



Brussels Rural Development Briefings
A series of meetings on ACP-EU development issues

Briefing session n° 13

**Upgrading to compete in a globalised world:
What opportunities and challenges for SMEs in agriculture in ACP countries?**

Wednesday 23rd September 2009 – 8h30 – 13h00

The case of Noelville Ltd. from Grenada
Denis Noel – Noelville Ltd.

Executive Summary

Background

Noelville Limited is a company based in the parish of St. Andrew in Grenada. It was incorporated on 4 May 1978 emerging from the Estate of Carlyle Noel consisting of farmland producing nutmegs, cocoa and bananas. The shareholders of *Noelville* are the six children of Carlyle and Sylvia Noel, one of whom has passed away but his estate remains as one of the shareholders.

Denis Noel (one of the siblings) operates as the General Manager of *Noelville*. An agronomist by profession, Mr. Noel has forged a colourful career which included working in the Public Sector, in the Diplomatic Corps, as a Government minister, a grower of rare tropical blooms (which has earned Grenada four gold medals at the prestigious Chelsea Flower in the UK) and now culminating as an entrepreneur involved in the processing of agricultural produce from the land. His contribution to the development of Grenada has been recognised and in June 2004, he was awarded an OBE in the Queen's Honours List.

The company is seeking pioneer status to be able to take advantage of tax breaks, which will assist in the expansion of the Plant. The main objectives of the Company are:

1. To develop the land-based assets of the farm to its optimum through production of crops to create value-added products
2. To make available to the ordinary man, products to build the immune system to prevent health problems such as AIDS and SARS
3. To play a leadership role in the development of medicinal herbs using plants from Grenada that can benefit the population

The Company's Mission Statement is:

"We manufacture natural products based on production from the land to benefit consumers both home and abroad."

In July 2000 **NUT-MED PAIN RELIEVING SPRAY** was launched in Grenada and became an instant success. This product has been the cash cow for *Noelville* with sales increasing by over 75% from 2000 to 2004. *Noelville*.

The main ingredients of *Nut-Med* – nutmeg oil and mace oil - come from the nutmeg and since Grenada is the second largest producer of Nutmeg in the world (Indonesia is number one - but Grenada's is of premium quality), *Noelville* is assured of always having a ready supply of these ingredients, especially as GCNA has given the assurance that local demand will always be satisfied first.

Products

All *Noelville*'s products belong to the herbal/organic/natural industry. This industry is rapidly expanding and, according to a CTA study, the international trade in botanicals as herbal extracts and semi-finished products

exceeds US thirty billion dollars per year. **Nut-Med** is the brand leader but the company also produces seven other products including:

- 1) *Flowers*
- 2) *Noni Juice*
- 3) *Lemon Grass Tea*
- 4) *Lemon Grass Powder (seasoning)*
- 5) *Lignum Vitae tea*
- 6) *Lignum Vitae Capsules*
- 7) *Petit Baum tea*

Noelville also has some new products in the Pipeline, viz.

- 1) *Juices: Fresh Frozen Fruit Juices: CARIRI* is assisting in the development of four (4) fruit juices: Passion fruit, grapefruit, orange and golden apple. They will undertake to do microbiological analysis, chemical/nutritional analysis, shelf-life evaluation and sensory analysis to determine acceptability by consumers.
- 2) *Body lotions: to be made from lemon grass and floral extracts (at the research stage).*
- 3) *Flowers and Garden: Expansion of the 'flowers' line and developing the farm as a 'Garden' open to the public for tours.*

Sales and Marketing

Local sales of all *Noelville's* products have been increasing steadily but *Nut-Med's* sales have grown phenomenally - from EC\$91,952.00 in 2000 to EC\$376,714.86 (c. 76%) in 2003. This is largely due to the effectiveness of the product and acceptance by consumers. Also, most marketing efforts are focused on *Nut-Med*; for example radio and television ads, billboards, magazine advertising and a website set up specifically for *Nut-Med*.

Export sales are mainly *Nut-Med*, although the other products are advertised on *Noelville's* website, www.noelvilletd.com, and in some magazines. *Nut-Med* is FDA registered which gives a competitive advantage to enter the United States but is also exported to CARICOM and European countries informally via DHL, FEDEX or regular parcel post. New markets are constantly being sought and the Company feels it is time that full advantage is taken of the access that is available to the US market. It is with this in mind that we herein seek assistance through a short term consultancy to help open the doors to some of the major players in the US market such as Walgreens, CVS, Right Aid and Walmart. If that can succeed, the entire nutmeg market in Grenada would be transformed from one of selling raw materials to one of finished products and in the process stimulate economic development so badly needed in Grenada