

CASE STUDY

Joy Millers A success story in rural East Africa

On the outer fringes of the Mount Kenya National Park, sits the town of Kutus. It's a green and fertile place where agriculture flourishes and thanks to recent improved road connections to the capital Nairobi, new business development is rife.

In 2011, a family business was established in Kutus. The founders were already successful commodity traders in maize flour and wheat flour and so they asked themselves the question: “why don't we set up our own mill”? This is when “Joy Millers” was born and their brand “Raha” which in the Swahili language means joy, was launched onto the market.

The first mill was a 25 tonne/day maize plant but by 2016, the daily capacity had doubled to 50 tonnes per day. Today in 2024, following further expansions, the daily milled tonnage on maize stands at 625 and by the end of the year the business will also be producing 400 tonnes daily of wheat flour.

It's been a remarkable journey for this family firm but they had the vision to see the opportunities in a country where the population increases by two percent each year and where the purchasing power of the middle class is growing rapidly.

There was a problem however: how to pack the flour. In Kenya the vast majority of maize and wheat flour is packed in retail sizes of 500 grams, 1 kg and 2 kg all into ready-made block-bottom paper bags and then the bags are themselves baled into paper outer sacks containing a Kenyan standard of 24kg. From the outset, Joy Millers had relied on local labour to manually hand-pack the bags but this had now reached a point where the volumes were too great and during the Covid pandemic, the risk of human contact in the packing process was a serious problem and had to be avoided. They turned to Fawema for advice, safe

in the knowledge that the German manufacturer had already sold and installed over 150 packing lines in mills all across the country. Fawema also had a subsidiary in Nairobi; Fawema Limited Kenya, with a warehouse of spare parts readily available and trained engineers on hand for new machine installations and routine service.

The management team at Joy Millers had no hesitation in selecting Fawema as their preferred choice of supplier for the new automatic, high-speed flour packing equipment: “We knew that the Fawema machine was the best on the

market and we wanted the best. We had talked to other millers in Kenya and they all told us the same thing – buy Fawema and you'll sleep peacefully at night.

That's what we did and we're delighted to say that our investment has paid off incredibly well and yes... we sleep very well too” !

Mark Wild the Fawema sales manager for Africa concludes: “meeting the owners and management at Joy Millers and working closely with them from the very start of this project has been an absolute... joy ! From our very first meeting I was impressed by the incredible attention to detail that the whole team demonstrates in every aspect of the business. They appreciate quality and they understand that like everything in life, quality comes at a certain price level. We at Fawema are proud that we have been able to assist Joy Millers in developing their business and becoming a market leader in Kenya”.

