

Article Ansoe Kokosolie – August 2024

Owner: Mr. Roepesh Jagernath
Company: ANSOE Kokosolie
Address: District Commewijne
Mangreyweg #23 - Meerzorg
Tel.: 00597-8901080

Mr. Jagernath is a simple loving husband and father of two daughters and is a bus driver who drives school kids to school and back during the week. During the COVID-19 pandemic he could not provide his family with a stable income and thus decided in February 2021 to produce coconut oil. Since that period, he has been producing coconut oil on a regular basis.

Roepesh sourced his dry coconuts from Mr. Carl van Dijk from VCM N.V. at the Plantation “Rust en Werk” in the district of Commewijne. Each month, he bought around 12,000 dry coconuts from this plantation. Roepesh produces 1 liter of coconut oil from an average of 12 dry coconuts. In total he produces around 700 liters coconut oil in one month. His production depends on day workers he can get for processing the dry coconuts. So, his monthly volume changes.

He sells the coconuts in 1 liter bottles, half a liter bottles and small bottles of 250 and 125 ML at the following local prices:

- 1 Liter = SRD 300
- 0.5 Liter = SRD 150
- 250 ML = SRD 75
- 125 ML = SRD 45

He sold his products in local supermarkets in the districts Commewijne, Para and Marowijne. All produced coconut oil is sold out each month. He also supplies further up the value chain to the cosmetics companies like Jomi Cosmetics N.V. and Nami Bitá N.V., which make different type of soaps etc.

Through the Alliances for Action, we assisted in market linkages to connect him to HEM Suriname N.V. which is a great distributor in Suriname. This company now buys his coconut oil (Ansoe Kokosolie) and sells them at 2,500 different locations nationally.

Mr. Roepesh has followed all the coconut awareness sessions and trainings funded by the European Union and provided by the Suriname Business Forum (SBF) under the MOU with International Trade Centre (ITC) and also made his business plan. This has helped him to get access to financing at the National Development Bank (Production Credit Fund/PKF) and Trustbank Amanah (National Agriculture Fund/NOFA). Through the efforts of the ITC and the SBF, the Alliance has helped him to fill in with the application at the National Development Bank (NOB) and he has received a loan of 1 million Suriname dollars (25,000 USD); that of NOFA is now in finalizing stage. The Alliance also assists with the application for access to finance from other (inter)national financial institutions and banks, which are now in the application phase.

Furthermore, he also attended all the trainings in food safety provided by the EU through the MOU between Suriname Standards Bureau (SSB) and ITC. He did get also with the help of the SBF a grant

from the EU-funded programme SAMAP and has followed all SAMAP-FAO trainings conducted last and this year. He is board member of the SBF Coconut Cluster. He is also member of the Coconut Cluster under the Non-Timber & Forest Products Section and participated together with the SBF/SBC, CELOS, ITC a.o. in several trade fairs and activities.

The value addition trainings by ITC/SBF have made Mr. Roepesh decide to diversify his coconut product base. His value addition products range from 'kasripo' (cassareep), charcoal and waste management for horticulture business. He is in the process to set up a nursery to sell seedlings of which he now has more than 200 plants. He will also endeavor to sell dehusked coconuts to the local market.

He remains enthusiastic on the Coconut II project and is fully engaged in all the trainings. Referring to the coconuts trainings held by the ITC he said the following: *"the most outstanding issue was the connections made with other coconut farmers and processors, getting to know the people in the coconut industry in Suriname and also learning from them and working together on several topics. The trainings provided the technical background and I have received a lot of support from ITC and SBF in getting loans from the National Banks to further strengthen my coconut business"*. He further stated that through the knowledge gained from the trainings, he wants to diversify his coconut business with, grated coconut, coconut flour and cocopeat. He would also like to receive additional training and support in waste management and the use of preservatives.



Mr. Roepesh Jagernath (R) with dry coconuts sourced from Lead Farmer Mr. Carl van Dijk from VCM. Mr. Ratan Kalka from SBF/SBC (L) receive explanation on the raw materials.



ANSOE Kokosolie - the finished products.



Participation in Suriname Exporters' Fair 29-30 September 2023.

From left to right: Mr. Erick Zaballos CEO FAO/SAMAP Project, Mr. Jerrol Renfurm ITC Suriname, Mr. Cyrano Asoiti Chairman NFTP Suriname, Mr. Roepesh Jagernath of Ansoe Kokosolie, Mr. Reinier Awana of Nami Bita Cosmetics and Mr. Ratan Kalka of SBF/SBC.