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## Mim Cashew officially awarded ACA Quality and Sustainability Seal

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ACA's Ernest Dankwa presents the Seal to Mim owner Lars Wallevik.

On December 14, 2012, Mim Cashew became the second company to be officially certified under the ACA Quality and Sustainability Seal. Mim, located in Ghana's Brong-Ahafo region, was provisionally approved in October after a visit by ACA Seal Team Advisor Jim Giles. After a final audit was completed, ACA Finance Manager Ernest Dankwa presented to Mr. Lars Wallevik, owner of Mim Cashew, Mr. Joseph Yeung, General Manager and Mr. Kumaris Anil, the factory's Production Manager, with their official Seal certificate.

**"The seal approval has come at the right time, when Mim Cashew is in the process of re-strategizing to storm the international market."**

**-Mr. Kumaris Anil, Mim Cashew factory Production Manager**

Trade, and other minor ones. But with the ACA Seal we have received, this is a milestone that we are very proud of," said Mr. Anil.

The ACA Quality and Sustainability Seal is an industry-supported mark signaling compliance with international food safety, quality, and labor standards. Mim began the Seal-approval process in March, when the initial site assessment was conducted by Giles. During subsequent follow-up visits, Mim worked with the ACA Seal team to develop systems to ensure the production of high quality and sustainable cashew compliant with international food safety standards. "The overall processing reorganization we undertook through the adoption of ACA seal procedure has been extremely useful. The seal process not only improved hygiene in the factory and knowledge acquisition – we also have an improved relationship between management and the work force," noted Mr. Anil.

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## ACA and UNIDO's 3ADI program promote small scale processing in Tanzania



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From 26th to 30th November the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) jointly with Sunil Dahia, ACA Business Advisor, conducted a program on capacity-building for small scale farmer & processor groups and government agency representatives on the fundamentals of a competitive Tanzanian cashew industry. UNIDO agreed on this first cooperation with the African Cashew Alliance on 5 November, 2012. ACA and UNIDO aim to collaborate on mutual beneficial activities relating to the Promotion of Cashew Value Chain Development in Tanzania.

In a statement for UNIDO, Philip Lehne commented on the challenges in Tanzania that the African Agribusiness and Agro-industry Development initiative (3ADI) is working to address: "While small-scale processing in Tanzania does already exist, there are still obstacles preventing the sector to grow and generate value added. Difficulties include the access to the raw nuts, the finance of processing operations, lack of capacities in business and operational management and a business environment that is characterized by over-regulation, [lack of] transparency and poor infrastructure."



Sunil Dahiya with participants in the 3ADI program

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## Year in Review – Highlights of 2012

**February** ACA founding member Olam International opens a processing plant in Cote d'Ivoire with a capacity of 30,000 MT, making it the largest facility of its kind in Africa. The opening was attended by Cote d'Ivoire's president, Alassane Outtara.



**March** ACA Facilitates US\$2 Million in financing for 3 Nigerian processors in partnership with Ecobank and Nexim.

**April** New Website Launch: In April, ACA launched its new website, along with a Market Information System and exclusive members-only content.

**May** ACA Seal Approval Awarded to First Cashew Processing Factory. After ACA approved Tolaro Global for the ACA Quality and Sustainability Seal, 5 more processors have signed on for the program. Mim Cashew of Ghana was the 2nd seal-approved processor,



**June:** Red River joins Advisory Board: One of the world's largest cashew buyers becomes an influential member of the

ACA governing body providing strategic advice to the Executive Committee and Secretariat .

**July** EBID Investment: ACA and USAID-West Africa Trade Hub Collaboration Results in US\$2.4 million for Cajou Espoir, a Togolese Processor. This was the first loan granted by EBID resulting from an MOU signed between the African Cashew Alliance (ACA), the USAID West Africa Trade Hub, and EBID in 2011.

The past year was filled with so many huge moments for ACA, it was hard to pick our favorites! Here's a selection of some of our most important achievements and milestones

**August** Regional Platform in East Africa : ACA facilitated and MOU signing among the Nut Processors Association of Kenya (NutPAK), Cashewnut Board of Tanzania, and AICAJU of Mozambique. The groundbreaking platform, which set up a cooperation framework to promote cashew business in the region, is the first of its kind for ACA.

