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Marketing old-style grains to new consumer markets

Project	Location	Funding Level	Funding Period
La Vivrière Production and Marketing Project	Dakar, Senegal	\$248,000	FY 2003-2007



La Vivrière has pursued a branding effort for its grains that focuses on highlighting their traditional appeal and their importance to old-style Senegalese cuisine. The company's processed grains are becoming a recognizable specialty commodity in food shops that serve west African migrants in France, Spain, Canada and the United States. Photo by Sarah Day.

Senegal is a nation of migrants. Every year, rural residents from across the country's 11 administrative regions flock to major urban centers like Dakar and St. Louis in search of full-time employment and a better standard of living. Thousands of Senegalese follow international job opportunities to Paris, Marseilles, Madrid, Montreal, Toronto and New York.

As with all migrants, these travelers yearn for the comforts of home and try to give their children a taste of rural Senegalese culture by preparing the food their mothers made. Rural Senegalese cuisine features hearty stews and breakfast porridges cooked with African grains like finger millet, pearl millet, fonio and sorghum. But the staple grains of Senegal's rural areas are rarely processed for sale to urban populations, and urbanites preparing classic Senegalese dishes around important holidays like Ramadan and Eid must often use maize meal and re-hydrated potatoes as substitutes for old-style grains.

With support from ADF, La Vivrière, a small food processing and marketing enterprise based in the suburbs of Dakar, is investing in expanding its capacity to purchase, process and sell indigenous Senegalese grains to a growing urban and international market. The company purchases millet and other grains from 50 farmers located in 20 rural villages, and ADF monies will help La Vivrière expand its volume of purchase and sale by financing construction of:

An expanded storage room,

- A processing room for mechanically separating grains from raw material,
- A processing room for filtering grains, and
- A processing room for washing and cleaning filtered grains.

The grant also provides funds for the purchase of new production equipment that will allow La Vivrière to process grains from their rawest form into value-added, packaged units that can be transferred straight to store shelves. This equipment includes conveyor belts, feed-hoppers, transfer hoppers, a washer, a grinder, a granulator, a cooker, a bagging machine, and an on-site electric generator.

La Vivrière will also engage food processing experts and business development experts to train staff in production techniques, essential business management skills and marketing techniques.

It is expected that these enhancements will more than double La Vivrière's annual processing capacity over the five-year project and multiply the company's annual earnings by eight times their current level. La Vivrière will also adopt a financial management plan that will allow it to monitor expenses and earnings and produce monthly, auditable financial statements.

With expanded production, the company will be in a position to raise employee salary earnings by 60 percent, expand the total number of its employees from 33 to 44 and introduce an employee profit sharing plan that will return 7.5 percent of La Vivrière's net profits to its production workers.

Quelle: <http://www.adf.gov/enews1004vivriere.htm>