

Cassava Processing and Market Transformation

Trends, Value Chains, and Investment Pathways
in a Growing Industry



Cassava is a major crop

Contributing roughly 22% to the nation's agricultural GDP, cassava plays a central role in food security, rural livelihoods, and agribusiness.

Over 70%

of Ghanaian farmers cultivate cassava

Over 80%

of the population consumes it as a staple.

Production is concentrated in regions such as Eastern, Ashanti, Central, and Bono East, which together account for a large share of national output.

Traditionally, cassava is processed into products like gari, agbelima (cassava dough), kokonte, and pellets, which serve both local and regional markets.

Beyond traditional uses, cassava also has growing industrial applications. High-Quality Cassava Flour (HQCF), starch, and chips are increasingly in demand for baking, food processing, and industrial use. This emerging market signals strong opportunities for investment in higher-value cassava processing.

Cassava's year-round cultivation offers a supply advantage compared to seasonal crops like maize. However, production peaks follow planting cycles: the major rainy season (April–July) leads to a peak harvest from July to December, while the minor rainy season (September–October) supports harvests from August to November the following year.

This report explores these dynamics and highlights the market opportunities, challenges, and growth potential in cassava processing for both local and industrial markets.

Demand for processed cassava products (gari, starch, HQCF, instant fufu flour), especially in urban markets, is growing at

~18% CAGR

(2020–2025)

\$400+ million is spent annually on wheat imports.

Substituting 10–20% of wheat flour with HQCF could redirect a portion of this spend into the local cassava sector.

Starch imports for food and industry present an additional \$50–70 million import substitution market annually.





Gari

1 tonne of fresh cassava
~GHS 500

=

250–300 kg Gari
~GHS 2,500–3,000
at retail.

HQCF

1 tonne of fresh cassava
~GHS 500

=

~250 kg flour
~GHS 7–9/kg to
bakeries and industries.



Gross margins in small-scale cassava processing range from 35% to 50%, depending on efficiency and scale.



Raw Material Availability

Cassava grows all year round, with peak harvest between July–December.

- Prices are cheaper during peak season and more expensive during lean season due to scarcity.
- Buy in bulk when it's cheap and convert it into gari for storage



Government & Donor Support

Projects like the Ghana Cassava Industrialisation partnership Project (GCIPP) back processors with training, input supply, and market linkages.

- Leverage project linkages to connect with industrial buyers (breweries, bakeries, etc) rather than relying on local markets



By-Product Utilisation (Secondary Income Streams)

Cassava peels → animal feed
Wastewater → biogas
Press cake → organic fertiliser

- Partner with livestock farmers to sell/ exchange cassava peels as feed
- Consider small-scale biogas production from wastewater to reduce fuel costs

30–45%

ROI For Small-Scale
Processors Annually,
Depending On Scale And
Efficiency

Cassava is cheap at farm-gate prices, especially in peak season.

Processing adds significant value (e.g., 1 tonne of cassava worth ~GHS 500 can be transformed into gari or flour worth GHS 2,500–3,000).

Demand is stable and rising, particularly in urban areas.

Break-Even Possible Within 12–18 Months Of Efficient Operation.

GHS 20,000

Small Gari Processing
Unit Investment

~GHS 1,500–
2,000

Monthly Net Profit

~12–14 Months

Payback Period

This Short Break-Even Timeline Makes Cassava Processing A Low-Risk Entry Agribusiness Compared To Poultry Or Pig Farming, Which Can Take Longer To Stabilise.

Cassava processing delivers attractive annual returns (30–45%) with a payback period of 12–18 months, supported by strong local demand for gari, starch, and HQCF, alongside by-product markets (animal feed, fertilizer, biogas).

However, it carries moderate risks tied to raw material supply fluctuations, price volatility, and equipment breakdowns.

 **Active management and strong market linkages are critical.**

By comparison, T-Bills (12.9%) and fixed deposits (19.9%) offer safe and predictable yields with high liquidity but limited upside, while equities (0–30%) provide market-driven growth with high volatility.

The table below positions cassava processing against traditional investment options in Ghana.

