

THE FOODSTUFF TRADER'S BLUEPRINT

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THE HIDDEN SYSTEM TO
BUY CHEAP, SELL FAST &
TURN FOOD ITEMS
INTO **DAILY CASHFLOW**



KOFWOROLA KOREDE

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Chapter 1

The Hidden Goldmine in the Foodstuff Market

Many people in Nigeria are looking for a business that can bring steady money every day.

Some try clothes business.

Some try phone accessories.

Some try cosmetics.

But many of those businesses slow down when the economy becomes hard.

There is one business that almost never stops moving.

That business is foodstuff trading.

Why?

Because every human being must eat.

A person can stop buying clothes for six months.

A person can stop buying a new phone for two years.

But nobody can stop eating food.

This is why the foodstuff market in Nigeria is one of the biggest money flows in the country.

Food Is the Most Recession-Proof Business in Nigeria

When things become expensive in Nigeria, people adjust their lifestyle.

They may reduce:

- outings
- entertainment
- new gadgets
- luxury spending

But food is different.

People still buy:

- rice
- garri
- beans
- yam
- palm oil
- pepper
- vegetables
- crayfish

Even when money is tight, people will still buy small quantities.

Instead of buying a full bag of rice, they may buy:

₦1,000 rice

₦2,000 garri

₦500 pepper

But they will still buy.

This is why food traders still make daily sales.

The Size of the Food Market (A Simple Way to See It)

Let us look at a very simple example.

Imagine just one street with about 40 houses.

If each house spends ₦2,000 per day on food, the total becomes:

40 houses × ₦2,000 = ₦80,000 per day

In one week:

₦80,000 × 7 = ₦560,000

That is just one small street.

Now imagine:

20 streets, 50 streets or 100 streets.

You will begin to see how huge the food market really is.

This is why many quiet millionaires in Nigeria are foodstuff traders.

How Everyday Food Items Quietly Generate Millions

Many people think the biggest money in food comes from:

supermarkets
big distributors
large warehouses

But that is not the full story.

Even small traders make steady money because they sell items people buy every single day.

Let us look at a real trading example.

Example: Garri Trading

Garri is one of the most common foods in Nigeria.

It is eaten by students, families, workers, restaurants, etc.

A trader buys 1 bag of garri.

Typical market range:

₦35,000 – ₦45,000 depending on quality

One bag of garri is roughly 100kg.

Let us break it down using common market measurements.

Measurement	Approx Quantity from 1 Bag
Paint buckets	25
Congo	40-45
Derica	70

If one paint bucket sells for about ₦2,000, the sales can look like this:

25 paint buckets × ₦2,000 = ₦50,000

If the trader bought the bag for ₦40,000:

Profit before expenses:

₦50,000 – ₦40,000 = ₦10,000

That is from just one bag.

Now imagine selling 10 bags in a week.

₦10,000 × 10 = ₦100,000

This is how simple food items quietly generate income.

The Difference Between Traders Who Struggle and Traders Who Thrive

Not every food trader makes good money.

Some struggle.

Some succeed.

The difference is usually three important things.

1. They Buy Cheaper

The first secret of profitable traders is buying well.

Some traders buy from:

retail markets
neighborhood sellers

But experienced traders buy from places like:

- Dawanau Market – Kano (large grain hub)
- Mile 12 market - Lagos (fresh fruits and vegetables)

- Oyingbo market - Lagos (condiments, dry proteins)
- Bodija/Saabo Market – Ibadan (grains)
- Oron Market – Akwa Ibom (dry fish and crayfish)
- Zaki-Biam – Benue (yam distribution)

These markets are major supply points.

Prices here can sometimes be 10–30% cheaper.

This difference becomes a big profit later.

2. They Focus on Fast Moving Foods

Smart traders focus on foods that people cook almost every day.

Examples include: **rice, beans, garri, palm oil, yam, pepper, onions, crayfish, spaghetti and tomato paste.**

These foods rarely stay long on the shelf.

When goods move fast, money returns quickly.

3. They Build Regular Buyers

Experienced traders do not depend only on random customers. They build regular buyers like
families
restaurants
food vendors
offices
caterers

These customers buy food every week.

That means the trader has predictable income.

A Simple System Used by Smart Food Traders

Many successful traders follow a simple system.

Step 1

Buy goods where they are cheapest.

Step 2

Sell foods people eat every day.

Step 3

Sell in quantities people can afford.

Step 4

Build customers who buy regularly.

This simple system creates steady daily cashflow.

A Quick Reality Check

Food trading is not magic.

It still requires:

- discipline
- patience
- learning the market

But the advantage of this business is very powerful.

The demand is always there.

People will always eat.

A Small Exercise

Look around your area today.

Ask yourself these questions.

- ✓ Which food items do people buy most often?
- ✓ Where do most people buy their food?
- ✓ Are there foods people travel far to buy?

Your answers may reveal business opportunities around you.

Final Thoughts

The foodstuff market in Nigeria is bigger than most people imagine.

Millions of Nigerians buy food every single day.

This creates one of the largest daily cashflow systems in the country.

The traders who succeed understand:

- ✓ where to buy
- ✓ what to sell
- ✓ when to buy
- ✓ who to sell to

In the next chapter, we will discuss something very important.

We will talk about the mindset successful foodstuff traders use to stay profitable even when prices change.

Chapter 2

The Foodstuff Trader's Mindset Thinking Like a Profitable Trader

In the foodstuff business, the biggest difference between traders is not capital.

It is the mindset.

Two people can start the same business with the same money.

One trader grows fast.

The other struggles.

Why?

Because one trader understands the market, while the other only sells.

Food trading is not just about buying rice, beans, or garri and putting them in a shop.

It is about understanding how food moves in Nigeria.

The traders who make the most money understand three things very well:

- * Supply
- * Demand
- * Timing

Let us explain this in a simple way.

Thinking Like a Profitable Trader

Many beginners think like this:

“Let me just buy foodstuffs and start selling.”

But experienced traders think differently.

