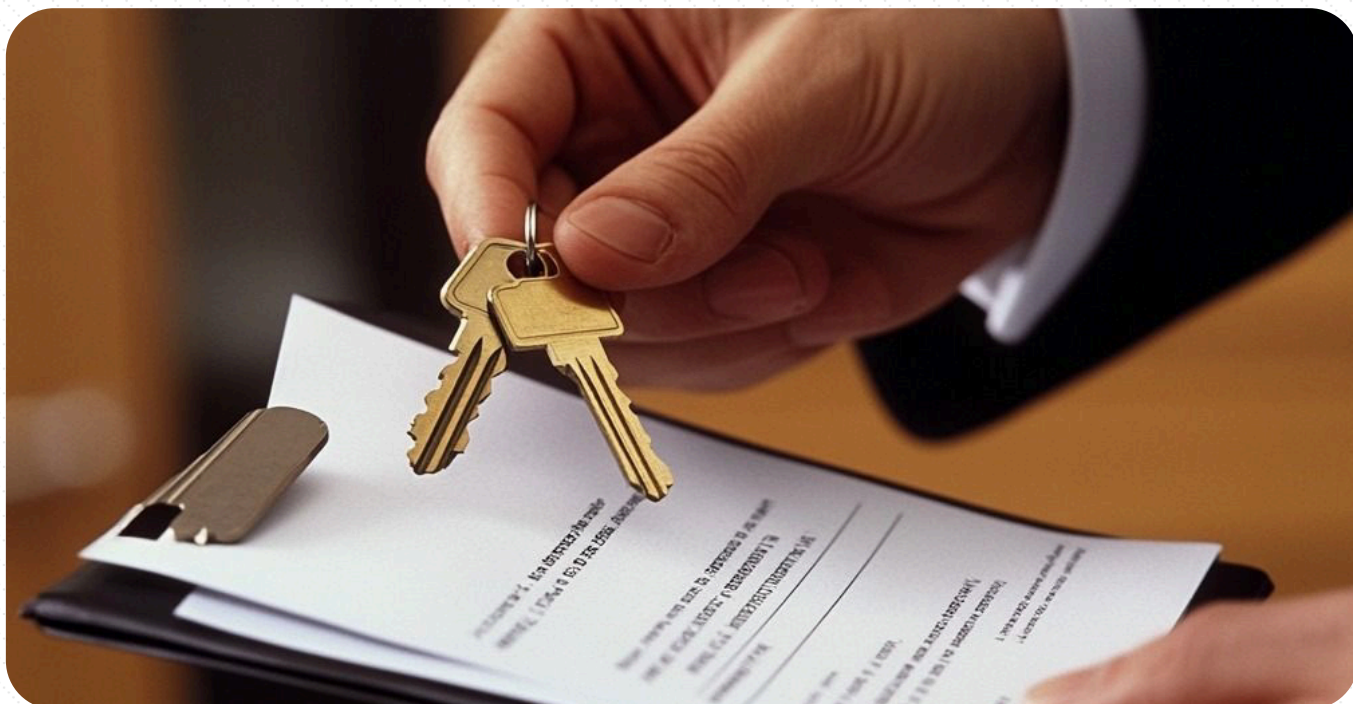
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9 VALUE ADDITION: THE KEY TO COMPETITIVE EXPORTS

By Pelatia Choto

ACROSS THE globe, countries that have achieved sustainable export growth share one defining characteristic: they export value-added products rather than raw materials.

For Zimbabwe, the path toward increased export earnings and economic transformation lies in embracing value addition, the process of enhancing the worth of local products through processing, packaging, innovation, and branding before they reach international markets.

Zimbabwe's export profile remains heavily concentrated in unprocessed minerals and agricultural commodities such as gold, tobacco, and raw cotton.

While these sectors form the backbone of the economy, exporting raw materials often means exporting jobs and missing out on the higher margins available in processed goods.

For example, refining gold locally rather than abroad can significantly increase earnings. Similarly, transforming raw cotton into fabrics and garments, or processing tobacco into finished cigarettes, creates employment, strengthens domestic industries, and positions Zimbabwean exports higher up the global value chain.

Value addition extends beyond industrial processing.

It encompasses innovation, product differentiation, and branding.

Exporters who invest in packaging, certification, and quality control are better equipped to compete in international markets.

Take, for instance, a Zimbabwean company producing organic honey.

When that honey is branded, certified organic, and attractively packaged, it can fetch several times the price of bulk honey sold as a raw commodity.

The same principle applies to other sectors, from leather products and horticultural produce to food processing and cosmetics.

