

Nepal: Final Essay

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Since The Beginning...

Since the beginning of humanity, there have been four main, essential jobs to maintain healthy living and grow stronger as a species. These jobs are food producers such as farmers and hunters, a healer or type of doctor, a religious worshiper or spiritual teacher, and someone to teach and raise younger generations. All of these jobs, except for a teacher, involves the use of herbal plants for either food, healing, or ritual. No matter how far someone looks back into human history, herbs and herbal products have always been a large part of culture, healing, and survival upon all races and nationalities.

One religion or lifestyle that largely bases their daily lives and practices around herbal products is the religion of Hinduism. Hinduism is one of the oldest practiced religions, dating back to two-thousand BC (“Hindu History.” ReligionFacts.com. 2015). There are many variations of Hinduism over different parts of the world but mainly in Indian and smaller countries in southern Asia. One country that largely practices Hinduism is the country of Nepal. Nepal is located between China and India and is home to the beloved Himalayan mountains. The population of Nepal is about twenty-eight million people and eighty-two percent of that population is Hindu. (The World Factbook. 2015). That means roughly twenty-two and a half million people practice Hinduism in Nepal. Since such a large percentage of Nepal’s population is Hindu, herbal production is a very large focus for many of Nepali farmers. Nepal’s very unique land regions also offer many growing opportunities for certain medicinal herbs that are otherwise difficult to grow elsewhere. According to Vision Paudel (2006), Nepal represents a tiny fraction of the world’s land but its geography and climate is so unique that it is a home to a surprisingly vast collection of medicinal plants. This Himalayan land contains vast amount of aromatic plants, which could have other non-medicinal commercial values. It has become an important matter of research for Nepal to understand these plants and to utilize them in a sustainable and ethical manner and bring benefit to the currently poor people of Nepal and the medical need of the people around the world. (Vision

Puadel 2006 paragraph four). Because of Nepal's unique herbs and plants, Nepali herbal products are desired all around the world. The biggest issue with exporting Nepali herbal products is the limited amount of internationally marketable quality herbs and the availability of an international market to these farmers. Majority of the countries herbs are grown, harvested, dried and sold to local Nepalese on the Nepali market, or sold directly to Nepalese from the farmers themselves. Nepali farmers are unable to take the herbal production and Nepali herbal market to the next level simply because of the lack of availability and the failure to even recognize the opportunities that could be very real to the herbal farmers. Nepalese do not realize how desired their herbal products truly are around the world.

An organization called the Nepali Herbs and Herbal Products Association, or NEHHPA for short, is an association that was founded in 2002 with the main focus to promote herbal products from Nepal on a more professional market. The organization is said to be "Nepal Herbs and Herbal Products Association (NEHHPA), an umbrella organization of the herbal producers, manufacturers and traders, is established to build up sustainable business system and has been working for the promotion of herbs and herbal sector in Nepal since 2002." (Yubraj Subedi 2015). NEHHPA has been organizing various activities and events in Nepal for Nepali herbal farmers to promote the extension of the marketing opportunities for its members. The organization also says that "Its main goal is to improve the livelihood of the underprivileged by working to provide farmers with market access to create income opportunities for rural households. Providing necessary support to rural communities for producing and marketing quality products is vital to the work NEHHPA does." (Yubraj Subedi 2015). The main efforts and goals of the NEHHPA in summery is to educate herbal farmers on how to properly produce herbs for a more professional market, and introduce them to this market. The Nepal Herbs and Herbal Products Association has done lots already to help

the herbal farmers succeed but there is a much bigger movement that can be done with the help of the NEHHPA to make the herbal farmers in Nepal very successful.

The Movement for Herbal Success

Herbal farmers in Nepal face many challenges and difficulties during the production of their crops. One of the largest issues that farmers face, is a clean way to dry their herbal products after they are harvested. If herbs are not dried correctly, they can mold, catch disease, lose nutrients, over dry, and most of all become contaminated by dirt, insects, or pests and unwanted debris. If any of those conditions occur, the herbs will either be forced to go to waste, or be sold at a much lower cost. Since a very large percent of herbs need to be dried, drying the herbal products is a very large part of the Nepali farmer's practices. The biggest issue is the problem of creating products that are clean and pure enough to be sold on a more professional market. Since the NEHHPA is already trying and working with farmers to create marketable products, the association will be interested in hearing the proposal to create locations where herbal farmers will be able to dry their herbs, have them monitored for quality control, and have their herbs sold at a higher rate to a international market. The idea is to build small, economical herb drying centers where farmers will go with their harvested herbs, be given a section in the shelter to dry their products, have their products checked periodically and guarded, then sold at a much higher price that what they would make on a local market. Less products will go to waste, and a higher income will be made by these farmers. Here is how it will work...