They ask questions like:

- * Is this the right time to buy this product?
- * Is the price going up or coming down?
- * Which food items are moving fastest this month?

This kind of thinking helps traders avoid losses and increase profit.

Example: Two Rice Traders

Trader A goes to the market and buys rice immediately.

He buys because he has money and wants to start.

Trader B observes the market first.

He checks:

- * rice prices this week
- * rice prices in another market
- * whether a big shipment is coming soon

Trader B may eventually buy ~~₦3,000~~ – ~~₦8,000~~ cheaper per bag.

Now imagine the trader buys 20 bags.

If the price difference is ~~₦6,000~~ per bag:

~~₦6,000~~ × 20 bags = ~~₦120,000~~ extra margin.

That difference comes from thinking like a trader.

Understanding Supply and Demand

In food trading, two simple forces control prices.

They are Supply and Demand.

Supply means how much food is available.

Demand means how many people want to buy.

When supply is low and demand is high, prices go up.

When supply is high and demand is low, prices go down.

This happens every week in Nigerian markets.

Example: Tomato Price Pattern

During the rainy season, tomato farms reduce production.

Supply becomes low.

But people still cook stew every day.

Demand stays high.

So tomato prices increase.

At times, a small basket of tomatoes may sell for:

₦12,000 – ₦18,000.

But during peak harvest, the same basket may drop to:

₦5,000 – ₦7,000.

Smart traders understand this pattern and plan accordingly.

Price Fluctuation in Nigerian Food Markets

Food prices in Nigeria move often.

This is normal.

Prices change because of:

- * harvest season
- * transportation costs
- * fuel price
- * market demand
- * weather conditions

A trader who understands these factors will not panic when prices move.

Instead, they will prepare ahead.

Example: Bean Market Cycle

Beans are harvested mainly between September and November.

During this period, supply increases and prices often drop.

Typical harvest season range:

₦85,000 – ₦100,000 per 100kg bag.

Later in the year, around March to June, supply reduces.

Prices may rise to:

₦110,000 – ₦130,000 per bag.

A trader who buys during harvest can sell later with better profit.

Understanding Nigerian Market Measurements

Food traders across Nigeria use different measurements/ units depending on location. Knowing these units helps you buy and sell correctly.

Experienced traders understand how to convert these units, it helps them calculate profit quickly and price goods accurately.

Paint bucket — common in Lagos and the Southwest — about 3.5 to 4 kg for grains (usually contains 25 cups or 2.5 standard congo).

Derica — common in Lagos markets — about 800g (4.5-5 tin cups).

Congo — common Southwestern, middle belts and Eastern markets — about 1.5kg to 1.7 kg (8-11 cups depending on type, standard is 10 cups).

Mudu — common in Northern markets — about 1.8 to 2 kg.

Cup — tin milk cup (used everywhere especially for retail)

Bag — grains are usually sold in 50kg or 100kg bags.

Grams/Kilogram - A standard universal measurement utilized globally. A lot of foodstuff traders are increasingly adopting this system due to its convenience, uniformity, and suitability for international trade.

Experienced traders understand how to convert between these measurements. Sizes of these also differ depending on the location so always ask your suppliers the type they are using.

This helps to avoid being cheated when buying or selling.

Why Patience Matters in Food Trading

One mistake many new traders make is rushing for quick profit.

But food trading rewards people who understand timing.

Sometimes waiting a few weeks can increase profit.

Example: Palm Oil

Palm oil is usually cheaper during the main production period around January to March.

Typical harvest period price range:

₦1500 – ₦1800 per litre.

Later in the year, when supply reduces, prices may rise to:

₦2,000 – ₦2,500 per litre.

If a trader buys 200 litres at ₦1500, the cost becomes:

$200 \times \text{₦}1500 = \text{₦}300,000.$

If the price later rises to ₦2,200:

$200 \times \text{₦}2,200 = \text{₦}440,000.$

Profit before expenses:

₦140,000.

This is why patient traders often enjoy greater success. They tend to stock up more during the season and sell out more quickly when prices reach their peak.

The Market Observation Habit

Successful traders always observe the market.

Before buying large quantities, they check:

- * What is the current price in two or three markets?
- * Is the product in peak harvest season?
- * Are traders expecting prices to rise soon?

These small habits help traders make better decisions.

A Trader's Weekly Market Routine

Many experienced traders follow this simple routine.

Step 1

Check market prices at least once or twice every week.

Step 2

Speak with suppliers or other traders.

Step 3

Observe which foods customers are asking for most.

Step 4

Buy in larger quantities when prices are favorable.

This routine helps traders stay ahead of the market.

Final Thoughts

The foodstuff business is not only about selling food.

It is about understanding how food moves in the market.

Traders who succeed do three things well:

- * They watch the market carefully
- * They buy at the right time
- * They stay patient when prices fluctuate

When you develop this mindset, you will begin to see opportunities that others miss.

In the next chapter, you will learn how to start a foodstuff business with the capital you already have, even if it is as small as ₦50,000 – ₦200,000.

Chapter 3

Starting With the Capital You Already Have

Many people delay starting a foodstuff business because they believe they need big **capital**.

They say things like:

“I need at least ~~₦~~1 million before I can start.”

But the truth is different.

Many successful foodstuff traders in Nigeria started with **small money and strong knowledge of the market**.

Some started with:

* ~~₦~~50,000

* ~~₦~~100,000

* ~~₦~~200,000

Food trading is one of the few businesses where you can start small and grow gradually.

What matters most is **choosing the right food items and understanding how the market works**.

How to Start With ~~₦~~50,000 – ~~₦~~200,000

With ~~₦~~50k–~~₦~~200k, your goal is not to buy everything in the market.

Your goal is to focus on **fast-moving food items**.

These are foods people buy almost every day.

These foods sell quickly because they are used in **many Nigerian meals**.

Current market surveys show that in many Nigerian markets:

- a 50kg bag of local rice sells around ~~₦~~65,000 – ~~₦~~68,000
- imported rice sells around ~~₦~~56,000 – ~~₦~~62,000

- a 100kg bag of beans (Oloyin beans) sells around **₦110,000 – ₦120,000**

But beginners do not need to start with full bags.

