

INNOVATION SERIES

BUSINESS PROFILE



EDEN TREE LTD.

LASHIBI, GHANA

[HTTPS://EDENTREEGH.COM/](https://edentreegh.com/)

ABOUT EDEN TREE LTD

- Company status: Limited Liability Company, created in 1997;
- Number of employees: 66.



**Catherine Krobo Edusei,
Founder & CEO**

Catherine is a Ghanaian Entrepreneur, Founder and CEO of Eden Tree Ltd. Catherine started her career as a banker at the Saudi American Bank office in London where she worked for ten years. She returned to Ghana in 1996 and started Eden Tree in 1997.

Her success with Eden Tree and engagement in promoting women in business have been recognized with several distinctions and awards including the 2012 national award from the Chartered Institute of Marketing in Ghana for "outstanding contribution awards nation-building", the Ghana Agribusiness Entrepreneur Award of the Year 2013 and 2015, the Feminine Ghana Achievement Awards 2016, the Most Outstanding Entrepreneur – Agriculture Sector (Third Feminine Ghana Achievement Award 2017), a life Time Achievement Award for promoting Urban farming in Ghana, TV Africa Award in Recognition of Women of Substance in Distinction in the Ghanaian Society and recently the First Lady's Excellence Award for the 2019 International Women's Day.

BUSINESS MODEL

The driving motto of Eden Tree is "Healthier People, Better Nation", as the company considers good nutrition to be key to a successful and emerging economy. To promote healthy eating habits, Eden Tree acts as a bridge between farmers and consumers by connecting farmers to markets. It also incorporates innovation and environmental protection in its business model, which is based on three core business values:

- sustainability and respect for all stakeholders within the value chain, the environment, and the communities supplying products;
- good relationships along the value chain with business partners and the community;
- profitability to support culture and family.

This series of events is organised by the PAFO and the COLEACP. COLEACP operates within the framework of the development cooperation between the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) and the European Union, with the support of the French Development Agency.

Eden Tree has been in food and agribusiness of fresh herbs, fruit and vegetables distributed to supermarkets and catering firms in Ghana for the past 24 years.

Eden Tree applies an integrated business model, as it produces, packages and markets high-end fresh vegetables, fruit, herbs and spices, as well as convenience foods. The company was created shortly after Catherine returned from the UK when she noticed that the food available in Ghana mainly consisted of carbohydrates and protein, with the few vegetables imported from other countries and very expensive. She couldn't find fresh herbs, only imported herbs in dried form. So Catherine decided to provide alternatives to imports that are fresh, attractively packaged in a similar way to the produce sold in UK supermarket chains, and price-friendly. Catherine first started growing herbs and then

established partnerships with local farmers to supply vegetables and fruits.

Among other awards, Eden Tree has been recognised by the Ghanaian Chamber of Agribusiness with the "Outstanding Fresh Vegetables Company" distinction and the 2018 Certificate of Excellence as "*Heleh Africa – Spirited Africa – Outstanding Healthy Agro-processing Industry of the Year*".

Eden Tree is nowadays one of the biggest suppliers within West Africa, initially selling its produce to expatriates living in Ghana, and now also to middle-class Ghanaians.

Eden Tree's main competitor is the South African retail chain Shoprite because its Ghanaian subsidiary, Freshmark, sources most of its fresh produce directly from local producers, similarly to Eden Tree.

STRONG RELATIONSHIP WITH SMALLHOLDERS

Eden Tree works with over 200 approved smallholder suppliers in five Metropolitan and Municipal Areas and 11 Districts in Ghana. Eden Tree also has three farm sites in Ghana (Asutsuare, Ada and Nsawam) totalling 52 acres, where it grows vegetables. Eden Tree works closely with its outgrowers and helps them to better develop their production, including by providing loans to improve production and to buy inputs. Eden Tree created jobs for urban farmers in Accra and the Ada area by providing training and education to its stakeholders.

Eden Tree also supports the communities involved in its business by paying tuition fees for the children of staff members, providing educational materials, and organising nursing to enable mothers to continue to work and attend to their children. The company also donated equipments to 20 women to learn the craft of dress-making and catering to sustain themselves and their communities in the Northern and Brong Ahafo regions of Ghana.



The Eden Tree farm in Nsawam

PRODUCTS COVERED AND MARKETS

Eden Tree supplies packaged fresh vegetables, fruit and herbs. Eden Tree also produces convenience foods in the form of prepared vegetables, ready-to-eat salads, crushed garlic and other value-added products.

The company supplies fresh fruit juices, spices (including ready-to-cook spice mixes), cereals, flour and nuts. The healthy value-added products are mainly sold in Ghana and will soon be exported within West Africa.

Eden Tree has three main business channels: growing and packaging fresh produce, convenience foods, and fresh fruit juices. A fourth channel, home deliveries, is being created to meet demand arising during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Eden Tree has the Food and Drugs Authority Certificate and is going through the process of obtaining HACCP Certificate.



Powdered chilli pepper

INNOVATIONS: MILESTONES AND EXPANSION PLANS

In 2015, the investments of the private equity firm *Investisseurs & Partenaires* contributed to professionalising the business and creating a processing and packaging factory, circumventing the limited financial support granted by Ghanaian banks (they usually offer loans for 2 to 3 years only).

Eden Tree has also concluded partnerships with two development agencies, GhanaVeg Program and GIZ Green Label Program, to further develop its business.

The company recently established its own branded store on the outskirts of Accra and envisions creating a chain of small shops in order to sell its produce directly to end consumers. It is also part of a new local certification programme, the Ghana Green Label scheme, which aims to give consumers confidence in locally grown fresh

foods and, in time, to establish new participating businesses for export markets.

Eden Tree is also exploring sustainable energy resources (mixed solar/grid energy system) for its factory.

One of the main difficulties Eden Tree has faced relates to training staff, as changing workers' mindsets and behaviour to align them with business expectations can be time consuming.

Eden Tree is strongly committed to corporate social responsibility and contributes to various Ghanaian nonprofit organisations, including Share Foundation, Dzorwulu Special School, Ledzokuku Krowor Municipal Education Directorate, Community Hope and Care Foundation, and Help Feed the Children Foundation.

