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Sasini PLC's tea and coffee brands. PHOTOS/POOL



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MARTIN OCHIEN'G | GROUP MANAGING DIRECTOR

The firm aims to address the changing consumer expectations while remaining true to their brand promise

Purity Wanjohi

Sasini PLC has unveiled new packaging for the tea and coffee they sell in the local market. This is in line with its goal of revamping its retail business.

Developed in response to consumer feedback, the new packaging seeks to elevate the experience of the brand by matching the quality of the product inside with consumer expectations. Sasini, whose consumers are in all socio-economic groups, aims to address the changing consumer expectations while remaining true to their brand promise.

“The new packs will convey our true fabric as an authentic and Kenyan top-quality producer of agricultural products and especially of tea and coffee,” Martin Ochien'g, the Group Managing Director told the *Business Daily* in an interview. The roll out of the new packs began end-October 2020 and will be in full gear by end of November 2020.

Though the bulk of its business is in the export market, the firm has several brands that are sold locally through its Sasini Retail Division which include Sasini Gold Tea (Pure Grade Highland Tea), Sasini Classic Tea (Fine Blended Highland Tea), Sasini Premium Tea, Sasini Instant Coffee, Sasini Kahawa Kamili (Ground Coffee) and Sasini Kahawa Number 1.

“These brands are critical to our success and offer us an excellent opportunity to showcase our quality in the local market. It is our aim to avail our products to the people of Kenya through packaging that clearly communicates what Sasini does in

the beverages sector,” Mr. Ochien'g said.

Upgraded features of the new packaging include pure export quality Kenyan tea in the packs, clearer communication of the brand promise, and simplicity to aid in purchase decision making and brand alignment to the Sasini family. Sasini has endeavored to keep the pricing at affordable and relevant levels to enhance engagement with the products from consumers.

The revamp is their latest way of showing Sasini's commitment to high quality produce for the local market while contributing to food security and the Kenyan economy. “We have a rich heritage and history in Kenya, and over the decades have developed an insatiable skill to be at the top and stay there with our quality. We want Kenyans to experience this, not just the export market.”

Kenya is known for producing the highest standard tea and coffee in the world and Sasini has been

Sasini in drive to boost Kenya market share

a leading player in the tea and coffee industry since 1952, a venture they have excelled at. However, Kenyans' consumption remains low, with much of the produce exported. Strengthening its retail business is one of the

strategies Sasini will focus on to increase local consumption.

“It's inconceivable that the country grows and produces the best tea and coffee grades yet consumes very little of the beverages. We intend to take the leadership in driving this consumption by doing both category growth and brand growth work,” he stated.

Besides the pack upgrades, Sasini has become savvy at capitalising on the demand and fulfilment opportunities provided by the vast networks of stores in the country to avail their products to consumers. These include

grocery chains, supermarkets, independent consumer outlets, convenience stores and kiosks spread all over the country. The diverse nature of these outlets gives them an opportunity to spread their products easily to the consumers they seek.

Sasini will also work with other local brands in both tea and coffee sections to drive awareness of these brands in Kenya drawing in more consumers. Additionally, they strive to expand occasions in which Kenyans interact with their brands, allowing them to share the numerous consumption occasions available for tea and coffee away from just the traditional breakfast.

Sustainability combined with other factors is increasingly a driving force in today's market informing consumer purchasing habits. Sasini continues to be proactive in embracing sustainability. “At Sasini, we are dedicated to treating people fairly, environmental protection and operating in a sustainable manner,” Mr. Ochien'g said. “Our recent strides in the retail market are squarely centered on advancing our strong alignment to doing all our business sustainably and gives us a great opportunity to talk to consumers about some of our commitments.”

All through their value chains, Sasini drives strict adherence to practices and values to drive adherence to good human rights adherence, excellent labour practices, and protection of the environment and zero tolerance for

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corruption in their business. Of particular interest to them is the fight against poverty, doing their bit to eliminate hunger while advancing good health and well-being. The firm is also

deliberate about advancing gender equality in their business.

A growing desire to reduce the depletion of natural resources and reliance on non-renewable energy sources has seen Sasini continually adapt their way of doing business to address the challenges that come with balancing the intricacies of people, planet and profit, in light of climate change. With latest research showing a downward trend in acreage under tea plantation, the company has no plans of reducing their tea growing areas. Sasini is confident that its forward-thinking leadership, robust plans, investments and holding on to being innovative in the technologies they employ to achieve their goals, will ensure they remain relevant and environmentally-sensitive.

Some of their action plans include convincing farmers to grow more tea in their catchment zones. This is true for their coffee, avocado and macadamia plantations as well; continuous research to find new cultivars for the crops they grow that have better adaptability to changing climate conditions and advancing and advocating for responsible consumption in their production setups.

Mr Ochien'g is certain that these will go a long way in showing their consumers Sasini's keenness in protecting the agricultural assets that the company and Kenya possesses.