You can start by buying **smaller portions from wholesale traders.**

Example: Starting With ₦100,000

Let us imagine a beginner trader starting with ₦110,000.

Instead of buying full bags, the trader can buy smaller quantities:

Garri (half bag) – about ₦15,000 – ₦20,000

Imported Rice (half bag) – about ₦27,000 – ₦30,000

Beans (3–5 Congo) – about ₦6,000 – ₦10,000

Palm oil (12.5 litres) – about ₦22,500 – ₦25,000

Crayfish (one paint) – about ₦10,000 – ₦15,000

Onions (small basket) – about ₦8,000 – ₦10,000

Total stock = around ₦88,500 – ₦110,000.

Now these items can be sold in smaller household quantities.

For example:

* garri by paint bucket or congos

* beans by Congo or cups

* palm oil by bottle

* crayfish by cup

Selling in smaller quantities often gives better margins.

Example: Rice Breakdown

If a trader buys one 50kg bag of rice for ₦62,000.

A paint bucket may hold about 4kg of rice.

$50\text{kg} \div 4\text{kg} \approx$ about 12 paint buckets.

If each paint bucket sells for about **₦6,500 – ₦7,000.**

Possible revenue:

$12 \times ₦6,700 \approx$ **₦80,400**

Potential gross margin:

₦80,400 – ₦65,000 = **₦15,400**

This is why selling in smaller quantities often increases profit.

Choosing the Right Food Items to Begin With

Not every food product is good for beginners.

Some items spoil quickly.

Others move slowly.

The best starter products usually have three qualities:

- ✓ They are always in demand.
- ✓ They are easy to store.
- ✓ They sell in small quantities.

These items are used in everyday Nigerian meals.

Foods That Move Fast in Most Nigerian Communities

Many traders notice that these foods rarely stay long in stock:

Garri, Beans, Rice, Palm oil, Pepper, Onions, Spaghetti, Tomato paste.

Others include eggs, frozen proteins, egusi, dry fish, fresh vegetables but these require proper storage.

These items are used for meals like:

*** eba and soup * rice and stew * beans and garri * yam and palm oil * jollof spaghetti**

Because families cook these foods often, traders get **steady turnover**.

How to Test the Market Before Investing Big Money

One secret successful traders use is market testing.

Instead of investing all their money at once, they test demand first.

This protects their capital.

Simple Market Test System

Step 1 - Start with small quantities.

Buy small stock and see what sells fastest.

Step 2 - Observe customers.

Notice which products people ask for most.

Step 3 - Adjust your stock.

Increase products that sell fast.

Reduce slow moving items.

This simple method helps traders grow with less risk.

Example of Market Testing

A new trader starts with:

- rice
- garri
- beans
- palm oil

After three weeks, the trader notices:

Garri and Rice sell fastest.

Palm oil sells second.

Beans moves slower.

So the trader increases garri and rice stock and reduces beans.

This simple adjustment increases cashflow and profit.

For Traders With Bigger Capital

Some readers of this book may already have **₦500,000 – ₦5 million** or more to invest.

For them, the strategy is slightly different.

Instead of buying small quantities, they can:

Buy directly from wholesale suppliers.

Buy during harvest season when prices drop.

Supply retailers and restaurants.

This creates larger profit margins.

For example, buying 20 bags of rice at ₦53,000 each during a supply surplus can allow a trader to sell later when prices rise.

Understanding these price cycles helps bigger investors make **stronger returns**.

Starter Checklist

Before starting your foodstuff business, ask yourself these questions:

Which foods sell fastest in my area?

Where can I buy them cheaper?

Do I have a safe place to store them?

How will I attract my first customers?

Answering these questions will help you start your business with more confidence.

Final Thoughts

One of the biggest mistakes people make is waiting for big capital before starting.

But many successful traders began with very small stock.

They started small.

They observed the market.

They increased their stock gradually.

In food trading, knowledge and market awareness often matter more than starting capital.

In the next chapter, we will reveal something very powerful.

You will learn the hidden system smart traders use to buy foodstuffs cheaper than most people in the market.

Chapter 4

The Hidden System to Buy Foodstuff Cheap

One of the biggest secrets in the foodstuff business is this:

Your real profit is made when you buy, not when you sell.

Many new traders focus too much on the selling price.

But experienced traders focus more on buying price.

Two traders can sell the same beans, rice, or garri in the same market.

Yet one trader will make much more profit.

Why?

Because that trader bought the goods cheaper.

In this chapter, you will learn the hidden system experienced traders use to buy food items at better prices.

Where Experienced Traders Really Buy Their Goods

Many beginners buy food items from the same market where they plan to sell.

This is usually the most expensive place to buy.

That market price already includes profit for:

- Wholesalers
- Transporters
- Middlemen

Experienced traders go one or two steps before the retail market.

They buy from places where the goods first enter the trading chain.

Some of these places include:

- Farm gates

- Grain hubs
- Wholesale redistribution markets
- Northern supply markets

When you buy closer to the source, the price is usually 10–30% cheaper.

That difference becomes your profit.

Major Grain Supply Hubs in Nigeria

Many people only know the popular retail markets.

But serious traders often buy from large grain hubs.

Some of the biggest ones Nigeria are:

- Dawanau International Market – Kano
- Giwa Grain Market – Kaduna State
- Maiduguri Beans Market (Tashar Muna) – Borno State
- Potiskum Market – Yobe State

These markets supply grains to many parts of Nigeria.

Common products there include:

- * beans - different types
- * maize
- * millet
- * sorghum
- * soybeans

Many traders from Lagos, Ibadan, Onitsha, and Port Harcourt buy grains from this market through agents.