Solution

Over the years, people have designed herb drying shelters that use thermal heat and convection to dry the products. The idea for Nepal is to build these small shelters, likely around ten feet long, eight feet wide, and six feet tall. These shelters will have four

rakes on either side that will be two and a half feet deep, by ten feet long. This makes two hundred square feet of drying for each shelter and a three foot walk way in the middle for inspecting the products, and giving the farmers space to move while spreading the products on the racks. The shelter will be constructed with minimal costs involved. The major cost of construction will be to fund workers to build the shelters and the poly plastic sides and mesh racks and doors. The general idea of the structure is the same as the images shown below.



(Christine 2013)

The racks in the image are essential to the design of the shelters.

The mesh material that is suspending the herbs will allow air flow all around the drying product to allow them to dry completely and evenly. Staples to attach the mesh to the wood, and nails to build the wooden frame can be purchased from a store called Worldwide Multipurpose Company (P) Ltd. The store is located near the center of Nepal in a city called Bharatpur. (Worldwide mp. 2015) the poly plastic siding can be purchased at most hardware stores.

(Christine 2013)

Since prices are not available online for Nepali hardware shops, the prices below are prices from Canadian hardware stores.

4 MIL

MODEL NO.	SIZE W x L	PRICE PER ROLL			LBS./ ROLL	ADD TO CART	
		1	2	4+		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
S-11175	3 x 100'	\$25	\$24	\$22	6	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="ADD"/>
S-5130	4 x 100'	\$24 per roll any quantity			8	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="ADD"/>
S-20066	5 x 100'	33	32	30	11	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="ADD"/>
S-5131	6 x 100'	34	33	31	12	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="ADD"/>
S-5132	8 x 100'	44	43	41	16	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="ADD"/>
S-5133	10 x 100'	\$47 per roll any quantity			20	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="ADD"/>
S-5134	12 x 100'	64	62	59	24	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="ADD"/>
S-13636	14 x 100'	74	72	67	27	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="ADD"/>
S-5135	16 x 100'	81	79	75	32	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="ADD"/>
S-5136	20 x 100'	96	91	88	40	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="ADD"/>
S-5853	24 x 100'	114	112	107	47	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="ADD"/>
■ S-11176	32 x 100'	174	170	165	71	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="ADD"/>
■ S-17860	40 x 100'	230	224	215	77	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="ADD"/>

(uline 2015)

The four mil grade will be strong enough to last the weather, and thin enough to allow sunlight to enter the shelter and heat the enclosure. If the shelter is constructed to be ten feet long, eight feet wide, and six feet high, the shelter will need a total of, forty-four feet, of ten-foot-wide poly plastic. This will allow enough overlap to cover all spaces, and prevent water from intruding. This means that one roll of ten-by-one hundred feet by four milometers will be enough to build two shelters. That adds a cost of \$33.50 to the cost of a shelter (uline 2015). The next cost will be the mesh to create the shelves. The mesh would be best to be made from aluminum mesh since nylon, or