**September** 7th ACA Annual Conference – World's biggest cashew event with 522 participants. 90 speakers.36 countries.



**October** ACA Member West Africa Markets Link wins Ghana Export Promotion Authority Achievement Award.



**November** ACA Partners with UNIDO's 3ADI program to support the Tanzanian cashew value chain promotion and small scale industrialization development

**December** Mim Cashew of Ghana is the second company to be approved under the ACA Seal. ACA Seal program launch in East Africa - Mr. Edgar Maokola-Majogo, CEO of Southern Jumbo and the ACA Vice President, has joined the ACA Quality and Sustainability Seal initiative.

## Intersnack and ACA Roll out ACA Seal in East Africa

The ACA seal is taking off in Kenya, Tanzania and Mozambique. The food safety, quality and social compliance program was developed by ACA in cooperation with Kraft Foods and Intersnack to improve the competitiveness and market access for the African cashew processing industry.

During the first week of December, an Intersnack quality expert and the recently-appointed new Sourcing Manager – Africa, accompanied by ACA Managing Director Christian Dahm, visited cashew processors in East Africa to introduce the Global Food Safety as well as the Global Social Compliance initiatives and explain how the ACA seal program relates to these initiatives. The delegation visited factories, advised processors on technical issues related to international standards and met with farmer groups in the region.

"What an impressive trip, very encouraging! The industry is busy here, there are plenty of opportunities for farmers as well as processors in Africa," the Intersnack representative said.

The most recent ACA Member to join the seal program is Southern Jumbo Cashew of Tanzania, the first East Africa-based company to begin implementation. Mr. Edgar Maokola-Majogo, CEO of Southern Jumbo and an ACA

Vice President, has joined the Quality and Sustainability initiative by investing in a cashew processing facility in Dar es Salaam.

At the end of November, ACA Business Advisor Sunil Dahiya visited the Southern Jumbo facility, where he launched the ACA Seal initiative after completing a primary assessment of the company and provided immediate



Southern Jumbo Cashew in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

recommendations for improved cashew processing and food safety conditions. Southern Jumbo is a newly established processor that began operations in March, 2012.

Southern Jumbo is eager to expand processing capacity in the coming year through gradual

growth and improved productivity, while also generating positive social and economic positive impact in the local community where the facility is located. On the first of several technical assistance visits that are part of the Seal implementation program, Dahiya shared technical expertise on food safety, grading, international quality standards, best processing techniques implementation and provided recommendations on maximizing human and machine performance to Southern Jumbo's section supervisors. He further assessed additional finance and equipment requirements for company for the future expansion of their processing operations.

East African excitement about the Seal extends beyond Tanzania to the entire region. Another East African processor requesting to launch the seal program in her factory, said: "This is a fantastic learning experience for us. We get a first-hand perspective on the priorities from a customer point of view. The ACA seal program will enable us to continue that dialogue and get the support to get our priorities right."

The company's quality assurance team demonstrated a strong belief that Southern Jumbo will be the first ACA Quality and Sustainability Seal-approved facility in East Africa.

## ACA and UNIDO collaborate in 3ADI program

*Continued from Page 1*

Within the 3ADI program in Tanzania a processing model is supported to enable small scale cashew processing units to work together with established medium or large scale processors. Aiming to improve processing capacities, efficiencies and quality of small scale processing, small scale farmer groups and processors engage in semi-processing of cashew to raw kernels which are consolidated at established processor's facilities for further processing, marketing and sales. This model removes many of the barriers to the small scale processors, but still maintains their processing business.

"The value of this model is that it provides excellent opportunities for pro-poor development, on a village level, especially for women and the youth thus being in the best sense in the core of the UNIDO mandate of poverty reduction through productive activities," remarked Mr. Lehne on the importance of implementing the project, which was initiated by former ACA President Idrisa Kilangi.

The objective of the program was to provide an introduction to the Global Cashew Industry, highlighting practical technical assistance to cashew nut processors on the community level that will support in proper quality cashew nut processing from quality selection of raw cashew nuts to packaging, as well as marketing according to international standards.