Wholesale Markets in Lagos, Nigeria:

- Mile 12 Market (fresh foods and tubers)
- Ile epo market (fresh vegetables and foods)
- Daleko Market (rice, oil and other grains)
- Kara Market (fresh foods and tubers)
- Ijora olopa market (frozen food)
- Oyingbo market (soup ingredients)
- Otto White sand market (different types of dry fish, and other Foodstuffs)

- Makoko & Badore market (fresh seafood)
- Apapa fish market
- Epe fish market
- Oko - Oba Abbatoir (fresh meat)
- Idi oro market, Mushin (different types of garri)

Other wholesale markets across Nigeria:

- Bodija Market, Ibadan, Oyo State (grains, tubers, fresh foodstuff)
- Akinyele market, Ibadan (meat, tomatoes and other fresh vegetables)
- Kila market, Omi Adio, Ibadan (garri, elubo, lafun, other fresh produce from farmers)
- Oje market, Ibadan (spices, fruits, vegetables)
- Oja Oba, Ibadan (fresh produce and vegetables)
- Bere market, Ibadan (yams)

- Relief market, Owerri (fruits, fresh foods, condiments)

- Faringada market, Jos (fruits, fresh foods)
- Jang Farmer's market, Jos (fresh produce)

- Zaki Biam Yam Market, Benue State (largest Yam market in Nigeria)
- Tour Tu market, Benue State (Yams, fruits and other fresh produce)

- Ogere market, Ogun State - fresh foods, vegetables and tubers
- Eleweran market, Abeokuta (deposit for northern grains)

- Okitipupa town, Ondo State (palm oil)

- Zuba market, Abuja (fruits, other Foodstuffs)
- Iddah bush market, Abuja (grains, other Foodstuffs)
- Orange Market, Maraba, Abuja (fruits/fresh foodstuffs)

- Abba Cemetery Market, Abia State (Egusi, crayfish, stockfish, etc)
- Oron Market, Akwa Ibom (crayfish, stockfish, dry fish).

Prices here can sometimes be **20–40% cheaper** than in southern city markets.

Farm Gate Sourcing

Farm gate sourcing simply means **buying directly from farmers** before goods reach the market.

This method can reduce cost because there are fewer middlemen.

Farm gate buying works well for products like:

- * maize
- * yam
- * tomatoes
- * pepper
- * vegetables

Farmers usually prefer selling quickly after harvest because they need cash.

Because of this, prices at the farm gate can be significantly lower than city markets.

Example of Farm Gate Advantage

Imagine a farmer selling maize at harvest.

Farm gate price may be around:

₦45,000 – ₦55,000 per 100kg bag.

By the time the same maize reaches a city market, it may sell for:

₦60,000 – ₦70,000.

That difference happens because of:

- * transportation
- * storage
- * trader profit margins

Buying earlier in the chain helps traders capture that margin.

Seasonal Buying Strategy

Food prices in Nigeria follow seasonal patterns.

When supply is high during harvest, prices usually drop.

When supply becomes low later in the year, prices increase.

Smart traders take advantage of these cycles.

Approximate Harvest Calendar in Nigeria

Maize harvest: July – September

Beans harvest: September – November

Rice harvest: September – December

Yam harvest: August – October

Pepper harvest: December – March

Tomato harvest peaks: November – February

During these periods, supply is high and prices often become cheaper.

Traders who buy during these months often get better buying prices.

Example: Seasonal Bean Buying

If beans sell for around:

₦95,000 per bag during harvest.

Later in the year the same bag may sell for:

₦115,000 – ₦125,000.

A trader who buys 20 bags during harvest may gain a difference of about:

₦20,000 per bag.

20 bags × ₦20,000 = ₦400,000 potential margin.

This is why experienced traders watch harvest cycles carefully.

Buying in Bulk

Another system smart traders use is **bulk buying**.

Buying larger quantities often gives access to better prices.

Wholesale traders usually reduce price when buyers purchase:

- * multiple bags
- * cartons
- * baskets

For example, a trader buying 10 bags of beans may get a better price than someone buying only one bag.

Building good relationships with suppliers can also help traders get **special prices or early information about incoming goods.**

A Simple Buying System

Many successful food traders follow a simple buying system.

Step 1 - Study market prices in at least two markets.

Step 2 - Ask traders about expected supply changes.

Step 3 - Buy larger quantities when prices are low.

Step 4 - Store goods properly and sell gradually.

This system protects profit and reduces risk.

Buying Checklist

Before buying foodstuff stock, ask yourself these questions:

Is this product currently in harvest season?

Is the price lower than last month?

Can I get this product cheaper in another market?

Do I have proper storage space?

These questions help traders make better buying decisions.

Final Thoughts

Many people believe the secret of the foodstuff business is selling.

But the deeper truth is that the biggest advantage often comes from buying well.

Traders who know where and when to buy usually make better profit.

They understand:

- * supply markets
- * harvest seasons
- * bulk buying opportunities

When you learn these patterns, you begin to see the food market very differently.

In the next chapter, we will explore something every trader needs to know.

You will learn about the fast-moving food items Nigerians buy every day and how traders build daily cashflow from them.

Chapter 5

The Fast-Moving Food Items Nigerians Buy Every Day

One big secret in the foodstuff business is this:

Not every food item moves at the same speed.

Some foods can stay long before they sell.

Some foods move almost every day.

If you want steady cashflow, you must know the foods people buy again and again.

These are the foods that keep many traders in business.

They are not always fancy.

They are not always the most expensive.

But they are foods people cook all the time, in many homes, hostels, bukas, and restaurants across Nigeria. Market surveys across Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt have shown strong trading activity in staples like rice, beans, garri, yam, and tomatoes, even though prices keep moving up and down.

This is why these products always sell:

people need them,

people know them,

people can buy them in small quantities,

and they fit many Nigerian meals.

If you understand these products well, you will know what to stock, what to push harder, and where your daily cashflow can come from.

Rice

Rice is one of the fastest-moving food items in Nigeria.

Why?

Because rice is for everybody.

Students eat it.
Workers eat it.
Families eat it.
Party people eat it.
Restaurants cook it.
Small food vendors cook it too.

Rice can become plain rice, jollof rice, fried rice, coconut rice, rice and stew, rice and beans.

That is why rice hardly goes out of demand.