other fiber material can hold diseases or possibly contaminate the herbs. Also, steel could rust from the moisture and also ruin the herbs. Aluminum is food grade safe, and will not carry disease. Aluminum mesh rolls that are three feet wide, and one hundred feet long, come to \$152.00 when priced at Rona, Canada (Rona 2015). If there are eight racks in the shelter, and each are ten feet long, that means eighty feet will be needed to construct the racks. Also, if the doors will be made with mesh, that takes up twelve more feet. This means that one roll will make one shelter, adding \$152.00 to the construction cost. The last, and most important component to making the shelter is the wooden frame. The shelters will be made in rural areas where farmers will be able to access them. This means that there will most likely be forestry around that can be used for the frame work. An association called the Nepal Foresters' Association is a group that is said to "establish prosperity and progress of Nepal's forestry and foresters. It has a mission to see sustainable natural resources conservation and management through scientific approach. The association also guides its members to work in their professional capacity to ensure the continuous flow of productive, protective and social goods and services from land, forests and biodiversity resources for general well being in perpetuity." (Nepal Foresters' Association 2015). In simple terms, the organization is set to maintain the forestry in Nepal and keep it in balance. By getting the association on board with the project, Nepali wood from the forestry will be able to be used to construct the shelter locations. In conclusion, the price to build one herb drying center, it will cost around \$200.00 in supplies (poly tarp, mesh, nails, staples), plus salary to fund the workers to construct the shelters.

The Bigger Picture

Nepal herbs and essential oils from the herbs are desired world wide. Various websites sell Nepal herbal products, as well as, certain stores across the world (National Exports Private Limited. 2015). For the operation to flourish with both Nepal and Canada

benefiting from the project, A Canadian entrepreneur should create a location in Canada or create a Nepali based brand to sell the Nepali herbs to Canadian herb distributors, such as Premier Herbal (Premier Herbal. 2015). According to Conrad Richter, “The impact of the baby boom on the marketplace is increasing with each year. The crest of the boom is now passing through the 30-40 age bracket, a time of increasing personal income. The baby boom generation has a larger world view, has travelled much more than previous generations, and so has picked up gastronomical tastes that are more adventurous and more cosmopolitan. I think this is one reason why ethnic foods and ethnic restaurants are so much more popular today, compared to just twenty years ago. Early "boomers" are now reaching 50, an age when health concerns are more prominent and reliance on herbal remedies for minor complaints, and on herbal teas for preventative health is greater.” (Conrad R. 2015). As Conrad explained, the desire for herbs have grown with the new generation where health has been a larger concern. More and more people are drinking herbal teas, herbal foods and remedies. With this growth, the desire for herbs has shot up greatly over the years. People are looking for safe, healthy foods to consume. Canadians are looking for safe, healthy foods, so the desire for herbal products will be, and are in high demand. In conclusion, a Canadian entrepreneur would be profitable to create a system to directly import Nepali herbs to Canada, and sell them to another herbal distributor. The shelters will be funded by the sales of the products as well as, a small fee charged to the Nepali farmers.

How It Works

To get the program started, the shelter project will be advertised for approximately six months throughout Nepal through posters, flyers, and the NEHHPA will advertise by word of mouth to herbal farmers. Herbal farmers will be asked to register themselves through the NEHHPA so that a map of where each farmer is can be constructed. After a map is made, the NEHHPA will be able to estimate how many

shelters will need to be made to satisfy the farmers. This will allow the organization to estimate the material cost and the work force needed to build. During the building of the shelters, some members of the NEHHPA will be flown to Canada to take a training class on how to properly inspect, and determine the quality of the herbs in the shelter. After the training is complete, and the shelters have been constructed, the Nepali inspectors will be flown back to Nepal and assigned to certain shelters. During the harvest of the herbs, the farmers who signed up for a drying shelter will bring their herbs to the shelters and lay them onto the racks to dry. Once they are cured and ready to export, the herb will be packaged up the suitable packaging for shipment, shipped to Kathmandu, Nepal, and flown to Canada. Once in Canada, the herbs will be graded, and repackaged for sales in the Canadian herb distributors. The Nepali farmers will be paid according to the price the herbs were sold for to the distributor. The rest of the money made will go towards shipping costs, funding the training for the Nepali's, as well as maintaining the shelters.

In Conclusion

In conclusion, herbal farmers in Nepal will be paid a higher price for their herbal products than if they were to sell them on the conventional Nepali market, have a safe a secure place to properly dry their herbs, have a guarantee of there product sales, and will not have to package or monitor their herbs once they are in the racks. Jobs will be created for the people that will maintain and monitor the shelters, as well as fund the workers to construct the shelters. Canada will profit by the import of clean, properly cured herbal products by the sales to the distributers. In theory, by getting the NEHHPA and a Canadian entrepreneur on board with this plan, both Canada and Nepal will be profitable from the construction of these economical herbal shelters and distribution of the herbal products to Canada.

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