



## Who we are and what we do

We would like to create more awareness about our activities in Tunisia and to provide greater insight into the cultivation of these tomatoes hailing from northern Africa. Tunisia is so different from the Netherlands, and similarities are hard to find. Every month, or even a little more often, we will issue a newsletter; plenty of pictures and economical with text. Of course, some explanations will be required and these will be provided.

Desert Joy is a company that has grown to ten hectares of greenhouses in the space of three years and provides employment for 175 people. Here is the perfect opportunity to produce superior quality tomatoes.



## 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.*



## The plants for next year are ready!

Last year we cultivated Santa tomatoes for the very first time in Tunisia. This was the perfect produce for job creation due to the labour intensive picking process. This year we once again chose the Angelle tomato variety to cultivate across five hectares. This variety produces a smaller crop but has a wonderful flavour. Last year we planted these tomatoes at the beginning of September. This year we opted to plant them halfway through August.

We also had another two and a half hectares built on, thus extending the total to ten hectares of greenhouses. Only two weeks after planting the Santa variety, we also planted two and a half hectares of Axiany tomatoes, one and a half hectares of orange Santa tomatoes, and one hectare of yellow cherry tomatoes.

Inshallah - God willing - the first truck filled with tomatoes will be setting off for the Netherlands in mid-October!

## Striving for progress

### It's even too hot for bumblebees

The last few weeks have been incredibly hot. It has been so hot that even the bumblebee population has been largely inactive. In order to get the bumblebees to fly, we have dug large pits to try and keep the bumblebee population in the greenhouse nice and cool. We even add ice from the local fish merchant to these pits every day to try and decrease the temperatures. And it has been a success too!

The plants are standing a little bare and we are cultivating with an elevated EC, but the fourth vine is now in bloom!

We are now five weeks ahead of where we were at this point last year and we expect to be exporting from the second vine onwards.



The first tomato and a very proud employee!

This year an even better plant than last year was delivered to us. The grower purchased an osmosis installation which had a positive effect on growth.

We could not complete our work last year as we did not have enough electric carts. This resulted in us not being able to prune some of the enormous vines that were bearing between 50 and 70 flowers. Consequently, we had a great deal of harvesting work as the tomatoes remained small. We started running behind schedule which led to too many red tomatoes. The final fruits of excessively large vines are also often of lower quality. However, this year we are running according to schedule and work is progressing smoothly!



### Visit by the minister

Last week, the Tunisian Minister of the Interior paid a visit to Desert Joy. He was joined by the governor, the mayor, their associates, and even a camera crew. We later learned that we had become national news.

Special thanks were given for the jobs that Desert Joy had created. After all, Tunisia has a relatively young population and education is of quite a good standard. However, there are few job opportunities, which leaves many feeling disillusioned. Furthermore, the importance of international cooperation was also emphasized. This is not a Tunisian company, nor is it a Dutch company. Rather, it is the perfect mix of both nations.



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

Then please send an e-mail to [info@desertjoy.tn](mailto:info@desertjoy.tn) or call us on +216 92 591 730