



**Strategy and Experience to Market the Amazonian Fruits in Switzerland/ EU**

**Camucamu**

**Acai**

**Cupuacu**

**Araza**

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### *Business history*

Since my first delicious milkdrink of Araza in Costa Rica in 1992 I was convinced by it's market potential. And on an excursion to Manaus and the Western Amazonas region in April 2001 the idea arose to market Camucamu, Cupuacu and Acai as fresh fruit pulp in Switzerland.

In 2001 the Oroverde GmbH was founded with little money. A nutritional chemist, a lawyer, an economist an agronomist joined for that task.

### *Strategy*

It's the idea to make underutilized fruits to cash crops in order to improve livelihood and to contribute to environmental protection. The aim is the protection of Amazonian rainforest by generating income in a sustainable manner. As a model is used the 30'000 ha sustainable forest project 'Precious Woods'. The four fruits are grown in diversified agroforestry systems.

The fruit pulps were presented to over 30 potential buyers. The range varies from leading national and international firms, small and mid-size purchasers of beverage-, fruits- and dairy industries. Surprisingly the dairy industries showed a greater interest to test seriously the four fruits. The key contacts were with mid-size firms with organic products where a clear vision to grow exists, based on readiness for pioneer tasks. Our main customers are organic dairies.

Fortunately oroverde GmbH had at it's date of foundation already numerous direct personal contacts to corresponding industries. Personal contacts are the main entrance door. Personnel from Research and Development proved to be ready to test new raw materials or products in development. In contrast marketing directors often acted as a break and therefore the product developers stopped going ahead in bringing their product-ideas to success. Why should the costumer buy it? That's the crucial question. Where is the story? Beverage markets are displacement markets. There is a huge variety of products with new characteristics, mixtures, wellness effects and tastes. Each year an avalanche of modified or new beverages and fruit juices are launched.

In our case the crucial step towards marketing success consists in the launch of an own product. It's a natural beverage produced by a contractor. Distribution is done (joint venture) with a worldwide active distribution firm.

We had observed the trends in food industries. Beverage markets are among the fastest growing markets. The highest net growing rates in 2002 showed fruit drinks, energy drinks, sports- and healthdrinks.

Why are we optimistic? We have found purchasers for all four fruits. The crucial step is the development of a final product for which a world wide distributor was found.

### **Key characteristics of the 4 fruits**

- Health functionalities: Anthocyanins, Vitamins, Iron, long- and shortterm energy

- Harmonisation in dairy products

- Exotic flavours

- Organically grown

### **Target markets**

- Wellness/Sports

- Health

- 'Latin wave': Latinisation of European culture

The target product segments are: fitrinks, sportsdrinks, natural energy drinks and new exotic aromas and functionalities for a variety of dairy products.

### Products on the market

	Araza	Acai	Camucamu	Cupuacu
2003			Orange/Camucamu fruit juice	
2004	OrganicYogurt	Organic Yogurt	Camucamu Yogurt	Organic Yogurt
	<b>Oroverde beverage</b>			

### All clients demand (kg)

	Araza	Acai	Camucamu	Cupuacu
2004	1'800	11'100	6'900	2'400
2005	7'100	61'800	48'200	3'200
2006	15'000	120'000	90'000	10'000

### Products developed

	Araza	Acai	Camucamu	Cupuacu
2001	Milkdrink Marmelade Icecream Sorbet			
2002	Sorbet Liquor Candy Fitdrink Powerdrink Wheydrink	Liquor Sorbet Fitdrink Powerdrink Wheydrink	Sorbet Liquor Fitdrink Powerdrink Fruitjuice-Mixture Wheydrink	Sorbet Liquor Fitdrink Powerdrink Wheydrink
2003	Yogurt Acidmilkdrink Powerdrink Sirup	Yogurt Powerdrink Sirup	Yogurt Powerdrink Sirup	Yogurt Sirup
2004	<b>Oroverde beverage</b> Sirups of all three fruits and combinations of them			

### Marketing activities

- Marketing survey
- Articles in 'Gastronews', 'Sonntagszeitung'
- Fair: Fruit Logistica 2002
- Direct marketing in latin and trendy restaurants
- TV broadcast (3SAT)
- Direct presentation to future clients

Indirect presentation to future clients by partnership of fruit processing industry  
Presentation to sustainable and ethic programs of a big retailer

### **Midterm objectives**

Foundation of Oroverde Brasil  
Expansion of production capacities in the Amazone for Camucamu, Cupacu: contracts with producers & own production base; organic certification of additional producers  
Installation of processing facility in Costa Rica  
Participation in processing plant in the western Amazone  
Warehouse/ refrigeration in Manaus  
Expand demand to fruit processing industries in the EU

### **Take-home-message**

Lessons learnt

Each market segment is 'stuffed'  
Develop own final products and find distributor: reduce dependency  
Combination of 3 factors: exotic flavours/aromas & organic origin & demanded health functionalities  
Unknown exotic flavours should be combined with known flavours  
Go for mid-size pioneer companies  
Don't go for very small markets

## Introduction to the fruits

### Camucamu (Myrciaria dubia)

#### *Production / characteristics / main use*

Camucamu has the **highest vitamin C content** of all tropical and subtropical fruits. With up to 3 gms of vitamin C pro 100 gms of fresh weight, it is 70 times richer in vitamin C than oranges and 50% richer than Acerola. A few grammes of the pulp are sufficient for the recommended daily dose of vitamin C. The content in the fully ripened, very aromatic fruit is about 0.8%. Wild bushes, four to eight metres high, are to be found on the regularly flooded river banks and lake shores of Brazil, Peru, Columbia and Venezuela. Camucamu is cultivated in small, ecologically acceptable plantations rather than in large ones.

