

Improving the Quality of Ghanaian Parboiled Rice

Training Manual



The Role of Marketing

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Session 5

The role of marketing

Objective:
The objective of this session is to briefly investigate the role market traders and other interested parties could play in the production of good quality parboiled rice.

Parboiled rice is a manufactured product. This means that raw materials undergo certain processes to produce the final product.

The quality of any manufactured product is only as good as the quality of the raw materials and the controls exercised during processing.

The quality of parboiled rice produced in Ghana is very variable, even though the same raw materials and processes are used throughout the three northern regions of Ghana.

WHAT DOES QUALITY MEAN TO MARKET WOMEN?

Market women are well-aware of quality, since it affects the price they ultimately receive for the rice they sell.

There is some evidence that they pay slightly higher prices for good quality parboiled rice and they certainly visit some of the more proficient parboilers to purchase directly from their compound.

However the market traders purchase from a number of different suppliers and, depending on availability, each batch of rice might be of varying quality. There is therefore no guarantee that rice bought from a single trader in the larger markets would always be of the

same quality. Many traders store rice until they have accumulated sufficient to take to the larger markets, storage must therefore be considered as a possible stage when quality could be compromised.

If quality is improved throughout the production chain and this project realises its aims to form linkages between the primary producers and processors to raise quality awareness and improve the quality of locally parboiled rice, it must also include the traders.

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF PARBOILED RICE – WHAT CAN MARKET TRADERS OR SMALL SCALE BUSINESSES DO?

**Make sure that the quality of the rice does not
deteriorate before it reaches market!**

If farmers, parboilers and millers all work together to produce parboiled rice of the best possible quality it must reach market in the same condition. Otherwise the consumers will not benefit from these quality improvements and local rice will maintain its poor image. Therefore the marketing outlets must ensure that:

- Quality rice is not mixed with batches of rice of inferior quality.
- Storage facilities must be clean and dry.
- Rice is suitably transported to markets.

MARKETING STRATEGIES

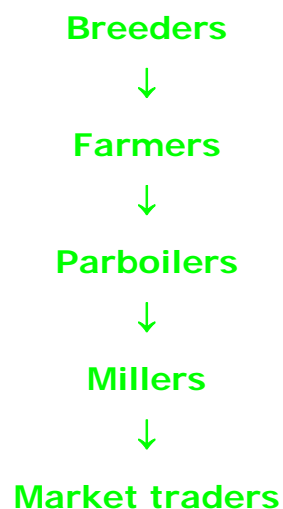
In many other countries entrepreneurs buy paddy, parboil and mill it and then pack it for sale under their own name. There is,

therefore obviously a great incentive to maintain quality standards as their business has been established by selling good-quality rice.

AIMS OF THIS PROJECT

There is no reason why groups of people (farmers, parboilers and millers) should not join together to produce parboiled rice of the highest possible quality and then market it themselves. This project aims to form those linkages and investigate possible outlets. Its success will depend on everyone working together to produce a good quality product and will rely on good communication and training of those involved.

The production chain will be comprised of:



Each person in this chain adds value to the original product and also needs to make a profit for their efforts. If this venture is to be successful **all** the members of the supply chain will need support and encouragement to improve and maintain the production of good quality parboiled rice.

Everyone in the chain will need the following skills to a greater or lesser degree:

- Communication skills.
- Technical skills.
- Management skills.

When a product is marketed you need to consider:

- What to produce (is the rice a variety with good cooking and eating qualities?).
- How much to charge (based on a fair profit margin for everyone concerned).
- How to promote the product (how will your potential customers find out about it?).
- The most appropriate and cost effective channel of distribution.

Further details can be found in an associated booklet entitled "Entrepreneurship Training for Rice Farmers, Rice Parboilers and Rice Marketers"