

PRESS RELEASE

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Aruwa Capital Management Invests in AgroEknor International

A leading exporter of superfoods and consumer wellness brand

Aruwa Capital Management (“Aruwa”), an early-stage growth equity and gender lens fund investing in Nigeria and Ghana is pleased to announce an investment into AgroEknor International (“AgroEknor” or the “Company”), a fast-growing hibiscus flower exporter and wellness brand.

AgroEknor, founded in 2013 is primarily engaged in the processing and exportation of dried hibiscus flowers, a superfood and wellness product. All flowers are sourced locally in Nigeria, processed in house, and exported all year round to international clients in the food and beverage industry, where it is typically used as flavouring in healthy teas and other drinks as well as the pharmaceutical industry, where it is used in immunity boosting and high blood pressure medicines. The Company has significant control over all aspects of its value chain including planting, harvesting, drying, packaging and exporting. The Company has exported c.15,000 tons of hibiscus since inception and is well positioned to significantly increase its output in the years to come, due to its direct connection to farming communities across Nigeria, its impressive orderbook from existing and new clients and its focus on backward integration and tech enabled value chain solutions.

The global hibiscus market is expected grow by 7.5% annually between 2021 and 2025 to \$490 million with growth in consumption driven by a preference for a healthy lifestyle. Nigeria is increasingly important to the global supply chain of hibiscus and is growing faster than the global market due to the global preference for Nigeria’s healthier, non-GMO hibiscus varieties and the unmet demand in the market for non-GMO hibiscus. Global non-GMO demand is expected to grow by 12.5% per annum for the next four years outstripping overall demand for hibiscus as consumers demand non-GMO in wellness products.

This funding round will not only accelerate Agroeknor’s growth, expanding the Company’s global footprint in select Asian, European and North American markets where the Company already has key clients, but will also enable the Company acquire certifications for global food, safety and hygiene. The Company also plans to further digitise their value chain through investment into an integrated backend process from sourcing to export and investment in digital infrastructure to enable the scale up across Nigeria.

Ayo Oke, CEO of AgroEknor said: “We believe our partnership with Aruwa will propel us in the right direction of consolidating our market share and operating with the best international standards. In our view, this partnership positions the Company for exponential growth as we look to cement our position as a market leader across all of our markets. Our vision for the Company is to move further down along the value chain, by making healthy products readily available to the retail consumer. We are very excited to partner with the Aruwa team and are grateful for Aruwa’s partnership and belief in our vision as our first institutional equity investor. We look forward to working together with the team to execute our vision of processing and exporting high value cash crops that are advantageously grown in Nigeria.”

Adesuwa Okunbo Rhodes, Founder & Managing Partner of Aruwa Capital added: “We are excited to have completed this investment in AgroEknor. We see significant value in the Company’s long term growth potential within the rapidly growing global food processing market and pent-up demand for AgroEknor’s health-based products. The Company has also shown significant growth in volumes exported year on year and has demonstrated an ability to operate profitably.

“In line with Aruwa’s gender lens investing strategy, the Company has trained over 3,000 women in hibiscus post-harvest best practices, which in turn, empowered these women to provide for their respective families in Northern Nigeria. Additionally, since 2017, 69% of the 1,600 small holder farmers trained on post-harvest operations and safety were women. Finally, all the employees directly involved in the Company’s processing facility in Kano State are women. We are so excited about the women’s economic empowerment that will occur as a result of the planned expansion. We look forward to working with the team and contributing to their continued success in the years ahead”

About AgroEknor

Agroeknor sources, processes and exports hibiscus flowers and other healthy cash crops for which Nigeria has a competitive advantage. Founded in 2013 and based in Kano State in Northern Nigeria, the Company is well positioned to cater to growing demand for hibiscus and other health-based products globally.

For more information visit <https://agroeknor.com/>

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