



Global berries marketer Driscoll's and Kakuzi announce bid to expand local and export blueberry superfood volumes

12/08...Kenya will soon break into the global Blueberries export market as listed agribusiness firm Kakuzi PLC and leading berries marketing firm [Driscoll's](#) have announced a collaborative partnership to grow the local and export volumes.

As part of Kakuzi's blueberry export plans, the firm is undertaking commercial engagements with Driscoll's, the global market leader in fresh strawberries, blueberries, raspberries and blackberries.

While confirming the blueberry export plans, Kakuzi PLC Managing Director Mr Chris Flowers said a Driscoll's market evaluation team conducted a fact-finding tour of the firm's orchards in Makuyu, Murang'a county, early this week. The Driscoll's team comprised 13 senior sourcing, Technical and market development executives led by Driscoll's Vice President of Global Blueberry Leadership, Mr Garland Reiter. The Driscoll's delegation was conducted on a guided tour of the 10-hectare blueberry orchards at Kakuzi.

The blueberry venture, which has been undergoing production and commercial trials, Mr Flowers said, is part of the firm's revenue diversification strategy.

Renown as the trusted brand for only the finest berries, Driscoll's is evaluating the possibility of importing premium Kakuzi Blueberries to the European, Middle, and Far East markets and further developing regional sales.

Speaking from Makuyu, Kakuzi MD Chris Flowers said that the commercial blueberry trials that commenced two years ago had returned some exciting outcomes that will guide the firm's future investments and expansion for the particular crop.

In the last financial year, Kakuzi disclosed that the firm's Blueberry production had grown in the previous financial year. The current blueberry production has been fully sold in the local and export markets.

"Kakuzi's pilot commercial trials have done what they were meant to do, and we have learnt a lot in preparation for our future expansion plans in this blueberry venture," Flowers said, adding, "Growing superfoods is what we do and adding blueberries to our core crops of avocados and macadamia will help Kakuzi to diversify its operations even further for the benefit of our

shareholders. Having Driscoll's here is exciting; they bring a wealth of knowledge to us, and we look forward to our journey together."

On his part, Garland Reiter, The Vice President of Global Blueberry Leadership for Driscoll's, said that the developments at Kakuzi heralded the dawn of blueberry exports to the international market.

Whilst congratulating Kakuzi and lauding the support of the Kenyan and Chinese authorities for enabling Kenyan avocados to be exported to China, Reiter said that Driscoll's is looking forward to the possibility of exporting Kenyan Blueberries to China.

Said Reiter: "Driscoll's is proud to be associated with Kakuzi, and we hope that the current production volumes will be significantly scaled up as this is an opportunity to grow the volume of blueberries produced in Kenya and to grow the regional demand for this superfood. Kakuzi's recent entry into China with its avocados is also very encouraging.

Within Kakuzi's revenue diversification strategy, the firm is set to continue developing a range of additional value-added consumer products for the domestic and regional markets. Such products include frozen and ready-to-eat blueberries and high-quality roasted macadamia snacks sold in local supermarkets and greengrocery retail stores.

Driscoll's is the global market leader in fresh strawberries, blueberries, raspberries and blackberries. With more than 100 years of farming heritage, Driscoll's is a pioneer of berry flavour innovation and the trusted consumer brand of Only the Finest Berries™. With more than 900 independent growers worldwide, Driscoll's develops exclusive patented berry varieties using only traditional breeding methods that focus on growing great-tasting berries. A dedicated team of agronomists, breeders, sensory analysts, plant pathologists and entomologists help grow baby seedlings that are then grown on local family farms. Driscoll's now serves consumers year-round across North America, Australia, Europe and China in over twenty-two countries.

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