

Our journey towards developing dehydrated jackfruit.

ZAHRA FOOD INDUSTRIES

**FIBER
FOODS**

**Quresh Fidahusein
Founder & Director**



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ABOUT ZAHRA

Zahra Food Industries (ZFI) is Kampala based young and ambitious agro-processing company. They specialise in processing a variety of fruits and vegetables. ZFI is organic certified and is one of the few certified companies in Uganda in ISO Food Safety Management System (FSMS 22000:2018). They are committed to value-addition, healthy products, sustainability and community involvement.

BACKGROUND

As a partner already well-known by the Dutch Embassy, Zahra was approached by BLU to join the programme. After an audit and several meetings, the formalised partnership was signed in June 2020. Quresh Fidahusein, Founder and Director of ZFI: "What really encouraged me to join BLU was the hand-holding, figuring it out together, and the focus on the end customer instead of capacity building."

CONTRIBUTION

First of all ZFI was a very committed partner in developing young jackfruit production. They conducted trials on temperature, dryer types, loading weights for trays, jackfruit cutting, correlation between rehydration ratio and moisture content, rehydration instability, drying time saved with dewatering, cooking times, and alternate mincing equipment. Moreover, they developed the first Standard Operation Procedure (SOP) for young jackfruit processing and aggregation. The latter is because ZFI served as the aggregator for the dehydrated jackfruit products from other companies and carried out food safety measures and product approvals. As supplier, ZFI was a knowledgeable partner too. The company enabled BLU to ship fresh young jackfruit to Kenya, sourced fresh jackfruit frequently and reliably and flagged concerns from farmer communities.



They found that young jackfruit quality was better close to water bodies, such as Lake Victoria. Regarding traceability, ZFI's team also contributed significantly. ZFI's strict quality management system formed the basis of Fiber Foods' current quality management system Iso2Handle. With their critical feedback it became a system that fits with the reality of the processing operations. Also on the farm-to-factory traceability app and dashboard, ZFI provided hands-on feedback. This triggered

many improvements and solved technical bugs. Other contributions were their social and environmental standards that formed an inspiration of Fiber Foods' current Child Labour and Decent Work Policies, as well as a calculation template for costing that was used by other participants of the programme. All in all, ZFI's experienced technical and well-thought input on processing, supply, quality and management made the dehydrated jackfruit product to what it is today.

THE CONTRIBUTION BY ZAHRA FOODS INDUSTRIES

As experienced allrounder in quality, processing and sourcing ZFI has made a great contribution to dehydrated young jackfruit by:

- Producing ~3 tons of dehydrated jackfruit and trialling on a wide variety of topics in young jackfruit production
- Developing SOPs for young jackfruit processing and aggregation
- Aggregation of a total of 7.5 tons of dehydrated jackfruit
- Sourcing ~140 tons of young jackfruit in 2022 and feeding back critical information from the field
- Co-creating the flow of quality management system Iso2Handle and critically looking our traceability app & dashboard.
- Setting an example in business management such as costing calculation and social and environmental standards.

Our - young -jackfruit is peeled, cut, and dehydrated directly after harvesting in Africa.