## ACA Plans for an Exciting Future During Executive Committee Meeting and Annual Retreat

From November 27 to 28, the ACA Executive Committee met at the ACA Secretariat offices for an extraordinary meeting, held in addition to the usual semi-annual timetable. The seven EC members travelled from Benin, Nigeria, Tanzania, Kenya, India, and the US. Elected by current ACA members in September at the Conference, this was the first time that all seven EC members have met together.

"The EC meeting was tremendous," said Tola Faseru, an EC member from Nigeria. "The contributions from the EC members at the meeting were very rich, insightful and robust. The commitment and passion of all the EC members was very visible and glaring as we were all focused on the matters concerning the ACA and the cashew industry at large, strategizing and positioning ACA for the roles it will be performing in driving the emerging African cashew processing sector."



Tola Faseru, Edgar Makola-Majogo, Patrick Wainaina, Gerogette Taraf, V. Rajkumar, Christian Dahm, and Jace Rabe

2012 results and achievements, discussed strategic plans and governments for 2013, and evaluated ACA goals and priorities for the future.

Jace Rabe, who traveled from the United States to attend the meeting, also expressed his satisfaction with the results of the gathering: "I felt we had a very productive and successful meeting with the new EC. Each member is passionate about the African cashew industry. I am confident that the different viewpoints of the various members will produce some great results to continue to steer the ACA on its upward course."

Earlier in November, the ACA Secretariat moved to Anomabo, Ghana for three days during its annual staff retreat. Nine ACA staff members

## Mim Cashew is 2nd Seal-Approved Factory *(from page 1)*

The following companies currently enrolled in the program are still in the implementation phase: Anatrans SARM, a Burkinabe processor, Afokantan Benin Cashew, Cajou Espoir of Togo, and Southern Jumbo Cashew of Tanzania. The Seal expanded to East Africa in November with the program launch at Southern Jumbo.

With ACA Seal Approval, Mim Cashew joins Tolaro Global in the ranks of African processors producing cashew kernels under internationally-recognized food safety and sustainability standards. "I especially noticed the marked improvement demonstrated by the facility," noted Mr. Dankwa. "Mim obviously put a lot of thought into their processing and is clearly operating under the highest standards of safety – I was particularly impressed by their security system. Mim is yet another factory that other African processors should look to for motivation to improve their quality and sustainability"



Mim Factory workers with the ACA Seal.

The company now has a platform from which to achieve its next goals – says Mr. Anil, "The seal approval has come at the right time, when Mim Cashew is in the process of re-strategizing to storm the international market."

were joined by Mritunjay Das, of Olam Ghana, as well as ACA President Gerogette Taraf, both of whom provided key strategic advice and feedback on ACA's activities. The retreat provided an occasion for ACA



Discussions at the EC Meeting in Accra.

to take stock of 2012 achievements and also consider improvement opportunities for the short and long-term future.

"The retreat was a great chance to take a step back from the day-to-day activities that keep us busy at ACA, and focus more on the big picture of the organization," said Marian Lamptey, ACA Administrative Officer. "I think everyone in the office really benefitted from working together, making us a stronger team."

Workplan development, skills trainings and target-setting workshops allowed the ACA team to analyze strategic options and implications of ACA activities, while also reinforcing teamwork and strengthening internal communication and organizational capacity. The retreat resulted in important identifications of ACA needs, potential, and goals, as well as a clear vision for ACA's scope of work and development in 2013.



ACA Secretariat after a successful retreat in Anomabo

This vision helped guide discussions at the Executive Committee meeting. "The secretariat and staff were very supportive and worked very hard - it was obvious that they made serious preparations ahead of the meeting," noted an appreciative Tola Faseru.

With solid leadership guiding a dedicated Secretariat, ACA is prepared for a successful new year, and looks forward to accomplishing many milestone goals along the road to a competitive African cashew industry.

**ACi steps into a new phase.**

by Ann-Christin Berger, ACi

The African Cashew Initiative has launched a Cashew Matching Fund Grant designed to help accelerate the development of the cashew industry in its five project countries; Ghana, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire and Mozambique. As it begins its second phase and builds on lessons learned in its 1st Phase, the Cashew Matching Fund Grant was designed to allow more private sector partners such as retailers, buyers, processors, farmer groups and public research organizations, to design and implement projects regarding farmer linkages and improved planting material.

