

CHARLES DENISON

DOB: 11TH APRIL 1984

TEL: +27(0)824649678

CHARLES@CULTIVAR.CO.ZA

TRI-NATIONALITY-SWISS, SOUTH AFRICAN, IRISH

CURRICULUM VITAE

EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF FRIBOURG, SWITZERLAND 2007-2009

MASTERS: INTERNATIONAL & EUROPEAN BUSINESS

Strategic Management & Marketing

Master's Thesis: The Status & Advancement of Smallholder Coffee Farmers in Zambia

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA 2003 - 2006

B.SOC.SC: LAW (LABOUR), BUSINESS MANAGEMENT & ORGANISATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

Triple Major

HILTON COLLEGE, SOUTH AFRICA 1997 - 2001

MATRIC: UNIVERSITY GRADE, HIGHER GRADE

Distinction, Independent Examinations Board (IEB)

SUMMARY

I am an experienced coffee professional with twelve years in the agri-commodity industry. I have a master's degree in strategic management and business development with a strong agricultural-economics focus. My specialist field is coffee, particularly relating to the specialty-coffee trade, quality, marketing, sustainability, agronomy training, and bringing the producer and the consumer together. Linking the specialty-coffee trade to origin and bridging the gap between the two separate worlds has been my focus for the past six years, using rapidly improving and available agrotechnology systems. This has been the precursor for current development of sustainability in the coffee ecosystem.

I have developed various business plans and agricultural models within East Africa, and have South African Irish, and Swiss nationality. I have a valuable understanding of the African continent, its people, and cultures, and pragmatic understanding of how to achieve goals in this unique landscape. I am also fluent in Zulu and Xhosa, with basic Swahili.

Furthermore, I own a small coffee farm farming both C.arabica, and the indigenous C.racemosa, as well as being a current licenced Q-Grader (Coffee Quality Institute). I have visited and consulted in fifteen various coffee growing origins in East Africa and Central America.

EXPERIENCE

MANAGING DIRECTOR

Cultivar Coffee

[\[www.cultivar.co.za\]](http://www.cultivar.co.za)

2013 – Present -Global

Coffee value-chain consultants and green coffee traders, focusing on commodity importation, logistics, quality control assessment, laboratory work, as well as agronomy & training. Development of social projects for the coffee community. QC laboratory and service providers for large scale roasters, with consultations in Tanzania, Uganda, DR Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and South Africa.

Clients include the largest fuel retailer in South Africa (1200+ forecourt sites), the largest coffee chain in South Africa (300+sites), and quality control for the two largest retail groups in Southern Africa.

As a founding member of the Coffee Science Institute (www.coffeescienceinstitute.org), I have worked on green-field coffee estate development, including analysis of soils, climate modelling, coffee variety selection, post-harvest processing, and market development.

Relevant Networks:

- **Kerry Group** (www.kerry.com) - Public listed company (Dublin/London)
 - Assist in sourcing rare and specialty flavours for their ingredients division
- **Petronas Engen** (<https://www.petronas.com>) – Public listed company (Malaysia, RSA)
 - Lead external coffee consultant to their 1200 forecourt fuel stations in South Africa
- **Vida e caffè** (<https://vidaecaffe.com>) – Largest coffee chain in RSA
 - Lead external coffee consultant – 300+ stores in Southern and West Africa
- **Monteagle Group** (www.monteaglegroup.com) – Public listed company (UK, Johannesburg)
 - Lead external coffee quality controller
 - Focus on Spar brand (850+retail stores) Checkers brand (230+ retail stores)
- **Royal Botanic Gardens Kew** (www.kew.org/science)
 - External co-author on rare coffee species
- **Numerous farming groups, coffee estates, and coffee cooperatives in Africa and Central America**

COFFEE TRADER

Ecom Agro-Industrial

[\[www.ecomtrading.com\]](http://www.ecomtrading.com)

2012 – 2013 -East Africa

Working for one of the top four largest Arabica coffee suppliers, I had the opportunity to be exposed to the coffee chain at origin, from growing to export. This included green bean trading (both physical and derivatives), hedging, logistics & shipping, and small-scale farmer advancement through rural agronomy training and certification. This experience included dealing with some of the world's largest coffee roasters to the most specialised.