As of early March 2026, surveys in Lagos showed foreign 50kg rice around ₦57,000 to ₦60,000, while local 50kg rice was around ₦65,000 to ₦68,000. Other market updates for March also put wholesale local rice around ₦48,000 to ₦55,000 and foreign rice around ₦68,000 to ₦82,000 depending on market, quality, and location, which shows why traders must compare prices before buying.

For a trader, rice is powerful because it can be sold in many units: full bag, half bag, paint bucket, congo, mudu, derica, or even measured cups in some places.

That means you can sell to:
big families buying bags,
small families buying paint buckets,
and low-cash customers buying tiny portions.

That flexibility is one reason rice moves fast.

A smart rice trader also knows that not every customer wants the same type.

Some buyers want local rice because it is richer.
Some want foreign rice because it cooks neatly and looks cleaner.
Some want the cheaper option.
Some want the “party rice” look.

Useful tip:

Do not stock only one type of rice if your area has mixed customers.
A low-income area may move smaller portions faster.
A middle-income area may prefer sealed bags or cleaner local rice.

Beans

Beans is another fast seller.
Beans is not just food. For many homes, it is a survival meal.

People cook:

beans and garri, beans and plantain, beans porridge, ewa agoyin, beans with yam, beans with bread.

Beans is also grinded fresh or dried into powder to make **akara, moimoi, ekuru, gbegiri** and other highly demanded meals.

It is filling, versatile, common, and useful.

That is why beans keeps moving even when the economy is hard.

The current market surveys showed 100kg beans selling around ₦90,000 to ₦105,000 in Lagos, ₦95,000 to ₦110,000 in Abuja, and ₦100,000 to ₦115,000 in Port Harcourt. In Lagos-specific surveys, oloyin beans were around ₦100,000 to ₦105,000, while white beans were around ₦90,000 to ₦95,000.

Beans also has strong retail power because many people do not buy a full bag.

They buy by: paint bucket, congo, mudu, derica, milk tin, or cup, depending on the market.

This is good for the trader because breaking bulk into smaller units often increases margin.

Beans is also good because it serves many kinds of buyers:

households,
food vendors,
ewa agoyin sellers,
canteens,
boarding schools,
and caterers.

Useful tip:

Know your bean types.

Some customers want oloyin because it is sweeter.

Some want white beans because it is cheaper.

If you know what your area prefers, your stock will move faster.

Garri

Garri is one of the deepest secrets in Nigerian food trading.

It may look ordinary, but it moves fast. Very fast.

Why?

Because garri works for many classes of people.

It is food for:
students,
bachelors,
families,
workers,
roadside food sellers,
and even event cooks.

People use garri for: eba, soakings, garri with beans, garri with groundnut, garri with soup.

It is cheap, flexible, and familiar.

That is why garri almost always has buyers.

In recent market surveys across major cities, 50kg garri was around ₦20,000 to ₦23,000 in Lagos, ₦23,000 to ₦26,000 in Abuja, and ₦25,000 to ₦28,000 in Port Harcourt.

BusinessDay's January 2026 survey also noted garri prices easing in some markets, though the exact level still varied sharply by colour, quality, and location.

One reason garri is powerful for traders is that almost everybody can afford some quantity.

A customer may not have money for a bag of rice.

But that same customer can still buy:
₦500 garri, ₦1,000 garri, one derica, one mudu, or one paint measure.

That means Garri keeps cash entering the business every day.

Useful tip:

Separate your garri well.

White garri and yellow garri do not serve the same buyers.

Some people want ijebu- garri for drinking.

Some want the yellow one to make swallow.

If you know the taste your market likes, your repeat customers will increase.

Yam

Yam is another food that sells fast, but in a different way.

Unlike rice or garri, yam is often sold by tuber, by set, or by heap.

It is strong in many homes because yam can become:

boiled yam, fried yam, pounded yam, yam porridge, yam and egg, yam with sauce. Some even make yam into powder for home-made yam swallow.

Yam is also important for:
restaurants,
roadside breakfast sellers,
and households with children.

In early March 2026, a medium tuber of yam was reported around ₦2,500 to ₦3,500 in Lagos, ₦3,000 to ₦4,000 in Abuja, and ₦3,500 to ₦4,500 in Port Harcourt, showing both its demand and how transport affects pricing.

Long-term **Nature Based Solutions** analysis also showed yam among the sharpest-rising food items in recent years, which is another reason traders who buy well can still make good profit. Yam is especially good for traders who understand timing.

When supply is strong, yam can be bought cheaper.
When the season changes, prices rise.
That is why good yam traders watch season, storage, and transport closely.

Useful tip:

If you trade yam, learn how to reduce spoilage.
Yam can still make money, but poor handling and storage can destroy profit.

Palm oil

Palm oil is one of the most useful food products in Nigeria.

It is not a full meal on its own, but it enters many meals.

People use palm oil for: stew, soup, beans, boiled yam, yam porridge, native rice, banga-related cooking, and many traditional dishes.

So even when people are not buying plenty food items, they still need cooking oil.

That is why palm oil has strong daily demand.

Palm oil is also good because it can be sold in many ways:
25-litre keg, 10 litres, 5 litres, 1 litre, 1 bottle, or smaller in measurements.

In March, 2026, a keg of palm oil can be bought between ₦48,000 - ₦55,000.
This helps both small and big traders.

A trader with small capital can buy little and resell in bottles.
A trader with bigger capital can buy in drums or kegs and enjoy better margin.

Useful tip:

Oil buyers care about colour, smell, and thickness.
If your palm oil is clean and trusted, customers will return.
Many people are willing to leave a cheaper seller for a cleaner product.

Vegetables

Vegetables move very fast, but they require speed and care.

This group includes items like:

tomatoes,
pepper,
onions,
ugu,
efo,
cabbage,
carrot,
okra,
and other soup vegetables.

These products move because Nigerians cook with them almost every day.

No matter the level of hardship, people still need ingredients for soup and stew.

