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**RAJON VANILLA
LIMITED**



COMPANY PROFILE

Rajon Vanilla was a brilliant idea that was birthed by two friends, Rajiv Ruparelia and Bahizi Jonathan Buteera who later turned this idea into a lucrative business opportunity that has contributed to the livelihood of many farmers and their families. The name is a combination of their two first names Rajiv and Jonathan. This signifies their mutual passion for the company and their combined determination to see Rajon Vanilla grow to greater heights under their direction and guidance.





Rajiv Ruparelia is the Managing Director of Rajon Vanilla. He is a fervent entrepreneur who has drive and ambition to push and steer Rajon Vanilla into the next century. His ability to combine skills, talent and professional judgement have pushed Rajon Vanilla to great heights

Bahizi Jonathan Buteera is the Director of Rajon Vanilla. He comes with vast experience in Vanilla farming with in-depth and hands on knowledge, as well as a knack for Business management. He brings many years of experience and expertise to Rajon Vanilla in order to make it a world class institution

As partners and great friends, they have collectively harnessed their passion for business and have successfully birthed and grown Rajon Vanilla into a force to reckon with in the Regional Vanilla industry.

Core Values

QUALITY ASSURANCE

CONSISTENCY

TRANSPARENCY

VALUE ADDITION



PRODUCTION PROCESS



Vanilla bean processing takes a period of 3 months from the time an order is received, to the time the order is ready to be transported to the Client/ Customer.

Vanilla is harvested by the producers under the supervision of their Peer Farmer Leaders, who oversee the first stage of vanilla sorting, making sure the farmer discards poor or too short beans. The vanilla is then transported in sacks to the buying centers, and it's bought by Rajon Vanilla Limited. At each center a clean dry sorting area is provided and covered with a tarpaulin.

After a second sorting (immature, unhealthy and undersized beans are rejected), and weighing, the vanilla is packed in bags labelled organic and transported by hired lorry to the processing plant at Rajon Vanilla Limited.

BUYING

Buying from Farmers and subsequent handling, processing and exporting is done by Rajon Vanilla Limited in such a manner as to ensure the integrity of the Organic product, to guarantee there is no contamination or co-mingling with conventional vanilla.

PROCESSING

Cooking is done in clean drums designated for organic vanilla. Sweating is done in blankets designated for organic vanilla. After a period of sun-drying on reed racks, the vanilla is stored in wooden boxes for further slow curing and aroma development. The organic vanilla remains in these boxes until it is ready for export.

Finally organic beans are graded by length and quality at different times to avoid any contamination and stored in separate clearly marked boxes in different areas of the processing facility until export.



SORTING AND GRADING

Our beans are classified according to their length as follows:

Length of Beans	Grade of Beans
15 cm and above	I
10-15 cm	II
10 cm	III
Splits, cuts and damaged beans	IV

KILLING

Graded beans are immersed in hot water at a temperature of 70°C for periods as indicated below:

Period of immersion	Grade of Beans
5 minutes	I
4 minutes	II
2 minutes	III
1.5 minutes	IV

SWEATING

The treated beans are then transferred immediately to a wooden box lined with blanket, for sweating and kept for 36-48 hours. The temperature initially is to be 48-50oC. By then, the beans will attain light brown colour and start imparting aroma.

SUN DRYING

Later on, the beans are spread in hot sun (from 12 noon to 3 pm) over wooden loft on a clean black blanket. The temperature of the bean, at this time should raise to 50oC. Later on, the bundles are transferred to the sweating box. Sun drying and sweating is continued grade-wise, as follows:

Period	Grade
12-14 days	I
7-10 days	II
5-7 days	III & IV

At the end of this period, the beans lose half of initial weight, turn to a shining dark brown colour and develop wrinkles. Also, their aroma improves.

SLOW DRYING

The next step involves the spreading of the beans in racks kept in well-ventilated room maintained around a temperature of 35°C and relative humidity of 70 per cent. The duration of slow drying is as follows:

Period	Grade
20-35 days	I
10-20 days	II
3-10 days	III
2-8 days	IV

On completion of slow drying, the vanilla beans get heavy longitudinal wrinkles, turn lustrous with brownish black colour and become supple. They offer a soft leathery touch; can be rolled around finger easily and on release, becoming straight. The moisture content at this stage may be around 30-35 per cent.

CONDITIONING

The dried and classified beans are bundled (500-1000gm each), and vacuum sealed in clear PTE bags.

CHEMIPHAR LABORATORY TESTING

The legislation on the composition of food products and their processing has become very stringent aiming at maximal protection of the consumer. Chemiphar works with national regulatory agencies to ensure the quality, health and safety of food products both for the domestic market and for export.

As a result national and export standards have reached a level in which the vanilla industry will have to put a lot of effort in improving the quality of their products if they want to sweep the competitive national and international markets.

Chemiphar offers the food industry and the regulatory inspection services the possibility to analyze the quality of raw, finished or intermediate products and render them in compliance with the legislation or international food standards appropriate for the industry. Chemiphar collaborates with the regulatory and competent authorities where an established mechanism of control and certification before shipment is undertaken, to assure that certain quality conditions to the European Union and other international markets have been met.

PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATION AND *CERTIFICATES OF ANALYSIS*

Phytosanitary Certificate is a document (certificate) that certifies that plant and plant products contained in a given shipment are free from regulated pests, and conforms with other phytosanitary (plant health) requirements as specified from the importing country. It is issued on a consignment basis by a designated competent authority after inspection and/or treatment of contents of a shipment. In Uganda the designated authority is the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) - Department of Crop Inspection and Certification. Rajon Vanilla has up to date certification as well as Certificates of Analysis from Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.

Determination of the hygiene status of the product, pathogen levels



Proximate analysis:

Water content, fats, protein, ash, fatty acid pattern, vitamin content, mineral content, etc.

Determination of impurities, contaminants and toxins: Pesticides, Poly Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs), heavy metals, natural toxins (cyanides in cassava), fungal toxins (aflatoxins, ochratoxins, fumonisins, etc.)

Determination of specific components: Vanillin content, caffeine, papaine activity.

Determination of freshness parameters or shelf life studies: TVB-N, TMA in fish, Anisidine in fish oils, etc.

BUSINESS *OPPORTUNITIES*

Uganda vanilla is one of the most important exports for the country. Its essentiality is highlighted by the fact that Uganda ranks fourth as the biggest exporter of vanilla globally. It also only comes second to saffron as the most expensive export. It is rare to come by this plant and some of the few places it is grown include Madagascar, Mexico, China, France and Indonesia.

Uganda vanilla is a meal flavoring plant, characterized by thick, flat leaves that are similar to those of orchids. It is basically that spice that emanates from the plants' pod. This spice is produced by the dried bean fruit.

The plant serves multiple purposes which include making of perfumes, aromatherapy and as a flavoring agent for baked products.

Rajon vanilla further processes vanilla beans into essence form (Vanilla essence). This is however supplied if there is a contract for supply in place. The requirements for the concentrate levels of the essence have to be clearly defined by the client and agreed upon by both parties in the contract before manufacture commences.

BUSINESS *PARTNERS*

Rajon Vanilla has distributed quality high grade Vanilla beans to many players in the industry, both local and international. From numerous countries like;

America
Japan
France
Kenya
Rwanda among others



FUTURE PLANS

Rajon Vanilla aims to become the biggest producer and exporter of high grade vanilla beans in the East African region and Africa as a whole.

Rajon Vanilla strives at producing and exporting quality high grade vanilla in a consistent manner.

Rajon Vanilla aims at systemizing quality assurance in the Vanilla trade. This is being achieved with the help of a select team of qualified professionals

Rajon Vanilla also aims to promote transparency in the vanilla trade business in the region.

Rajon Vanilla aims to become the biggest producers of extract and all other forms of Vanilla that are achieved through value addition.



PAYMENT PLAN

Rajon Vanilla Payment plan is as follow;

Percentage	Payment terms
30%	On order before processing
40%	After processing is complete
30%	The remaining percentage is paid at the time of delivery
50%	On order (For local orders)
50%	Remaining percentage is paid upon delivery

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR)



Rajon Vanilla adheres to all CSR guidelines in the region.

The farmers Rajon Vanilla partners with are periodically sent for trainings and agricultural tradeshows and fairs in order for them to enhance their skills and also network with other farmers and potential buyers

Rajon Vanilla also ensures that it gives first choice of business to Female owned farms as well as family oriented farms. This is in an effort to improve the standards of living in the communities in which they source their vanilla.

Rajon Vanilla has worked with farmers spanning the Kigezi region with Districts such as Kasese, Bundibugyo, Ntoroko, Bunyangabu.

The farmers are all registered as trade partners to the company and this ensures fair pay and consistent pay, fringe benefits provided by the company and also eases tracking of Vanilla beans to their individual suppliers

STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING VANILLA TRADE

Design climate-smart production systems using diverse agroforestry systems as a foundation. Given the probable impacts of climate change on vanilla in Uganda in the coming years, this component is paramount to a successful country level strategy. Vanilla farm landscapes should include appropriate tree-based agriculture services (shade, nitrogen fixing, fuel and fodder resources), soil conservation strategies that increase water retention and drainage, and intercropping strategies of other cash and food crops.

Smallholder farmer organizations focusing on vanilla will need to be created or strengthened to further consolidate smallholder farmer position as relevant actors on the chain. The Rajon Vanilla experience in building economies of scale is that this process usually takes 7-10 years of accompanying farmer organizations to sufficient levels of maturity. Rajon Vanilla will apply its existing set of tools to this challenge and develop more in the coming years.

Adopt risk management strategies to protect farmers and other value chain actors in Uganda from price volatility. Given the potential of vanilla actors to work together toward common goals, a fair price scheme could be developed and adhered to based on living income data and costs of production.

Enhance the reputation of Uganda vanilla on the global market. Launch a marketing campaign to promote Uganda vanilla as the world's number one source of premium quality natural vanilla