- Physical green coffee trader (US\$ 2-3 million per week).
- Futures coffee trader on the New York “C” market.
- Sustainable management and project lead for Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance, 4C's & Utz certification.
- Origin work with smallholder and estate farmers in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and commercial lead for Nestle Sweden's Rainforest Alliance programme in Kenya.
- Coffee estate and small-holder development in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda.
- Consultant to Sustainable Management Services, marketing and farmer training to 85000+ farmers
- Speciality coffee development
- International Finance Corporation (IFC) coffee project development
- Shipping and logistics of coffee export and import
- Marketing and market research responsible, website development, and online presence
- Client liaison for Starbucks, Nestle, Paulig, HA Bennet, Caribou Coffee, Hivos
- Cup of Excellence liaison
- Sample roasting, cupping, scoring, SCA spec laboratory setup
- Represented ECOM at Speciality Coffee Association of America Conference, Portland, USA.

Relevant Networks:

- Fair Trade Organisation, Rainforest Alliance / Utz, 4C's Services, Nestle Sweden, Hivos
- East African farming groups, coffee cooperatives and estates

OPERATIONS MANAGER

RedBerry Coffee Company

[\[www.redberry.co.za\]](http://www.redberry.co.za)

2009 – 2011 -Southern Africa

Supplier to the second largest coffee account in South Africa, RedBerry exposed me to the retail aspects of coffee, from procurement to roasting, and training, and also to the quality side of an agricultural product.

- Green bean sourcing and procurement, farm visits, coffee processing, cupping and quality control.
- Barista training team management and development.
- Account management (Famous Brands)

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

International Institute of Management in Technology [www.iimt.ch]

2007 – 2009 -Switzerland

- Researcher and assistant to Executive-MBA.
- Marketing and promotional material
- Course lecturer – Project Management (PMBOK)
- Liaison with IATA on technological developments in airline communications - onboard mobile and internet communication.

LEADERSHIP POSITIONS, AWARDS AND CERTIFICATES

Colombo Coffee , South Africa's oldest coffee roastery – member of the board	2018-
Coffee Quality Institute , Licensed Q-Grader (South Africa's longest license)	2010
Adventure Team of the Year Finalist , OutThere Magazine	2005
My African Dream , Adventure Company Founder	2004-2008
British Army Officer Selection , Pre-Royal Military Academy Sandhurst	2002
Service Tie Award , Hilton College, Outreach & Community Service	2001
Head Prefect , Churchill House, Hilton College	2001

OTHER

Master's Thesis: "The Status and Advancement of Smallholder Coffee Farmers in Zambia"

Analysis of Zambian coffee sector, creating a sustainable business plan for smallholder coffee growers. Out-grower model development. Trade and Investment competitiveness, and market-led value chain integration. Supported by Cafe Africa Switzerland, Schluter Café Switzerland, Zambia Coffee Growers Association, Coffee Board of Zambia.

Agricultural Consultancy: Agricultural commodity networking consultant with Profile Silo, focusing on staff sourcing with large multi-nationals, specifically on soft commodities: sugar, coffee, cotton, cocoa.

Consulted to Organic Farms Group and Priority Zone on organic farming initiatives within urban areas – inner-city greening. Consulted to numerous coffee estates in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and South Africa on biodiversity, agrotechnology and environmental farming initiatives.

LANGUAGES

ENGLISH	(Native/bilingual proficiency)
ZULU	(Professional working proficiency)
XHOSA	(Professional working proficiency)
AFRIKAANS	(Professional working proficiency)
SWAHILI	(Basic working proficiency)

REFERENCES [PROFESSIONAL AND CHARACTER ASSESSMENT]

Riaan Lazenby – Director: Profile Silo Consulting
riaan@profilesilo.com +44 779 444 3904

TM Muigai – Head Trader: Ecom Agro-Industrial Kenya (now at Grainpulse)
tmmuigai@grainpulse.co.ug +254 724 335 338

Dylan Cumming – Director: RedBerry Coffee Company
dylan@beavercreek.co.za +27 82 907 0652
