

# Case Study – Agribusiness

Chief Commercial Officer, Tanzania



To identify a Chief Commercial Officer for a leading, fully integrated agribusiness operating across the poultry value chain in multiple African markets



## Business Challenge

- To drive growth and expand its presence in both domestic and regional markets, the business was seeking a CCO to lead a cross-functional commercial team, aligning sales, marketing, and distribution strategies
- This was a pivotal hire, essential to sustaining the company's growth trajectory
- The CCO would be responsible for overseeing the development and execution of an innovative, growth-focused commercial strategy for both existing and new market segments

## The Search Challenge

- Experienced commercial executives with African market insight, poultry industry knowledge, and leadership experience were scarce, making the search highly selective in a competitive talent market
- The role required a leader capable of driving measurable growth while upholding the company's standards for quality, sustainability, and farmer support
- The candidate also needed to navigate complex regulatory, cultural, and supply chain dynamics across African markets

## Critical Requirements

- Senior leadership experience in sales and marketing, ideally in FMCG or food/agriculture
- Proven ability to execute strategies that drive revenue, volume, and profitability
- Strong financial management skills across budgeting, forecasting, and performance metrics
- Demonstrated success leading high-performing diverse teams
- Advanced analytical and strategic planning skills, with fluency in CRM tools, data analytics, and MS Office

## The Search Process

- The Research Team mapped the market across East Africa, leveraging referrals and recommendations
- A purpose-driven approach fostered candidate engagement and alignment with the company's mission and values
- From a longlist of 105 candidates, 15 advanced to comprehensive interviews and a rigorous assessment process
- Within just 4 weeks, 5 candidates who met all brief requirements were shortlisted

## The Placed Leader

- Tanzanian national with 15+ years' senior commercial leadership and full P&L ownership in complex operations
- Deep expertise in route-to-market strategy, sales operations, and scaling commercial processes
- Proven success leading high-performing teams with strong performance management and cross-functional alignment
- Strong analytical acumen and strategic mindset consistently driving commercial results

# Case Study – Agribusiness

## Commercial Manager, Kenya



To identify a Commercial Manager for a well-established Kenyan agribusiness seeking to expand its international export market



### Business Challenge

- The client sought to expand exports into the Middle East and required a candidate with deep expertise in the region's market
- They required a well-travelled expatriate with proven agribusiness experience and strong Middle Eastern market connections to drive expansion
- The ideal candidate would bring both strategic insight and hands-on experience in navigating cross-border trade, fostering partnerships, and scaling exports

### The Search Challenge

- Niche and highly specific mapping parameters meant there were only a finite number of suitable individuals
- Although the role was international, candidates were required to relocate to Kenya as their base if selected, but many Dubai-based individuals were unwilling to relocate
- Rigorous assessments were essential to evaluate leadership fit, commercial acumen, and market development capability

### Critical Requirements

- International candidate with extensive Middle East experience
- Strong commercial management and leadership skills, including full P&L responsibility
- Proven ability to expand a fresh produce business into new markets
- Well-established networks with leading international supermarket retailers, enabling direct access to high-value retail channels and supporting rapid expansion of export volumes

### The Search Process

- The Research Team swiftly mapped the market across Europe and Southern Africa
- From 147 longlisted candidates, 19 advanced to comprehensive interviews and a rigorous assessment process conducted by the Delivery Team
- Within just 4 weeks, 7 candidates who met all brief requirements were shortlisted

### The Placed Leader

- Turkish national with experience gained in the European and Middle Eastern fresh produce markets
- Strong commercial track record and established networks with leading international retailers
- The offer was accepted within just 3 weeks of the shortlist presentation

# Case Study – Agribusiness

European Head of Sales, Rwanda



To identify a European Head of Sales for a recently established commercial farming business that was ramping up production and needed to secure buyers for its crops



## Business Challenge

- With operations and production spanned across 600 hectares of commercial farming land, the business was set to harvest green beans, nightshades, and avocados within 6–7-months
- However, no European sales contracts had been secured to guarantee buyers
- Given the unique investment structure and ethical model, securing early sales was vital for first-year viability
- The absence of required certifications and lengthy negotiation timelines posed a significant risk

## The Search Challenge

- Target companies operating as intermediaries in fresh produce sales to Tier 1 and 2 European retailers was a new sector for both Executives in Africa and the client
- Extensive primary research was undertaken to identify and profile relevant intermediary organizations
- Wide variation in candidate job titles across the sector added complexity to role alignment and targeting
- The target salary was modest relative to market benchmarks, requiring careful candidate engagement

## Critical Requirements

- Proven track record in establishing new relationships with retail customers in fresh produce, not solely account management experience
- Demonstrated capability to create robust, long-term B2B sales contracts designed to mitigate financial risk
- Ability to travel freely across Europe, ideally with prior experience in or affinity for African markets
- High levels of trustworthiness and the ability to work independently

## The Search Process

- Our Researcher Team was pivotal in defining target companies and rapidly developing expertise in fresh produce routes-to-market across Europe
- From 102 longlisted candidates, 6 were assessed and 4 presented to the client, fast-tracking one exceptional candidate nearing a longer notice period
- The client responded quickly, flying him to Rwanda and completing the appointment within 6 weeks of launch

## The Placed Leader

- British national with experience living across Africa and a strong passion for the continent
- Extensive networks with UK and European Tier 1 retailers and a proven track record in securing uptake of surplus production
- Expert in structuring B2B contracts for fresh produce, with a decisive, independent leadership style well-suited to early-stage operations