

Desert Joy

These tomatoes from a very special cultivation site in Tunisia are real Fair Trade tomatoes. They are bursting with flavour and are cultivated responsibly, keeping the respectful treatment of every employee in mind. The employees are enthusiastic, ambitious, and hard-working. They work towards creating a better life and to cultivate the finest, most delicious tomatoes.



A snapshot of the company

This is a picture of Salha Azidi, who has been working at Desert Joy since its foundation in 2013. She is extremely committed to the company, always does her work with a smile, and has climbed her way to the top and taken on the role of supervisor.

She came to the Netherlands two years ago to observe the working methods in the greenhouses. This was a fruitful knowledge exchange and a special experience for Salha.

What we find even more special is the fact that Salha intends to carry on working at Desert Joy after she marries next year. This is quite uncommon in her culture. Salha explains: 'I thoroughly enjoy working at Desert Joy. I learn something new every day. My fiancé and I have talked about my intention to continue working there. I think it's important that I do, as it will give me more independence. Although I will still cook and do housework alongside my professional work, the fact that I'm going to keep working will ensure more balance in the relationship and that's what I want.'

Salha has been appointed a member of the Fairtrade Premium Committee and is making a significant contribution!



Transport

The first shipment of tomatoes was sent to the Netherlands three weeks ago. The tomatoes will be approved and sealed by the customs officer and will be sent to Tunis by lorry. From there, they will be shipped to Marseille and brought to the packaging station GreenPack. This process lasts only three days, which makes a pleasant change to how goods are usually transported in Tunisia!

SIAMAP 2015

SIAMAP is an agricultural exhibition in the capital city Tunis. This year it attracted 75,000 visitors, most of whom were from North Africa. Desert Joy was present with a stand brimming with Fairtrade tomatoes. It was a great success in terms of our enthusiastic employees who were promoting their products as well as the reactions from visitors. The tomatoes' new shape and colours - coming in red, orange, and yellow - had people asking what they were and whether they were made out of plastic. Despite people's confusion, they were always positive about the taste!



Visit from the Netherlands

Sister organisations Agro Care and Desert Joy would like to intensify their collaboration in the future. Different employees from Agro Care are interested in sharing their knowledge and working together with colleagues from the Tunisian branch. Better collaboration generates common goals, new insights, and improved results. They were extremely enthusiastic as they looked around the location in Tunisia, and found it to be a modern company in a country in which everything is so different.

Greenhouse panel cleaner

The western winds of the Sahara carry a great deal of dust, and 1% more light means 1% more yield. Light is important for optimal growth.

Desert Joy has high plastic greenhouses, 1280 cm tall. Plastic is not only cheaper, it also means the greenhouse roof can be built higher in order to create an air buffer. This protects the plant from high temperatures.

The panels of the greenhouse are usually cleaned by hand, which means a greater risk of injury, damage to the plastic, and lower-quality cleaning. Last year, Desert Joy began to use a prototype panel cleaner (see photos). A Manitou lifting vehicle is being used to hoist the panel cleaner onto the greenhouse. One person sits on the panel cleaner and needs around eight days to clean ten hectares of plastic panels.

The eight members of our maintenance team (Bechir, Salem, Said, Mohamed, Abdelkader, Ali, Sofien, and Lasaad) are very proud.



Do you have any comments, questions, or suggestions regarding our news update?

Then please send an e-mail to info@desertjoy.tn or call us on +216 92 591 730