Why grow maize when you can make more money growing peanuts?

Most farmers were focused on planting maize and beans, even in areas where peanuts could thrive. However, when comparing market prices, a 100 kg bag of peanuts was selling for about 16,000 Kenyan shillings, while maize was only fetching around 3,000 shillings at best. Moreover, the production cost for maize was about 1,800 shillings per bag, whereas peanuts only cost around 2,000 shillings. Peanuts don’t even require fertilizers, as they serve as nitrogen fixers for the soil and are also used for crop rotation. Therefore, the input costs for peanuts are mainly labor-related, such as planting, tilling, and harvesting. Our research on the value chain highlighted the untapped market potential and nutritional benefits of peanuts.

Source and Market

The peanut market is challenging, requiring significant consumer education, especially in areas unfamiliar with the product. We discovered that a substantial portion of the peanuts consumed in Kenya is actually imported from Malawi due to insufficient local production. In our approach to the market, we have adopted a unique model that involves collaborating with women in various markets, rather than relying on distributors and wholesalers. As we expand, this model empowers more and more women and youth by creating job opportunities. Women sell peanuts within their own localities.

Uses

Peanuts have a wide range of uses. They can be used in porridge for children and individuals with dietary

restrictions, cooked with traditional vegetables, spread on bread, or consumed as a snack.

Based on my experience, accessing finance and technical capacity to grow your business will depend on your passion and strategic approach to product development. It is essential to identify your target market segment and understand the source and cost of your inputs. Having a well-structured production process is crucial because any organization or financial body that comes to support you will require a clear operational framework.