In March 2026, tomatoes were reported around ₦10,000 to ₦18,000 per basket in Lagos, ₦12,000 to ₦20,000 in Abuja, and ₦15,000 to ₦22,000 in Port Harcourt. Another wholesale March update placed baskets of tomatoes around ₦28,000 to ₦45,000, pepper around ₦32,000 to ₦60,000, and onions around ₦80,000 to ₦115,000 depending on size and market.

BusinessDay's January survey also showed tomatoes at about ₦45,000 for a big basket and onions near ₦95,000 for a big bag.

Vegetables are different from dry food items because they spoil faster.

So the trick here is not just demand.
The trick is speed.

If you trade vegetables, your money can turn quickly, but only if:
you buy right,
you sell fast,
and you reduce waste.

Useful tip:

Vegetables are best for traders who have fast turnover, a good display point, or regular buyers like bukas and families.

Do not carry too much fresh stock if your sales are slow.

Crayfish and dry fish

Crayfish and dry fish may look like small add-ons, but they are very powerful in food trading.

Why?

Because many soups and stews feel “incomplete” without them.

People buy crayfish and dry fish for:

egusi,

okra,

ogbono,

vegetable soup,

beans,

native soup,

and many home-style dishes.

These products also cut across many income groups.

A family that cannot buy much meat may still buy crayfish.

A soup seller will likely buy dry fish weekly.

A food vendor may restock often.

That makes them steady sellers.

Large supply hubs like Oron Market in Akwa Ibom are known for supplying crayfish, stockfish, and dry fish into southern urban markets, often at materially lower prices than city retail points, which is why experienced traders source there or through agents.

Crayfish and dry fish are also useful because they can be sold in: congos, dericas, different tin cups, nylon pouches or sachets, or larger bulk units.

This makes them good for small traders, market women, neighbourhood sellers, and supermarkets.

Useful tip:

With crayfish and dry fish, smell and cleanliness matter a lot.

If your product is neat and not dusty or infested, people will notice.

Why these products always sell

Now let us bring everything together.

Rice, beans, garri, yam, palm oil, vegetables, crayfish, and dry fish always sell for simple reasons.

- First, they are part of everyday Nigerian life.

✓ These are not luxury foods.

✓ These are regular foods for both poor and rich.

✓ That means the market for them is wide.

- Second, they can be sold in small units.

That is very important in Nigeria.

Many people do not buy only in bulk.

They buy to match the money in their hand that day.

A trader who understands this will sell faster.

- Third, they fit many meals and can serve many kinds of customers.

For example:

rice can serve households, caterers, and food vendors.

beans can serve homes and ewa agoyin sellers.

vegetables can serve homes, bukas, and restaurants.

- Fourth, they are familiar.

Customers do not need much convincing to buy them.

The demand already exists.

Your job as a trader is to stock the right product, in the right form, at the right time.

A simple trader guide

If you are just starting, focus first on products that:

✓ sell often,

✓ store fairly well,

✓ and can be broken into smaller units.

Good examples are:

rice,

beans,

garri,

palm oil, crayfish.

If you already have some experience and want faster turnover, add: tomatoes, pepper, onions, and other vegetables, but only if you can sell quickly.

If you have bigger capital, you can combine both: stable dry goods for safer profit, and fast fresh goods for quick cashflow.

Quick checklist

Before stocking any fast-moving item, ask:

- Do people in my area buy this often?
- Can I sell it in small units?
- Can I store it well?
- Can I restock it easily?
- Does it match the kind of customers around me?

If the answer is yes to most of these questions, that product is likely a good fit for your business.

Final thoughts

The smartest foodstuff traders do not just stock random goods. They understand what moves. They know the foods people buy even in hard times. They know the foods that can bring daily cashflow, not just occasional profit.

That is why these products matter so much.

They are the engine room of many food businesses in Nigeria.

In the next chapter, we will go deeper into the money side.

You will learn the simple pricing formula that helps traders protect profit, avoid underpricing, and sell with confidence.

Chapter 6

The Simple Pricing Formula That Guarantees Profit

One of the biggest reasons many foodstuff traders work hard and still do not see real profit is this:

They do not price well.

Some traders price with emotion.

Some price by guesswork.

Some just copy what others are doing.

Some forget hidden costs.

At the end of the day, money enters, but real profit is small.

This is why pricing is very important.

If you price too low, you may sell fast but still lose money.

If you price too high, customers may walk away.

A smart trader must **learn how to price** in a way that does two things:

- * protect profit
- * help goods move fast

That is what this chapter is about.

The good thing is that pricing is not as hard as it looks.

Once you know the simple formula, it becomes easier.

The real meaning of **profit**.

Many people think profit is simply:

Selling price minus buying price. No. That is not complete.

In foodstuff trading, your real profit is what remains after all the costs connected to that product have been removed.

That means if you buy a bag of rice for ₦60,000 and sell everything for ₦70,000, your profit is not automatically ₦10,000.

You must first ask:

- * How much did transport cost?
- * Did I rebag or package it?
- * Did I pay for labour?
- * Was there spoilage or shortage?
- * Did I sell on credit to some customers?

This is where many traders miss it.

The simple pricing formula

A good food trader should think like this:

Cost price

- * transport
 - * loading or offloading
 - * storage or packaging
 - * expected loss or spoilage
 - * desired profit
- = selling price**

That is the full thinking.

Let us break it down with an example.

Example 1: Rice

Let us say you buy one 50kg bag of rice for ₦60,000.

Transport from market to your shop or house = ₦2,000

Offloading and handling = ₦500

Packaging and small nylon bags = ₦1,000

Total cost so far:

$$\text{N}62,000 + \text{N}2,000 + \text{N}500 + \text{N}1,000 = \text{N}65,500$$

Now let us say you want a profit of ~~N~~9,500 on that bag.

Your target selling value becomes:

$$\text{N}65,500 + \text{N}9,500 = \text{N}75,000$$

So if you break the rice into smaller units, all the units together should bring about ~~N~~75,000 or more.

That is **proper pricing**.

If you sell below that, you are reducing your own profit.

Why small-unit selling can increase profit

This is one secret many smart traders understand.

The same bag can look ordinary in bulk.

