

**Episode 15: Annette Ayamba – YourChoice Agro Processors Ltd. Uganda**



When she returned from maternity leave, Annette’s lecturing position had been filled by someone else. Rather than seek employment, Annette started YourChoice to fill a market gap she had previously identified: a reliable supply of high quality millet flour. Today, ten years later, YourChoice’s monthly production of nine different flours for human consumption is at 50 metric tonnes. The flours are processed from six locally grown crops (cassava, groundnuts, maize, millet, rice and soya beans) and sourced from 3,000 farmers (75 percent women) across Uganda. YourChoice employs 44 permanent staff.

**What you’ll hear in this episode:**

- How Annette’s desire never to lose a job again led her to start YourChoice Agro Processors Ltd., alongside a grocery shop that she was already running.
- How she identified a gap in the market: she could not meet her grocery shop customers’ demand for high quality millet flour. There simply were not enough suppliers!
- Starting out by producing two products (millet flour and millet with cassava flour) and introducing new products in response to customer requests.
- Borrowing US\$135 to get started and using household items as collateral for her Centenary Bank loan.
- Why Annette does not employ any relatives.
- Working with farmers to help them view farming as a business and to provide YourChoice with the right product quality.
- Challenges: High cost of borrowing. Obtaining quality, affordable packaging in Uganda. Limited research and innovation.
- **Annette’s dream for YourChoice:** To be the leading agro-based processor in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- **Lesson Learned:** Start with whatever you have.
- **Words of Inspiration:** Pursue your own dream, or else someone will hire you to help them pursue theirs. Be confident in your abilities.

**Useful Resources**

**Centenary Bank Uganda:**  
<http://www.centenarybank.co.ug/>  
**Uganda Women Entrepreneurs Association Ltd.:**  
<http://uweal.co.ug/>

**YourChoice Agro Processors Ltd.**

**Facebook:**  
<https://www.facebook.com/YCAPLTD/>

**We would love to hear from you**

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**Twitter:** @bizchatshub  
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