Consumers worldwide are willing to pay more for products with uniqueness, traceability, and consistent quality.

To fully realize the benefits of value addition, Zimbabwe must foster a strong partnership between government, industry, and the private sector.

Investment in modern processing technology, skills development, reliable energy supply, and efficient logistics will be key enablers.

Moreover, nurturing innovation among youth and women entrepreneurs can catalyse new industries that harness local resources for export.

As more enterprises shift from exporting raw goods to finished or semi-finished products, the country will gain from increased export revenue, job creation, and industrial growth.

Value addition is not merely an economic strategy but a mindset that redefines how Zimbabwe participates in global trade.

It transforms the country from a supplier of raw materials into a competitive producer of quality, market-ready goods



10 PASSION FRUIT CAN BE ZIMBABWE'S NEXT FOCUSED EXPORT CROP THIS SEASON

Kudakwashe Tirivavi

EUROPE'S TASTE for exotic fruit has grown into a steady, organised market served through hubs such as France and the Netherlands.

Passion fruit already moves in meaningful volumes into these gateways, supplying both the retail and food service sectors that use fresh halves and purée in drinks and desserts.

Buyers plan year-round programs and look for origins that can fill seasonal gaps with reliable quality.

Zimbabwe can fit that plan since our climate supports a window from January to May, which sits across an off-season for several competing suppliers.

That timing lets growers enter on quality and service rather than compete head-on with peak harvests elsewhere.

During the Zimbabwe Export Week, a French buyer confirmed interest in Zimbabwean supply for that very window for the *Passiflora incarnata* 'Ester' variety, which clearly signals that the door is open if we can meet the specifications.

Some figures

The price language in this trade often starts at a per-fruit level.

A reference in a French retail store of about US\$2 per fruit was given.

Converted into contract terms that work by weight, if fruit averages 50g, there are roughly 20 fruits in a kilogram, which is about US\$40 per kg and US\$40,000 per tonne.

If fruit averages 35g, there are about 28 to 29 per kg, which is near US\$57 per kg and US\$57,000 per tonne.

These figures are only a guide.

Actual returns depend on size mix, pack out, freight, and the wholesale price agreed with the importer.

On the farm, outcomes depend on yield and grading.

Commercial systems range from 10 to 30 tonnes per hectare, depending on trellising, irrigation, and nutrition.

Using the 50g and US\$2 guide, a 20 tonnes/hectare field could suggest a headline revenue near US\$800,000 before costs.

The workable figure will be lower after applying a typical marketable pack out and logistics.

Producers should build budgets that include fertiliser, labour, packaging, cooling, airfreight, and commission, and then stress test those budgets at

conservative price and yield assumptions.

The rules are familiar, passion fruit must meet plant health, pesticide residue, and traceability requirements that our citrus and blueberry exporters already manage.



A phytosanitary certificate is required, and consignments are inspected on entry.

Clean records, correct labels, and complete documentation reduce risk and speed clearance. Global GAP is a must.

Route to market

The route to market can follow the blueberry playbook, adjusted for passion fruit.

Start with purple *Passiflora incarnata* 'Ester' for fresh export.

Choose frost-free, irrigated blocks with wind protection.

Use trellising, pruning, and nutrition to align flowering and harvest to the January to May window.

Pick at the proper maturity, avoid bruising, pre-cool fast, and pack in clean 2 kg cartons that match buyer specs.

Begin with airfreight into France and the Netherlands to validate quality and presentation.

As rejections fall and feedback turns into precise size and grade targets, scale weekly lots and explore mixed sea-air only where trials prove that quality holds.

France is a practical early target because Zimbabwe has a ready market through our buyers' program.

While leading suppliers to France include Spain, Vietnam, and Madagascar, if supply is reliable, there is room for a Southern African origin.

A Zimbabwe supply programme should target January to May to catch off-season gaps, align with Global G.A.P., meet EU maximum residue limits, enforce tight field-to-packhouse traceability, grade by size and firmness, and move fruit quickly into a cold chain at about 8–10 °C.

Start with small airfreight trials into France and the Netherlands using ripeness-managed partners, then build to consistent weekly volumes.

Once shrinkage is under control, test sea freight for durable cultivars.

For the first season, a simple pilot can prove the case.

Line up a small group of growers, as clustering and aggregation are forms of sustainable solutions.

Track prices and volume through your importer and adjust pruning and harvest plans to hit the most in-demand sizes.

Zimbabwe has already shown that coordinated fresh programs can work in Europe.

With a transparent window, disciplined quality, and tidy paperwork, passion fruit can become a focused export line that adds value to diversified horticulture.



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