

ALLEGATO 3.3

Production Protocol Kenema Kola Nut (Slow Food Presidium)

Art. 1

Name

Kola Nut (English name), Tolei (local Mende name)

Art. 2

Region of production

Kenema District is located in the extreme east of Sierra Leone, it borders the Republic of Liberia in the south east. Internally, it shares boundaries with five districts. In the east are the Kailahun and Kono Districts, in the south are Pujehun and Bo districts and in the North is the Tonkolili district. Kenema is the headquarter of the Eastern region, which comprises three districts: Kono, Kailahun and Kenema. There are 16 chiefdoms in the Kenema District and these chiefdoms are headed by paramount chiefs, who are the local custodians of their communities.

Kenema District is predominantly covered with thick forest and is one of the regions with the highest rainfalls. This part of the country is predominantly occupied by the Mende ethnic group, who are mostly farmers.

Kenema is located about 250 kilometers from the capital city Freetown and it is about 50 kilometers from the Liberian border.

Art. 3

Historical background

The origin of kola nut in Sierra Leone is that it came from Liberia and it was introduced by the Gola/Gbandi ethnic groups from Liberia to the Mende ethnic groups who live along the Sierra Leone/Liberian border. Kola nut is used predominantly for chewing and it is highly connected to the socio-cultural activities of almost all of the ethnic groups in Sierra Leone, more specifically the Mendes who are mostly found in the east and southern parts of Sierra Leone.

Apart from chewing, there are other uses of the of the kola nut. It can also be prepared as a drink (similar to ginger ale) during the month of Ramadan. The kola nut is pounded together with ginger, washed in clean water and mixed with some sugar.

Kola nut can be used as dye or colorant for baskets waving, and dress making mostly for women and young men.

It can be used as energizer and also serves as stimulant. When chewed, it will keep someone awake for a long time.

It can be used as a means of resistance to hunger. When chewed, it increases the sense of thirst, and as one drinks, his hunger is quelled for some hours.

Kola nut from Kenema has a very unique quality, taste and colour. The cleaned kidney shaped nuts have varying sizes and colour, white, red and pink. Much attractive among the three types is the white kola nut. White kola nut has very important socio-cultural connections. It can be used for marriages, naming ceremonies sacrifices and as gifts to guest/visitors in homes. The taste of Kenema kola nut is preferred to that of countries in the West African Sub-region of Guinea Conakry, Guinea Bissau, Mali and Liberia etc. Indeed, traders come from these countries to buy Kenema kola nuts.

The kola nut tree is commonly found growing together with cocoa and coffee. These two crops coffee and cocoa have had more economic importance than the kola nut. During the 1960s and

70s it was discovered by our native dress makers that kola nut can be used as colorant/dye in clothes. Following this discovery, the demand for kola nut increased, leading to its rapid spread in cultivation. But in the 1980s kola nut dye was replaced by imported foreign dye which the market now prefer. This has led to its being abandoned due to low demand and lower profitability compared to the other crops, coffee and cocoa. Only a few growers now continue to produce it. There is a long socio-cultural tie and local demand of kola nut among the communities in which it is produced, due to this fact, a group of producers and processors have come together to launch a campaign to increase on its production.

Art. 4

Description of kola nut tree and fruit

The tree grows better and yields more in the Eastern region of Sierra Leone than in the rest of the country. The kola nut tree can attain the height of approximately 120-140 feet in a humid rainforest. It can live for almost 40 years or more. Kola nut farms are inherited from deceased relatives preferably by young adult males in the family who are closely related to the deceased.

The kola tree can be brought to bearing in 3-4 years, by using rooted cuttings made from already bearing wood, especially if grown under minimum shade conditions. The kola tree serves as shade for coffee and cocoa trees, which are usually grown together in the same plot. In turn, coffee and cocoa trees improve the soil structure, to the benefit of the kola nut tree.

Art. 5

Cultivation Techniques

The kola nut tree can be planted by nursing the kola nut itself. Two months after sowing, the young plant can be transplanted in a hole of about six inches deep. The planting can be done in the wet season i.e. June-August. The kola nut tree produces more fruits during the wet season than in the dry season. Also, kola nut trees planted on high grounds yield less fruits because they do not receive as much water as those growing at lower levels. In any case, all kola nuts from Kenema have the same quality and taste whether planted on high or low land.

Art. 6

Harvesting

Kola nut is harvested twice a year. The first oblong matured kola nuts can be harvest from January to March, the second harvest happens from April to July.

The oblong and matured fruit is harvested by using cutlasses or curved sharp knives tied to a long pole.

Art. 7

Processing

Knives are used to take the nut out of the pods. When the nuts are removed from the green pods, which may contain one to ten nuts, these nuts are collected together for fermentation. There are two methods of fermentation. The first method is carried out as follows: the nuts are placed on a clean mat, preferably in a room (for fear of thieves), covered or wrapped under broad kola or banana leaves for at least 4-5 days. According to the second method, the kola nuts are buried in a hole/pit on the ground, outdoors, and covered with earth or sand for 3 days.

After fermentation, the nuts are cleaned in a clean cold water. This particular work is mostly carried out by women and children.

The second method allows for a fast fermentation, but is the least practiced. Indeed, the sand and mud on kola nuts fermented in pit can scratch and bruise the nut during washing. The ruined nut is less attractive to traders and consumers and receives a lower market price. The first method is now generally being practiced because traders and consumers pay high prices for a smooth kola nut.