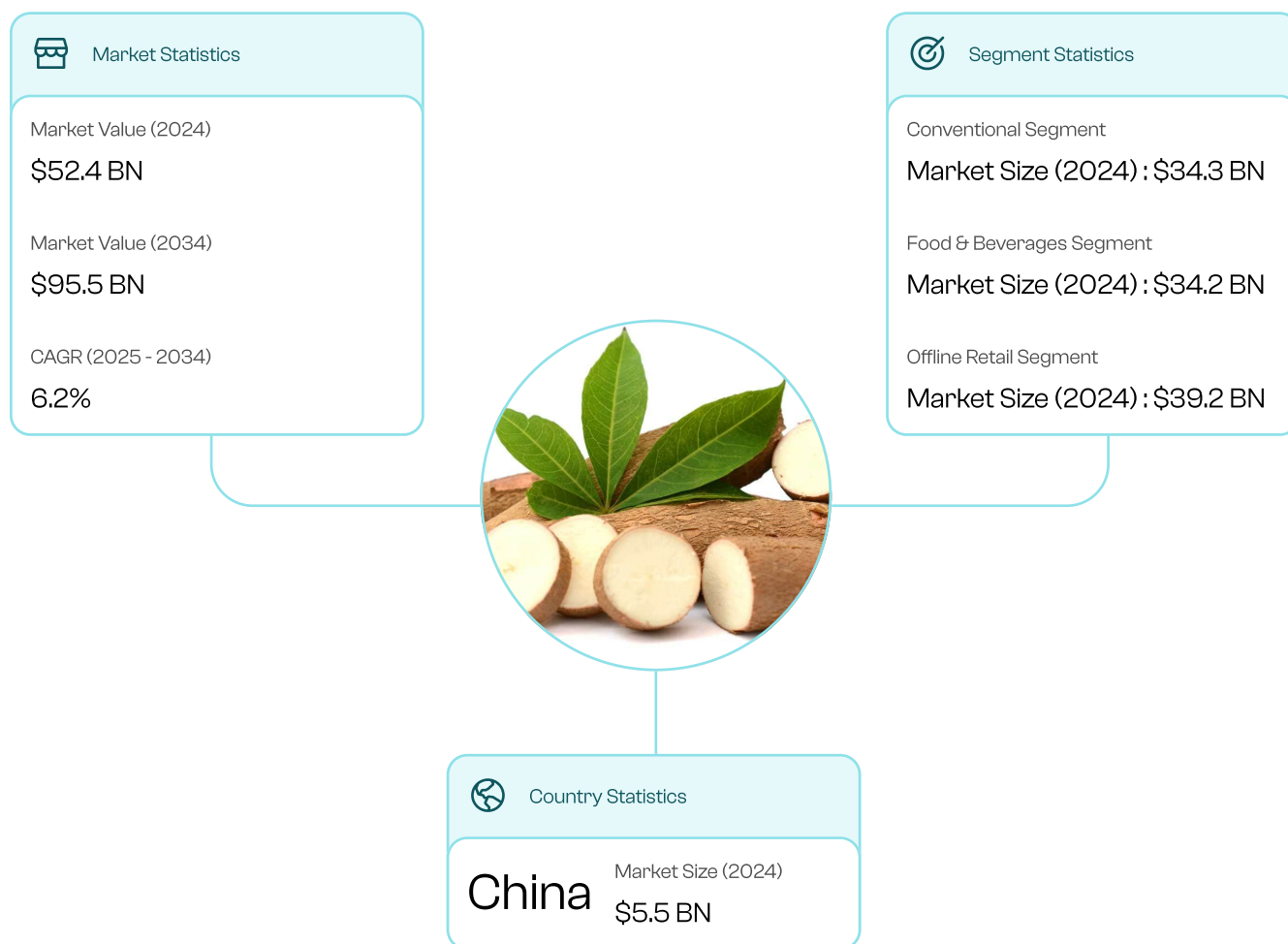
Factors	Cassava Processing	T-Bills (364-day, BoG)	Bank Fixed Deposit	GSE Equities (Stocks)
Expected return (p.a.)	20-35%	12.90%	19.90%	0-30%
1-Year Value (GHS 100k)	120k - 135k	112.9k	119.9k	100-130k
Risk Level	High	Low	Low-Medium	High
Time Horizon	Medium-Long (1-3yrs)	Short (91-364 days)	Short-Medium (1-2 Mths)	Medium-Long (1-5yrs)
Management Intensity	High	None	None	Low-Medium
Key Drivers of Return	Yield per tonne, cassava price	Interest rate by BoG	Bank rate offers & tenor	Price volatility,
Main Risks	Spoilage, price volatility	Inflation	Bank credit worthiness	Price volatility
Upside Potential	Very High	Limited	Slightly higher than T-Bills	Potentially Very High
Downside Potential	Losses if supply chain breaks	Low	Low	Very High
Best for	Active entrepreneurs	Risk-averse investors	Higher but safer returns investors	High risk investors

Processed cassava products (Gari, High-Quality Cassava Flour(HQCF), starch, chips) are in growing demand worldwide for gluten-free baking, industrial uses (starch, paper, adhesives), and food security.

Cassava flour, derived from the root of the cassava plant, is favored for its versatility, neutral flavor, and ability to replace wheat flour in baking and cooking.

The market is experiencing significant growth due to its increasing adoption in various applications, particularly in gluten-free and specialty food products

The global cassava flour market size was valued at **USD 52.4 billion in 2024** and is estimated to grow at a **CAGR of over 6.2% from 2025 to 2034**.



Market Volatility & Demand Fluctuations



1. Secure long-term offtake contracts
2. Diversify export destinations (US, Canada, Asia)
3. Add value through branding

Supply Chain & Post-Harvest Losses



1. Build farmer networks & aggregation centres
2. Use improved cassava varieties
3. Establish storage/processing near farms

Regulatory & Trade Barriers



1. Obtain certifications (ISO, HACCP, FDA)
2. Partner with trade facilitations agencies
3. Diversify markets to reduce dependency

Analyst Opinion

“ Cassava processing is a growth-oriented agribusiness with strong margins and social impact potential, best suited for investors willing to manage operations.

A balanced portfolio, pairing cassava with T-Bills or deposits, provides both income stability and high-growth exposure.

”

About Us

Over the past 12 years, One Africa Markets has grown into a leading force in the financial services industry, marked by consistent innovation, strategic execution, and measurable impact.

We have surpassed key milestones including over \$14 billion transaction volumes across the diverse markets we operate in, from Accra and Lagos to London and beyond. Today, One Africa Markets stands as a global leader in payments, fixed income, commodities, data, technology, and financial talent.

We serve as a vital bridge connecting the world to Africa and Africa to the world by creating seamless pathways for trade, investment, and sustainable economic growth across the continent.

\$10bn+

traded in fixed income &
forex markets

140+

teams across our
global offices

1000+

global client coverage

100+

global banking
partnerships