But once broken into smaller units, the total selling value often goes up.

That is why many traders prefer to sell by:

- * paint bucket
- * congo
- * mudu
- * derica
- * bottle
- * cup
- * small nylon pack

Let us use rice again.

If 1 paint bucket holds about 4kg, a 50kg bag can give around 12 paint buckets, with a little balance.

If you sell each paint bucket for ~~N~~6,500:

$$12 \times \text{N}6,500 = \text{N}78,000$$

Then the small balance may still add something extra.

That is why breaking bulk is powerful.

But do not forget this:

small-unit selling can also bring extra costs like nylon, labour, and measurement loss. They also require detailed calculations because of the several units the goods have been broken into.

So the smart trader includes those costs too.

Example 2: Palm oil

Palm oil is a very good product for showing how pricing works.

Let us say you buy 25 litres of palm oil at ~~₦~~2,000 per litre.

Total cost = ~~₦~~50,000

Transport = ~~₦~~1,500

Container and bottling = ~~₦~~2,500

Leakage or handling loss allowance = ~~₦~~1,000

Total cost =

~~₦~~50,000 + ~~₦~~1,500 + ~~₦~~2,500 + ~~₦~~1,000 = ~~₦~~55,000

Now you want a total profit of ~~₦~~8,000.

Target selling value = ~~₦~~63,000

That means your 25 litres must sell in a way that brings at least ~~₦~~63,000.

If you divide well and sell by bottle, the profit becomes easier to achieve.

This is why experienced traders like products that can be resold in smaller quantities.

The hidden costs many traders forget:

This is where profit usually disappears.

Many traders remember only the buying price.

But foodstuff business has hidden costs.

Some of them are:

- * transport from market
- * loading and offloading
- * storage cost
- * rent contribution
- * repackaging
- * spoilage
- * shortage from measurement
- * credit sales delay
- * staff handling loss

If you ignore these costs, your pricing will look good on paper but your cash will not show it.

Example:

You buy garri and think your profit is ₦8,000.

But after transport, repackaging, and one or two cups missing here and there, the real profit may be only ₦4,500.

This is why record keeping and proper pricing must work together.

A very simple pricing system any trader can use

Use this 4-step method.

Step 1

Write down the full buying cost.

Do not stop at the market price.

Add transport, labour, packaging, and any other direct and indirect costs.

Step 2

Estimate your expected selling units.

For example:

- * how many paint buckets
- * how many congos
- * how many litres

* how many bottles

Step 3

Set your desired profit.

Decide the minimum profit you want from that product.

Not emotional profit.

Not random profit.

A clear target.

Step 4

Divide and price each unit.

Make sure the total of all units will cover your full cost and leave your profit.

This system works for beginners and bigger traders too.

Pricing strategies that help you sell faster

Now let us talk about something very important.

Good pricing is not only about profit.

It is also about speed.

If your goods do not move, **your money is trapped.**

Below are simple pricing strategies that help food sell faster.

Strategy 1: Know the market range

Before fixing your price, ask around.

What are others selling this item for?

Do not ask only one trader.

Ask in two or three places if possible.

This helps you know whether your own price is too high or too low.

Useful tip:

Your price does not always have to be the cheapest.

Sometimes customers will still buy from you if your product is cleaner, better measured, or easier to access.

Strategy 2: Use “entry quantities”

In Nigeria, many customers buy according to the money in their hand that day.

That is why traders who sell in small quantities often move goods faster.

Examples:

- * ₦500 garri
- * ₦1,000 rice
- * ₦500 crayfish
- * ₦1,000 palm oil

This helps low-cash customers buy from you without stress.

It also increases your daily transaction count.

Strategy 3: Price by customer type

Not all customers should be priced the same way.

You may have:

- * retail buyers
- * repeat family buyers
- * bukas and food vendors
- * restaurants
- * bulk buyers

A trader who understands this can use flexible pricing.

For example:

Retail buyers may pay normal price.

Bulk buyers may get a slight discount because they buy more.

Repeat customers may get small favors that keep them loyal.

That is smart pricing.

Strategy 4: Use bundle pricing

Food moves faster when people feel they are buying a complete solution.

Instead of selling only one item, you can bundle.

Examples:

- rice + beans combo
- soup pack
- stew ingredients pack
- monthly family staple bundle

Bundles can increase total sales and help slow items move together with fast items.

Strategy 5: Move old stock faster

Sometimes it is better to reduce profit slightly and recover cash quickly than to hold stock for too long.

This is especially important for:

- * vegetables * pepper * tomatoes * onions
- * products nearing damage

Cashflow is very important in foodstuff trading.

Goods must move.

Money must return.

Avoiding underpricing mistakes

Underpricing means selling too low.

This is common among new traders.

They do it because they want customers quickly.

But if care is not taken, the business starts looking busy while profit stays weak.

Signs you may be underpricing:

- * customers rush your goods too easily every time
- * you sell fast but cash is always tight
- * after restocking, very little money remains
- * your competitors seem more relaxed while you struggle

Common causes of underpricing:

- * forgetting hidden costs
- * copying another seller blindly
- * pricing out of fear
- * not keeping records

Useful tip:

Do not price with panic.

A business that does not protect profit cannot grow.

Avoiding overpricing mistakes

Overpricing means pricing too high for your market.

When this happens, customers start comparing and moving elsewhere.

Sometimes overpricing happens because a trader wants “big profit at once.”

But in the food business, steady profit is usually better than greedy profit.

Signs you may be overpricing:

- * customers ask price and keep walking away
- * your stock stays too long
- * faster traders around you sell out before you
- * customers only come when they are desperate

Common causes of overpricing:

- * trying to recover unrelated personal expenses from one product
- * guessing price without market check
- * adding too much profit on a slow product
- * ignoring the income level of your area

A trader in a student area will not always price like a trader in an estate.

Know your environment.

The balance smart traders look for:

The best pricing is usually in the middle.

Not too low. Not too high.

Just right for:

- * your costs
- * your market
- * your customer type
- * your speed of sales

That is the sweet spot.

