

## EXOTIC EPZ

*Community-focused agribusiness grows with solar*



*Exotic EPZ was founded by a dynamic trio of Kenyan female entrepreneurs, Jane Maigua, Loise Maina, and Charity Ndegwa, to bring healthy products from the African continent to the world and have a positive impact in their community and on the environment. The company buys macadamia nuts from smallholder farmers, processes the nuts, and sells them to the national and international markets. The founders of Exotic EPZ are passionate about creating sustainable and inclusive agribusiness value chains, so they provide far more services than nut processing. They provide smallholder farmers with various training, ranging from pest control to soil care. They also provide the community with direct employment in their nut processing facility, focusing mostly on jobs for women and youth. 85% of their employees are women, while 74% fall into the youth category. All Exotic EPZ employees have access to personal and professional development provided by the company.*

### CHALLENGE

#### How to sustain a business and the environment

The COVID-19 pandemic hit the Kenyan, and indeed global economies hard. In response to plummeting demand in the nut market, Exotic EPZ's leaders reduced product prices. In order to accommodate this new pricing while still supporting smallholder farmers and company employees, Exotic EPZ needed to cut operational costs. The rising electricity tariffs provided extra incentive to investigate alternative sources of electricity, such as solar. Solar energy was not only

attractive for financial reasons. In addition to supporting the community, Exotic EPZ's leaders are committed to promoting environmental sustainability. The company promotes sustainable farming and reduces processing waste by using inedible nut parts in creative ways, such as using macadamia shells to fuel boilers. In order to further reduce their carbon footprint, Exotic EPZ's leaders decided to transition to renewable electricity generation.

Financed by:



[www.redaviasolar.com](http://www.redaviasolar.com)

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### SOLUTION

#### Quality energy for quality nuts

In response to the global pandemic, REDAVIA introduced the COVID-19 Resilience Program, which provided 6 months of free solar energy, followed by an affordable lease-to-own agreement, to businesses in Ghana and Kenya. As a provider of affordable sustainable energy, REDAVIA was the natural choice for Exotic EPZ to reduce costs while also reducing carbon emissions.

In March of 2021, REDAVIA's on-site engineers deployed a 48 kWp roof-mounted solar plant at the Exotic EPZ processing facility in Nairobi. REDAVIA's premium aluminum roof mount system is designed for fast-track installation, minimal impact on the existing building, and easy maintenance.

Critically, REDAVIA provides full-service, including installation, 24/7 remote monitoring, and training for on-site maintenance staff, at no extra cost, so the leaders of Exotic EPZ can save money while still focusing on processing nuts and serving their community.



*minimal  
upfront  
investment*

*More than  
53MWh  
per year*



### BENEFIT

#### Solar energy for nut processing

Over the 12 year lease term of the solar plant, the plant is projected to generate 53 MWh while reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by an estimated 6 tonnes. In addition, the service provides meaningful financial savings for Exotic EPZ, enabling them not just to survive the COVID-19 crisis, but to thrive. Exotic EPZ's leaders are planning to reinvest the company savings into the business by scaling up their macadamia nut processing, allowing them to support more smallholder farmers and to employ more community members.

Exotic EPZ's partnership with REDAVIA will grow alongside the company, as REDAVIA's modular business model supports company expansion by offering solar in standard units that can easily be added or removed.

Jane Maigua, Exotic EPZ MD, commended the business relationship, saying, "REDAVIA has shown commitment to our partnership and has always demonstrated that they care for our needs first."