



CTA instructors providing field training to cinnamon workers

How Ceylon Cinnamon can change lives in Sri Lanka

THE branding of Pure Ceylon Cinnamon and promoting it in global markets was a masterstroke in giving the spice the pride of place it deserves, alongside another celebrated Pure Ceylon branded and globally famous product - tea. Apart from clearly distinguishing the superiority of Ceylon Cinnamon in export markets, the branding has helped shine the spotlight on the industry and its implications for local stakeholders.

With 31,000 hectares under cinnamon cultivation employing approximately 400,000 people directly and indirectly, the cinnamon industry still faces a shortage of labour and a lack of formal training for enhancing the skills of its workforce.

Cinnamon Training Academy

This status quo has now been changed with the establishment of the Cinnamon Training Academy (CTA), which aims to attract job-seekers independent of age or gender, train them in specific areas of cinnamon cultivation and factory operations on par with international standards, thereby helping them upgrade their skills and earn a stable income. The average export earning recorded for cinnamon bales is \$ 132 million and \$ 7 million for value-added products, which reflects that the industry has tremendous export potential.

The CTA's role as a formal training centre will help uplift cinnamon workers at the grassroots level, recognising and certifying their knowledge, thus offering them dignity of labour and social acceptance. The certification for training on occupations established for Cinnamon Factory and field operations offered by the institute augurs well for the industry and its stakeholders such as exporters and producers who have much at stake in the industry and should be buoyed to see this influence of professionalism into what has earlier been an unorganised sector.

Lack of quality certification

Over the last several decades, there has been a dip in demand for Ceylon Cinnamon due to lack of quality certification, which will change with the CTA taking on the challenge to



establish GMP accredited production centres and specific education of cinnamon workers on the relevance of safer food. The CTA, as a knowledge hub for the cinnamon industry, would be the training provider, the consulting agent for GMP and even plans to foray into product testing in the future.

In the cinnamon centres where the needed upgrade was already carried out, a safe and secure working environment is available, since Ceylon Cinnamon enjoys almost a monopoly in global markets. With more of the country's workforce opting for the cinnamon industry, local communities would be more developed.

Employment opportunities

The CTA aspires to create value for the human capital in the industry so that more workers are attracted to the industry. As the cinnamon industry forays into greater value-addition of cinnamon, which commands a higher price, further training and professionalism will become mandatory, serving to uplift workers to the next level.

The current national endeavour where the President of Sri Lanka is pushing the authorities towards creating million employment opportunities to mitigate unemployment rates, can be eased with the abundant and rewarding positions available in the cinnamon sector.

The rapidly diversifying cinnamon industry will endure into the future as more and more therapeutic uses are being found for the spice, which is pushing up its value as a wonder spice in high-end markets. The CTA will play a key role in strengthening the cinnamon supply chain and infusing professionalism and global hygiene standards, so that Pure Ceylon Cinnamon value-added products can enter to the high-end markets. Cinnamon can be a winner in the global marketplace and CTA is laying down the foundation for the sector to take the next step.

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