Art. 8

Storage and preservation

The nuts can be infected by insects if not properly stored. So, the processed kola nuts are spread on a mat for the water to drain, then stored in baskets or sacks wrapped in broad fresh green kola leaves. Kola nut can be kept fresh as long as the leaves are constantly changed, ensuring the level of humidity necessary to prevent the nut from drying. It is therefore good for the producer to remove the dry leaves from the kola nut and replace it with fresh ones every two to three months to maintain its good quality and high value in the market.

Art. 9

Taste, Physical and Chemical Characteristics

Kenema kola nut has a very unique quality, taste and colour. Much attractive among the three types is the white kola nut. White kola nut has very important socio-cultural connections. It can be used for marriages, naming ceremonies sacrifices and as gifts to guest/visitors in homes. Taste from Kenema kola nut is more preferred to that of countries in the West African Sub-region of Guinea-Conakry, Guinea Bissau, Mali and Liberia etc. This is evident by traders who come from these countries to buy the Kenema- kola nuts.

Art. 10

Checking

Checking of the adherence to these regulations is carried out by representatives of the Presidium itself and the Slow Food network in the area.

Attachment

Sierra Leone, Kenema kola nut Producers Association

Preamble

Members of the Kenema kola nut Producers Association comprising of two communities of Darlu and Gegbwema in the Tonkia Chiefdom, Kenema District – Eastern Sierra Leone, have organized themselves into a kola nut producers/farmers association whose aim is to increase on its production and to develop processing techniques so as the producers from these two pilot villages(Darlu-Tonkia and Gegbwema)will produce a good and clean kola nut to be able to receive better price in the market for their product.

This signed document by all members of the association is therefore supreme and binding on everyone as from the date it is signed.

Section i

- 1.1 The name of the Association:
- 1.2 The name of the Association shall be the Kenema kola nut Producers Association.
- 1.3 Operational areas: The operational areas of the association shall be Darlu and Gegbwema villages, in the Tonkia Chiefdom, in the Kenema District.
- 1.4 The contact person of this association shall be Patrick Abu Mansaray and Shed Jah c/o No.14 combema road, Kenema, Sierra Leone, West Africa.

Section ii

Aims and Objectives:

- i. This association is geared towards the establishment of the Slow Food Philosophy in our local communities by cultivating the appreciation for pleasures and quality in our daily life.
- ii. The association aims to bring the local food producers and support them through projects, events or partnerships.
- iii. The association will ensure that every body irrespective of his/her status, farmers scholars, teachers, students, are welcomed to be members of the association.
- iv. The association shall collaborate with other organizations who share the same idea or vision in promoting the slow food philosophy.
- v. The association shall explore the possibility in bringing pleasure back to the table, by educating consumers, defend agricultural biodiversity and build strong food communities in order to create a system that makes good, clean and fair food available to every one.
- vi. To protect the environment, and respect the culture of the communities with whom they are working
- vii. To engage in collecting basic food crop production, processing and marketing, and to explore ways to promote the principals of good food within the association.
- viii. To ensure that all members have access to loans from the association at a minimal interest rate, such loans shall be repayable against the time agreed upon by the member.
- viiii. To ensure that the soil fertility is properly maintained and preserved.

Section iii

Rights and Duties of members:

- 1a. Every member of the association has freedom of speech.
- 1b. Members shall have respect for the rules and regulations of the association
- 1c. Members shall have the right to vote and to be voted for.
- 1d. Every member shall be obliged to make meaningful and sustainable contributions towards the association when and where necessary
- 1e. There shall be amendment to this rules annually and any amendment shall have the approval of 2/3 (two-third) majority members present in a general meeting.

Section iv

The executive:

The executive body shall be the regulatory body of the association. These shall comprise the following:

- The chairperson
- The vice chairperson
- The secretary general
- The treasurer
- The auditor

Section v.

Functions

Chairperson:

- Shall be the executive head of the association.
- Shall preside over all general and executive meetings.
- Shall work in collaboration with the secretary general to draw agenda for meetings.
- Shall on behalf of the association sign all documents and together with the secretary reply to all correspondences.
- Shall settle disputes among members of the association.
- Shall endeavor to be in meetings at all times.

Vice chairperson:

- Shall perform the duties of the chairperson in his/her absence.

Secretary General:

- Shall be the custodian of all the associations' documents.
- Shall take minutes of all meetings
- Shall give a comprehensive report of the associations' activities every six months.
- Shall maintain the roll of registered members of the association.

Treasurer:

- Shall keep or deposit in a Bank Account of the association all finances received on behalf of the association.
- Shall disburse money or resources of the association with the approval of the chairperson.
- Shall make budget plans depending on the executives' consent.

Auditor:

- Shall look into or investigate all the associations financial activities.
- Shall audit all financial transactions of the association quarterly or annually.

Section vi:

Bank Account:

There shall be the associations' Bank Account to be managed by:

1. The chairperson
2. The treasurer
3. The secretary general.

The association shall open a bank account in any Banking /financial institution in Kenema.

The name of the account shall be the Kenema kola nut Producers Association.

The association shall be registered with the government Ministry of Agriculture, and Food Security at Regional level.

- The chairperson shall be the principal signatory.

- Any withdrawal from the account shall be made by any two (that is the chairperson plus any one)

Guiding Rules:

- No member shall absent himself/herself with out any genuine excuse from meetings.
 - Fines shall be imposed on members who deliberately absent themselves from meetings without permission.
 - Members who absent themselves from attending meeting in three consecutive sittings shall be given a warning notice.
 - If a member fails to attend meetings for five consecutive sittings such member shall be suspended pending investigation into his/her conduct; a warning letter.
 - shall be issued thereafter and he/she reinstated.
 - Any member found guilty for embezzlement of funds/resources shall be expelled with immediate effect.
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