



COMAM – Madagascar

Organic Bourbon vanilla and cloves

Our vanilla and cloves are grown by a long-standing partner cooperative within the UNESCO-designated Mananara Biosphere Reserve in north-eastern Madagascar. Our local representative PREMIUM SPICES takes care of processing and export while supporting the cooperatives in all aspects of the certification process.

It takes a three-days drive up the bumpy main road from the capital Antananarivo to the **UNESCO-designated Mananara Biosphere Reserve**. The reserve consists of rare tropical rainforests in low-lying coastal areas. The traditional knowledge of the population and the humid climate are the **ideal basis to grow premium vanilla and cloves** according to organic and fair trade standards. The sustainable cultivation prevents ecological exploitation and enables the harmonious coexistence of people and nature. PRONATEC and PREMIUM SPICES have been working with an independent smallholder cooperative in Mananara since 2005 and helped them achieve organic and Fairtrade certification.

The members of the **cooperative collectively decide how to use the Fairtrade premiums**. Besides financing tools such as the traditional “angady” spade or “kiso” knife used for daily work, the annual fair Fairtrade premiums allow to support vulnerable members of the cooperative. Some can hardly afford to buy food, which has become much more expensive over the last years due to inflation. Other important ongoing projects include the protection of the water basin to safeguard the access to safe water close to the villages as well as access to running water.



LATEST FAIRTRADE PROJECTS

- Helping members in need – food supplies for 1337 members
- Protecting water resources – raising awareness among 1239 farmers of the protection of water resources
- Access to running water – construction of 2 wells
- Planting seeds for the future – distribution of 3785 clove tree seedlings to smallholders

Here's how the cooperatives support smallholder families

- Higher incomes thanks to the organic/Fairtrade premium and Fairtrade minimum price
- Better yields by offering advice, tools, training, seedlings
- Better health by paying for doctors/medication
- Better quality of life by building community centers, improving the water supply
- The whole region benefits from valuable community projects

COMAM at a glance

- Founded in 2003
 - Fairtrade certified since 2006
 - 745 members (160 women)
 - 42 villages, 1463 plots
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"Ever since I became a member of the cooperative, I've had no problem buying medicine and paying my family's medical bills in case of illness. Planting vanilla is our source of life".

Tabavy Esteline, 47 years, member of KOMAM since 2014



The farmers typically live in small villages around the tropical rainforest. The **vanilla orchids** grow on small plots on the **fringes** of the reserve, where the up to 1,5m long plants are curled around the branches of their supporting plants. **All work is done manually, based on pesticide-free organic farming practices** within a balanced agroforestry system. When the plants are cut back, the branches and leaves serve as green manure to protect and regenerate the soil.

PREMIUM SPICES purchases most of the vanilla as green pods from the smallholders. After a total of six to eight weeks of elaborate care, which includes **hot bathing, sweating, sun drying, shade drying and daily massages** of the darkening vanilla pods, the finished product is created: our organic vanilla with the typical round yet complex Bourbon flavour.

PREMIUM SPICES carries out strict quality controls before transporting the final products to international ports or to the capital city of Antananarivo.

Madagascar is the **second-largest exporter of cloves** in the world and has a **wealth of experience in both cultivation and processing**. Cloves production spans much of the country's East coast, providing an important income to farmers. The clove trees grow in traditional clove forests. The flower buds of the clove tree are harvested before they flower and then dried in the sun.

Our products

- Organic Bourbon vanilla (pods, powder, extract, extract powder, teabag cut, cut 4-6mm (pronatec.com/vanilla))
 - Organic cloves (CG3, hand-picked cloves or clove stems for industrial applications) (pronatec.com/spices)
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