The round, dark yellow to pink fruits are 1-3 cms large. They are easier to transport than Araza. The fruit flesh content is approximately 80%. The sour taste of the fruit is similar to that of Araza, which belongs to the same family, and it is enjoyed with the addition of sugar, as fruit juice, sorbet, ice cream, and in desserts. The peel is used in food colouring. The acidity of the fruit is mainly due to the high content of citric acid and vitamin C. The juicy, **incomparably aromatic pulp** also contains a high degree of **flavonoides** interesting to our health, in addition to the very high vitamin C content.



Camucamu fruits

### Araza (Eugenia stipitata)

The tropical fruit Araza was domesticated by the Indios of the western Amazonas (Peru, Ecuador Columbia and Brazil). It has recently been cultivated on a small scale not only in these areas, but also in central America (Costa Rica). No use is made of extensive monocultures. The plantations concentrate on a variety of fruit and other trees. The method is consistent and the fruits can be organic certified according to EU VO 2092/91.

Araza grows well on poor soil and is hardly susceptible to diseases and parasites. Araza is an environmentally friendly alternative to the problematic banana monocultures of the southern Atlantic area of Costa Rica, with their intensive use of harmful pesticides.

#### *Characteristics*

The golden yellow fruits of the 2-6 metres high bushes can be best compared to quinces. Botanically speaking they are berries, which have a delicious fruit flesh and contain between 3 and 20 fleshy seeds. The juicy yellow flesh is sour and so particularly suitable for **refreshing drinks**. The thin peel of the 70-300 gm heavy fruits exudes an intense, pleasant aroma. It is necessary to let the fruits ripen on the tree in order that the full aroma can develop. The processed fruit flesh of the ripe fruits is stored deep frozen. Quality tests have been made which show that the characteristic flavour keeps for months using this form of storage.

### *Main use*

Locally, Araza is enjoyed as fresh fruit juice, in fruit cocktails, as nectar, jam, in milk drinks and as ice cream. Thanks to the stabilising effect of its own pectin, Araza is especially suitable for the production of exotic milk products. The flavour components develop especially well in **milk products**.

Consumers greatly appreciate this individual fruit flavour. In addition, Araza has a vitamin C content which is twice as high as in oranges. So far, Araza is only available in the humid lowlands of tropical Latin America. It's possible that certain visitors to these countries have already made the acquaintance of this wonderful flavour. There are certainly many less widely travelled consumers ready to indulge in a new exotic aroma experience.



(right) . Araza (left ) with mango (centre) and orange

### Acai (Euterpe oleracea)

#### *Production*

Acai is mainly cultivated in the Brazilian state of Para, where its high nutritional value has made it a basic food in country areas. The local population makes use of both the fruit and the palm hearts. The dark purple fruits are about 1-1.5 cm. in diameter. The edible part of the fruit is the approximately 1cm thick mesocarp, which surrounds the hard seeds. The fruit flesh is turned into a thick pulp called „Vinho de Acai“, which is greatly relished. About 10% of the yearly production of approximately 100 000 tonnes come from Amazonia and Mananhao. The yearly harvest pro hectare is very high and financially more rewarding than livestock, for example. In addition, the Agroforestry system of cultivation is carried out in a consistently ecological manner in the endangered tropical rain forests of the Amazon.

#### *Main use*

Recently Acai has experienced a boom as an **energy drink** , especially among athletes and young people in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, in the south of Brazil. In many restaurants it is served as a refreshing drink with ice, or simply in pulp form. Sugar, Guarana (which contains caffeine) or other fruits and cereals are added. By adding Guarana, you get an unusually full favoured and effective energy drink.

Compared to grapes, Acai contains a higher amount of **anthocyanins**, which is of health interest because of its **antioxidative effect**. Acai also has a high iron content. A bowl of delicious, easily digestible Acai enjoyed as a morning „muesli“, supplies the body with vital energy for several hours.



Acai in baskets (Latas)  
13-15 kg each

## Cupuacu

### *Production / main use*

Cupuacu is closely related to the cocoa plant, but in contrast to it, use is also made of the creamy, fibrous flesh. The fruit tree comes from the undergrowth of the forest. It is mainly cultivated by small farmers. The fruits weigh 1.2 kilos on average, and the pulp production takes place in small factories around Manaus. It is also brought increasingly to the south east of Brazil. Because of its interesting flavour, Cupuacu is one of the most popular fruits in the Amazonas region. It is usually consumed as **juice, nectar**, jam, or ice cream, and also as a popular dessert. The fruit's own pectin is an aid in jam making. **Yoghurt** has been produced on an experimental basis, and the **distinctive fruit flavour** developed to its full advantage.

The name Cupuacu means „advantage“.

Rather less significant is the use of the seeds for the extraction of fat, similar to cocoa butter. This fat is used in the production of chocolate and also cosmetics.

Aglucones, glucosides, rutinoides and linalool oxide were established as aroma components, and we can follow the development of taste during pasteurisation and processing.



Cupuacu fruits