The main objective of the fund is to facilitate the achievement of improved quality and quantity of cashew produced, enhanced knowledge transfer to cashew farmers, strong linkages and ties between processors/buyers and farmers, improved access to price and production information as well as improved cashew value/supply chain (sustainable supply chain). Hence, Matching Fund supported projects must ultimately benefit farm productivity and farmers income.

The minimum amount of cashew matching fund grant per project financed is \$50,000; the maximum amount per project financed by the grant will be \$250,000. For projects targeting two or more countries, the amount allocated may be bigger. The grants provided by the cashew matching fund will be matched as follows:

- Minimum matching ratio of \$1.5 private funding for project supporting farmer organization and processor-farmer linkages to \$1 public funds from Matching Fund. (i.e. 60% of the cost of a given project shall be borne by private sector).
- Minimum matching ratio of \$1 private or public funds for project investing in improved planting material to \$1 public funds from Matching Grant Fund.

The time for implementation of funded activities will be between 12



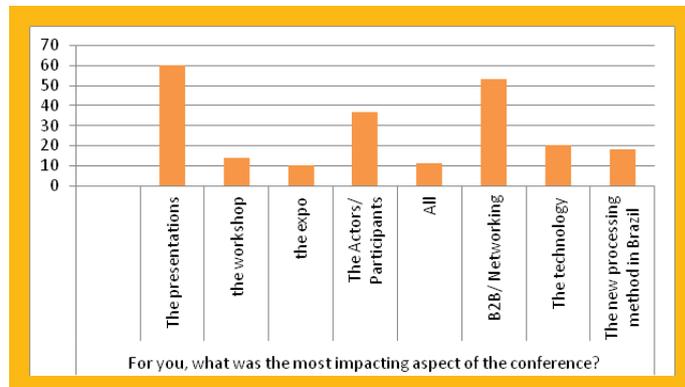
The CMFG aims to ultimately benefit farm productivity and farmer income.

- 24 months and not to be extended beyond August 2015. Co-funding of other donors for individual project is in principle, intended, however not obligatory. Where such co-funding has already been obtained by the partner, it could be considered as a replacement for parts of the Cashew Matching Grant contribution.

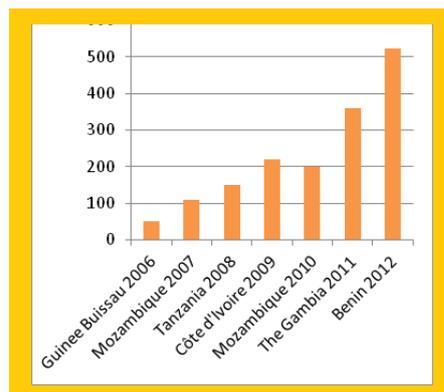
In September 2012 and during the first call for concepts, 30 applicants submitted their papers to ACi. At this point 25 applicants were approved and subsequently sent a more detailed project proposal in a second stage by the end of November. In the first two weeks of December, the ACi technical team met for an evaluative session of all proposals after which they sent their recommendation to the Matching Fund Board composed of representatives from GIZ, ACA and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The Board is currently in the process of assessing these proposals. The final decision of who will be granted the Matching Fund is expected before Christmas. Successful applicants will be notified afterwards.

**ACA scores with 7th ACA Annual Conference: High Marks recorded on Participant Evaluations**

ACA recently released an evaluation report of the September 17-20, 2012 7th ACA Conference. Participant surveys indicated high levels of satisfaction with the conference program, while the feedback will also guide planning for next year's conference – the 8th World Cashew Festival and Expo13, taking place in Lagos, Nigeria in September 2013. For many, the opportunity to interact and learn from other cashew stakeholders proved to be the most useful aspect of the conference – Networking and the World Cashew Expo received some of the highest marks from participants.



522 participants – a 45% increase from the 2011 event in the Gambia.



**Cashew Calendar 2012**

**January**

19-21 PTNPA Convention, Palm Spings, USA.

**February**

Cote d'Ivoire Cashew Day, Abidjan

Guinee Cashew Day, Conakry

**May**

21 - 23 INC Congress, Barcelona, Spain

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