

FINGER MILLET CLEANING REVITALISES INDUSTRY

Stockfeed Enterprises Ltd – Finger Millet cleaning revitalises industry

Finger millet (*Eleusine coracana*) is a cereal crop believed to be native to East Africa and traditionally cultivated on smallholdings. Finger millet grain is nutritious with high protein content, a rich source of minerals such as calcium, iron and phosphorous and has a good content of energy compared to other cereals. The grain can be ground and used for preparation of various types of food that include porridge and bread. Finger millet grain can also be used for making beer.

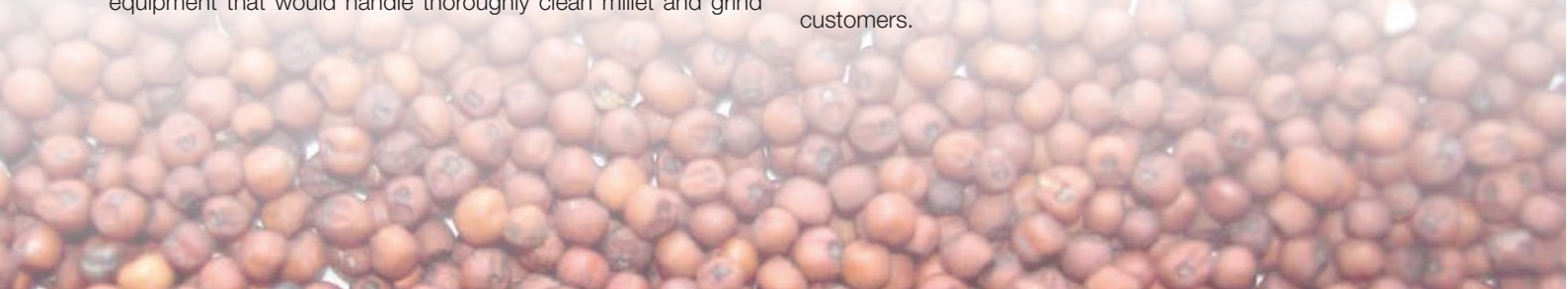
Cultivation of finger millet is labour intensive. Harvesting, post-harvest conditioning, drying in the sun, handling and threshing are manual tasks and are carried out on earth floors. The very small size of finger millet grains makes handling of the crop very difficult at all stages of processing. Therefore, the separation of the seed coat from the endosperm has been a major challenge in the development of a mechanical commercial milling technique for finger millet.

When in the year 2000, Unga Ltd, the oldest and largest wheat and maize miller in East Africa, decided to venture into mechanical commercial milling of finger millet, the firm approached Cimbria in East Africa to discuss the possibility of Cimbria supplying equipment that would handle thoroughly clean millet and grind

the finger millet to their stringent quality standards. The biggest challenge was, in fact, cleaning the finger millet – to ensure that 99.9 % of stones were removed. In the end, Cimbria supplied a 1.5 t/h milling plant for milling finger millet complete with intake, conveying equipment, Delta fine cleaner and de-stoner that met Unga’s strict quality requirements. In this way, mechanical commercial milling of finger millet began in Kenya. Several other commercial grain millers have since set up finger millet milling plants as part of their business, leading to increased demand for finger millet being imported from the major finger millet producing countries of Uganda, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Zambia.

During the last 5 years Cimbria has supplied and installed two finger millet cleaning plants in Nairobi to meet the increasing demand for clean finger millet by the millers.

In April this year, Cimbria East Africa built the third finger millet cleaning plant in Kenya. This followed the confirmation of an order by Stockfeed Enterprises Ltd to Cimbria for the supply, installation and commissioning of a finger millet cleaning plant. The 5-6 t/h plant includes intake, conveying by screw conveyor and bucket elevators, Delta fine cleaner, de-stoner, a bagging station, an aspiration system by Jet Filter and electronic control. Stockfeed Enterprises Ltd cleans its own stocks of millet for supply to millers and also offers grain cleaning services to its customers.



Cimbria installation for finger millet cleaning