

BREADFRUIT GOES COMMERCIAL

CTI volunteers develop a commercial product for this abundant tropical fruit



“While numerous traditional methods have been developed to process and store breadfruit, this easy-to-grow, nutritious carbohydrate fruit will never become more than a locally important crop unless economical, reliable methods of extending its shelf-life and commercially processing it are developed.”

- Diane Ragone, Director of the [Breadfruit Institute](#)

In 1996, Inette Durandis, Director of the Committee on Development (COD) of the Haitian Methodist Church asked CTI to help her commercialize breadfruit, saying “Why can’t we make bread and other food stuffs from this fruit which is so abundant in Haiti? My farmers are tearing up their coffee trees to plant wheat for a cash crop, but by the third year the land has washed away and now they have nothing. If we could make breadfruit a cash crop it would be a Godsend.”

CTI and Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church accepted this challenge. In spite of a civil war, numerous hurricanes, political embroilments and several false starts, CTI and Hennepin Avenue UMC established a process, conducted taste surveys, and selected the primary equipment necessary to commercialize breadfruit.

Initially, a nutritious breadfruit cookie was developed to sell on the streets or to schools for student lunches and tuck shops. The cookie was good but the marketing failed. Other experiments in bread making produced some success in unleavened breads, which led to a decision to concentrate on breadfruit flour. However, a “Breadfruit Fair” where taste samples and recipe booklets were distributed proved to be another marketing failure.

Not to be deterred, the CTI/Hennepin Avenue UMC project team persevered, and an internet search led to experimentation with the extrusion process to convert breadfruit flour into snacks and cereal products. This decision proved to be the right one. A company called SATAG (Antillean Food Processing Corporation) was incorporated into the project, and they wrote a proposal for start-up funding. CTI volunteers tested recipes and created a commercial product that has much to offer the people of Haiti:

- A highly nutritious snack food at a very competitive price.
- A new industry for Haiti that would employ 180 rural people to harvest and dry the Breadfruit.
- A new business that would employ 32 persons on a one shift basis.
- A locally-produced cereal that would replace imported cereals.
- A potentially exportable product.



The Board of Directors of the Banque Nationale de Credit of Haiti met with SATAG Incorporators, Ms. Durandis (COD), and Fred Joseph in December, 2008 to discuss the Breadfruit Project. There, Board members munched on the breadfruit snack that the CTI/Hennepin Avenue UMC team had processed in South Beloit, WI the previous week. The product was well received and the bank committed to disburse the necessary funds “in time for sales in September 2009.” We look forward to the public production of this CTI designed breadfruit snack!

(Thanks to the project team: Hank Garwick, Project Leader, George Ewing, Technical Director, Dave Elton, Drying Process, Christine Nowakowski, Senior Scientist, General Mills and many others including American Extrusion personnel.)

Sharing resources and knowledge to fight hunger and poverty