



*Absolutely Chicken*





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**Rahim Manji, Executive Director of HMH-Kuku** provides us with an insight into his role and shares how despite the crowded market, the company continues to flourish

## Briefly introduce us to HMH-Kuku.

HMH Kuku Ltd is the parent company of the Yo Kuku! and Yo Kuku! Feeds brands, established in Uganda in 2011 and commissioned by H.E President Museveni in 2013. It is a joint venture company limited by shares between Ugandan-owned Hudani Manji Holdings Ltd (HMH) and Africa Poultry Development (APD) Limited.

The vertically integrated business employs close

to 700 staff across the broiler farms, feed mill, processing facilities, distribution centre, Kuku shops, and offices, all of whom collaborate closely together. The company's farms and facilities are in various areas in Kampala and Semuto with its headquarters at Plot 2-10 Hamu Road, Bugolobi, in Kampala. Yo Kuku! has consistently delivered on its commitment to provide high-quality nutritious and safe processed chicken products to their customers in Uganda and the surrounding region. Our diverse





range of products, including whole chicken such as muchomo, standard, specialties such as drumsticks and thighs, and by-products such as

liver, gizzards, and necks, are all crafted with uncompromising food safety standards in mind.

Over the years, our company has built an impressive customer base that includes global fast-food outlets, hotel and restaurant chains, and leading supermarkets, among others. Some of our customers, such as KFC, expect very high quality and safety standards. Yo Kuku! has been able to meet these requirements and supply them since they established operations in Uganda. Additionally, we take pride in operating a strong retail footprint of Kuku shops in 10 major towns across the country.

We have also expanded our reach into neighbouring countries supplying distributors in Kenya, South Sudan, and Burundi.

Yo Kuku! Feeds produces chicken feed for both broilers and layers, offering products to cater to the different stages of growth. We operate 20 retail outlets in Kampala, Mukono, Jinja, Mbale, Masaka, Hoima, and Gulu, with multiple distributors and retailers extending our footprint across Uganda.

### **What are some ongoing or recent projects that you are most interested in showcasing?**

We recently completed a new addition to our broiler farms, significantly increasing our production capacity,

### **Could you tell us more about any environmental initiatives that you have in place?**

We share APD's purpose of 'enabling shared prosperity through sustainable food production'. This means that from our farms to all our operations, we integrate sustainable practices across the entire value chain to minimise our environmental footprint in food production.

Most notably, HMH Kuku Limited uses environmentally friendly biodegradable material (carton boxes) for its secondary packaging to avoid environmental degradation, and where propylene sacks are reused for secondary packaging, they are always reused and recycled before disposal.

Also, our wastewater treatment is purely a natural process and so, friendly to the environment. We use cow dung for wastewater treatment through the natural oxidation ponds, which poses minimal risk to the environment compared to chemical treatment methods.



which will help us continue to satisfy our existing customers and attract new ones. Additionally, we have upgraded our logistics with new bulk trucks to ensure top-notch cold chain delivery and maintain the high quality of our products in transit.

## What, for you, differentiates your business from the competition?

We are the market leader in the supply value chain for chicken and we are channeling strategic moves to ensure that we maintain this position in Uganda.

Our broilers are grown and fed on organic feeds made from just maize, sunflower cake, and soya.

Consumers are becoming increasingly health-conscious about what they eat and about the inputs that go into what they eat, including chicken. We offer our clients fresh, tasty, tender chicken products, untainted by fish or other unacceptable additives.

We are focused on producing the safest and most nutritious chicken products. Our state-of-the-art facilities are accompanied by strict quality standards that are enforced from the arrival of day-old chicks at the farm, to the end processing and delivery of chicken and chicken products to the customer.

With a strong retail presence, we ensure our chicken products are easily accessible to all customer segments through our Kuku Shops, as well as through supermarkets, hotels, and restaurants we supply.

## Could you tell us about some of the major challenges faced within the industry and the business itself and then detail how these have been overcome?

Fluctuations in the cost of raw materials

particularly the inputs used in making feed, rising global and local inflation, increase in the cost of fuel all directly impact our business and operations.

We also continue to contend with political and other barriers to fully develop our export supply chain. We've got a highly motivated team that pulls together to find innovative solutions to these challenges.

## What are your major future ambitions going forward and how will these goals be achieved?

Plans are in motion to grow our investments in Uganda and support existing export trade. This could be through expanding our broiler farm capacity to meet increasing demand or to enhance our processing and feed production capabilities. When new opportunities arise, we need to be ready to strategically explore the possibilities of expanding our footprint.

## What are you most proud of in relation to the company overall?

Celebrating our 10-year anniversary in November 2021 was a significant milestone for us.



Not many businesses reach their fifth year, let alone their tenth. HMH-Kuku is now 13 years old and thriving thanks to the support from our customers, staff, and other stakeholders, who have positioned us as a leader in the dressed chicken market.

During this time, HMH-Kuku has successfully partnered with different players in the poultry industry. Most recently, we have partnered with Africa Poultry Development Limited (APDL), a prominent business conglomerate operating across Zambia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda.

### **What does the next 12 months look like for the business?**

We are looking to rapidly grow our business over the next year, by prioritising customer needs, particularly those planning to expand their outlet base in Uganda. Additionally, we plan to continually increase our brand distribution to new markets in the region, particularly the DRC.

To improve our service delivery and enhance customer convenience, we are embracing technology to innovate around the online marketplace. We're also looking to strengthen sustainability partnerships with other brands to foster community build-up and support initiatives through CSR activities.

Sustainability will continue to remain at the heart of our business and a top priority, in trying to achieve a triple bottom line for future generations.



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**HMH-KUKU**

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