

Exporting Canadian Buckwheat Seed to the Farmers of Nepal

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Canadian buckwheat, scientifically known as Polygonaceae Fagopyrum esculentum is also called a pseudo-cereal since it is not a cereal yet it is used like cereal grains. This crop primarily grows in Manitoba and Ontario since the open fields allow for proper sunlight exposure (Canadian Grain Commission). This crop is undemanding allowing for trouble-free growing since it adapts well to many soil conditions including poor ones. In contrast, buckwheat requires specific temperatures to grow in. High heat levels can cause the flower to “blast”, meaning the flower falls off the plant before a seed is produced. In order to maintain optimum growth, a mild temperature is required as well as a moist environment to grow in (Greg and Pat 1986).

Buckwheat grows in a short time frame of 10 weeks. A full life cycle of Canadian buckwheat is between 70-90 days. Seeds are planted 1 inch into soil and seedlings start to appear roughly 4 days after sowing and in the following 3 weeks leaves begin to become visible. Between 7-10 weeks, flowers begin to bloom and shortly after the seed matures, it is ready for harvest (St-Laurant 2011). A visual inspection can be made to see if it is time to reap the crops. Once the seeds are 75% brown, the yield is ready for harvest (Greg and Pat 1986).

One of the main reasons Canadian buckwheat should be exported to Nepal is for all of the nutritional values that it will provide. 1 cup of buckwheat has both a sufficient amount of carbohydrates as well as protein. In the Nepalese diet, primarily most of their food comes from grains and currently rice is the staple of their dishes. By replacing rice with buckwheat, 23 grams of protein would be added to their diet while also contributing

to over 40% of their needed carbohydrate intake for the day. In addition to protein and carbs, there are many vitamins and minerals that are obtained from buckwheat such as magnesium and potassium. With only 227 grams of buckwheat a day, 98% of the daily recommended amount of magnesium will be added to their diet as well as 782 mg of potassium. Antioxidants are found in large quantities in buckwheat and are a great health benefit since they provide the human body with energy to fight off infections and decrease the chances of getting cancer (Shereen Lehman 2014).

When targeting the Nepalese market, Canadian buckwheat is a product that majority of the population can consume and afford. The current carbohydrate staple in their cuisine is rice and by changing it to Canadian buckwheat, the cost change would be minimal yet extremely beneficial (Shereen Lehman 2014). Health concerns are not only for the wealthy however buckwheat is also a product that the well off would also be interested in purchasing. This being said, nearly the whole population of 27.8 people would financially afford Canadian buckwheat making this a large population product and not just a neiche (United Nation 2013).

Exporting a product from Canada to any other Country usually creates a positive impact. When dealing with Canadian buckwheat, not only does the Country as a whole benefit but as well do the farmers individually. Canadian buckwheat is currently exported to the United States of America and Japan only leaving 4% of the buckwheat production for the rest of the world (10). Nepal is a market that is not yet tapped so by creating a partnership with then, Canada broadens its allies. As a whole, Canada will only seem more superior since expanding and making partnerships with more countries. Since a

very limited amount of buckwheat is sold directly within Canada, by exporting to Nepal there would be more demand for the product year round contributing to the amount of work Canadian farmers will receive. Not only will exporting buckwheat to Nepal help the countries economy, it will also generate jobs for the Canadian farmers allowing the buckwheat farms to keep up production.

When exporting Canadian buckwheat seed, the target buyers are the farmers who will directly grow the buckwheat on their land and afterwards sell it to the consumers which is the general public of Nepal. One of the major challenges involved is educating the Nepalese farmers and showing them that it would be a greatly beneficial for them to grow the buckwheat. One strategy is to hire an executive to fly undeviating to Nepal and one on one approach the big farmers to see the product. These executives will go with prepared research showing all environmental and economical advantages that come with growing the crop. Some of the things the farmers could be educated on: Soil erosion, soil nutrition and protection of the soil form the cold winters.

Once the buckwheat is grown, there are many things that the farmers can see them as. Generally, buckwheat is milled into flour and that flour is then used to bake breads and cakes (Gaziano 2007). There are many other uses for this crop including medicinal ones. Buckwheat is often used to treat diabetes by improving the body's way of dealing with blood sugar. Consuming buck wheat strengthens and thickens the veins as well as small blood vessels improving blood flow through the body. Patients that have poor blood circulation in the legs can be treated with buckwheat to help in a holistic way(Wed MD). Aside form medicines and foods, buckwheat hulls are also used for

natural stuffing of pillows and upholstery. The farmers of Nepal will have no waste products when producing and selling the buckwheat since every part of the crop is useful. This becomes an advantage and incentive for the farmers to grow the buckwheat since they can market it afterwards to many different consumers and not be restricted to just the food aspect of this product.

Storage is a big detail when transferring the buckwheat from Canada to Nepal. Once the buckwheat seeds are picked and ready to be picked, they must be stored in a cool dry and air tight container. The dry food vault can be bought for \$63.49 CAD and has a 50 pound capacity. This vault is air tight and made of plastic therefore being light and cheap to ship with the buckwheat. This container is also waterproof and weather proof which is important when shipping buckwheat to Nepal since the climate there is often hot and humid. If the buckwheat comes in contact with any water it can begin to spoil and it will drastically decrease the shelf life.

Overall, the Canadian buckwheat seed is a great fit for export to Nepal. Not only will it benefit the environment by enriching the soil, it will also boost the economy by creating jobs for the Nepalese. Women and children would have minimum labor jobs such as shaking off the seeds and stuffing pillows with the hulls. Since every aspect of the crop is used, the farmer will not have any waste product and more money can be generated. Holistic doctors can recommend buckwheat for those suffering from diabetes and the Nepalese will have a cheaper alternative for treatment. With low average monthly salary of \$70 US, a lot of money will be saved when having so many uses for the buckwheat.

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