



**SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH COUNCIL**  
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## **Endless Possibilities with Milling and Drying**

For many locals who have watched their income streams dissipate due to various factors, including the COVID-19 pandemic, there still exist pockets of opportunities. Known for its services to agro-processors, there is one gem in particular at the Scientific Research Council (SRC) that with minimal effort can quickly bolster or generate a well-needed income; the area of milling and drying. Clients who have been utilizing this service for years, some for over a decade, will tell you that this is an area that has been performing extremely well for them.

For many agro-processors this is an attractive business venture as not only is it hassle-free and accessible, but it is also a multi-billion-dollar industry, globally. Seemingly unaffected by the COVID-19 crisis, the global market for Dry Milling has projected continuous growth for this industry. As reported by Reportlinker.com, the industry "estimated at US\$72.5 Billion in the year 2020 is projected to reach a revised size of US\$94.7 Billion by 2027, growing at a CAGR of 3.9% over the period 2020-2027". This is definitely a good venture for those with an interest in

this industry says Ms. Annaleise Aiken, SRC's Process Development Team Leader, who also projects expected growth in this area, as more people embark on entrepreneurial ventures locally.

Stating that the service is in high demand with SRC receiving between 945- 1190 kg per month of raw material for milling on a monthly basis, Aiken highlights just how lucrative this industry is. She states that, "There are several opportunities for the use of milled products, such as in the production of flours, spice mixes, formulations for supplements and internationally there is a demand for Jamaican herbal teas and supplements, as well as gluten-free alternatives to flour (eg. cassava and sweet potato flour)."



*Dried Sarsaparilla in preparation for the milling process*

Manufacturer of some of Jamaica's finest sea moss, *Amor Jamaican Herbs and Essentials*, can testify to the value within this industry. Amor's founder, Mr. Beezer, after extensive research of the local milling and drying terrain was led to the doors of the SRC- a move he has not regretted, due to the positive impact on his business. For him, milling and drying is quite convenient, as it is a fairly quick process that has facilitated timely filling of orders.

With prices as low as JA \$1800.00 per hour for drying and \$30.00 per kilogram for milling, the service, due to its affordability, is very accessible. Persons can even request one service independent of the other as clients have been known to take in sufficiently dried products for

milling and the same applies for drying as well. According to Aiken, “clients can bring in as little as 1 kg of product for drying and milling, but it is recommended that they start with at least 5kg of raw material to reduce the percentage of product loss”. The Council utilizes a steam dryer, which has a load capacity of approximately 80 kg, but drying times will vary from product to product. Materials that are brought in for this service include: spices, herbs, roots/tubers, fruits, as well as endemic plants which are thought to have health benefits. SRC currently receives approximately 10 -18 clients per month and is able to mill as much as 120 kg of dried product daily.



*Dried Soursop (L) and Dog Blood leaves (R) prior to milling*

With the milling and drying process, possibilities are endless. Not only does the process extend the shelf life of products, but it also encourages greater retention of flavour and the longevity of products. It is also a useful way of creating value-added products from surplus crops such as fruits that may have otherwise gone to waste. Many products from this process have been used as snacks such as dried fruits or utilized as key ingredients in confectionaries. The milling of dried products also transforms them into versatile ingredients which can be used to create

unique teas, spice blends, rubs, sauces, supplements, and even flour.



*Milled products of various particle sizes prepared and ready for distribution*

For persons interested in accessing SRC's milling and drying facilities, the process is as simple as contacting the Scientific Research Council at (876) 977-2192 or (876) 927-1771-4. The SRC also offers consultancy and technical support to persons interested in establishing their own milling and drying facilities.