A quick visual pricing table

Here is a simple guide:

Item	What to include before pricing
Rice	cost, transport, repackaging, measurement loss, desired profit
Beans	cost, transport, sorting loss, packaging, desired profit
Garri	cost, transport, storage, scooping loss, desired profit
Palm oil	cost, transport, bottling, leakage allowance, desired profit
Vegetables	cost, transport, spoilage risk, speed of turnover, desired profit
Processed foods (e.g beans flour)	cost, transport, sorting loss, grinding, dehydrating cost, sieving labor, packaging, desired profit

This kind of thinking will save you from many mistakes.

Simple worksheet for pricing any product

Use this anytime you want to price a product:

Product name: _____

Buying cost: _____

Transport: _____

Loading/offloading: _____

Packaging: _____

Loss/spoilage allowance: _____

Total cost: _____

Desired profit: _____

Final target selling value: _____

How many units will I sell it into? _____

Selling price per unit: _____

This is a simple but powerful habit.

If you use it often, your confidence will increase.

Real-life trader example

Let us say a trader buys beans for ₦95,000.

Transport and handling = ₦3,000

Loading and Offloading = ₦500

Sorting and bagging = ₦2,000

Repackaging costs = ₦2,000

Total cost = ₦102,500

The trader wants ₦12,500 profit.

Target selling value = ₦115,000

Now the trader breaks the bag into smaller units and prices in a way that the full stock returns at least ₦115,000.

This is how pricing should work.

Not by guess.

Not by hope.

By calculation.

Useful tips for better pricing

- * Always know your total cost before fixing selling price
- * Check market prices often
- * Keep profit targets realistic
- * Sell in units your customers can afford
- * Use bundles where possible
- * Reduce old stock before it turns to loss
- * Record what works and what does not

Final thoughts

Pricing is one of the biggest skills in foodstuff trading.

A trader can **buy well and still lose profit through poor pricing.**

But a trader who understands pricing can protect profit, move stock faster, and grow with confidence.

Do not price by guesswork.

Do not price by fear.

Do not price only by what others say.

Price with understanding.

When you do that, your business becomes stronger.

In the next chapter, we will move from pricing into selling.

You will learn how to sell foodstuff fast, even if you do not yet have a big shop or a perfect location.

Chapter 7

How to Sell Foodstuff Fast (Even Without a Shop)

Many people believe you must have a shop before you can sell foodstuff well.

That is not true.

Some of the fastest growing foodstuff traders in Nigeria started without a shop.

They started from:

- * their house
- * their compound
- * their street
- * their phone

The truth is simple.

People do not only buy food from shops.

They buy food from **people they trust and people that are close to them.**

If you understand how food moves around your area, you can sell fast even before renting a shop.

In this chapter, you will learn some simple systems traders use to sell food quickly.

These methods work for:

- * beginners with small capital
- * traders with medium stock
- * bigger suppliers looking for steady customers

Selling from home

One of the easiest ways to start selling foodstuff is from home.

Many people are already doing it quietly.

Think about it.

If you live in a street with:

- * 30 houses
- * 40 houses
- * even 20 houses

That street alone is already a small market.

Families there buy food every week.

Instead of them walking to a far market, many of them will prefer buying from someone nearby.

Example

Imagine you stock:

- * garri
- * rice
- * beans
- * palm oil
- * crayfish

Even if only 10 houses buy small things from you every week, you already have steady sales.

Example of weekly purchases from customers:

Family A - ~~₦~~5,000
Family B - ~~₦~~3,500
Family C - ~~₦~~4,000
Family D - ~~₦~~6,000
Family E - ~~₦~~3,000

If just 10 families buy an average of ~~₦~~4,000 worth of Foodstuffs weekly:

~~₦~~4,000 × 10 = ~~₦~~40,000 weekly sales.

That is only from your street.

Many traders underestimate how powerful their immediate environment can be.

Useful tip

Start by telling people around you that you sell food items.

- Neighbours
- Friends
- Security guards
- Caretakers
- Domestic staff

They often become your first customers.

Neighborhood supply systems

This is a very powerful method many successful traders use.

Instead of waiting for customers to walk in, they create **small supply networks**.

Let us look at how this works.

Example: Compound supply

In many compounds with multiple flats, families buy food every week.

A trader can approach them and say something like:

“I now supply rice, garri, beans, palm oil and soup ingredients. If you need anything weekly, I can supply directly to your house.”

Many families like this arrangement.

Why?

Because it saves them time and transport.

Now imagine you supply 10 families weekly.

If each family buys about ₦10,000 worth of food weekly:

$10 \times \text{₦}10,000 = \text{₦}100,000$ weekly sales.

That is already a strong movement for a small trader.

Example: Street supply

Another method is street supply.

Some traders move through their street or nearby streets weekly with simple announcements through one-on-one marketing with their printed fliers or cards: “Rice, beans, garri, palm oil available.”

This is common in many Nigerian neighborhoods.

Even without shouting, word spreads when people know you sell.

Useful tip

Trust and consistency matter here.

If people know you always have clean products and fair measurements, they will return.

WhatsApp selling strategy

One of the biggest tools many modern traders use today is **WhatsApp**.

Almost every Nigerian with a smartphone uses WhatsApp.

That means you already have a small market in your phone.

Many successful traders now sell food through WhatsApp groups, broadcast lists, and status posts.

Example

A trader posts on WhatsApp status:

“Fresh garri available
Rice available
Beans available
Palm oil available
Delivery within this area.”

Friends, neighbours, and contacts who see it may place orders.

You can also post simple price lists like this:

- Rice (paint bucket) – ₦6,800
- Beans (congo) – ₦2,500
- Garri (paint bucket) – ₦2,000
- Palm oil (1 litre) – ₦1,200

This makes it easy for people to decide quickly.

Useful tip

Pictures help sales.

When customers see clean rice, fresh pepper, or well-packed garri, they trust the product more.

Step-by-step WhatsApp selling system

Step 1

Post your available items regularly on WhatsApp status.

Step 2

Create a small broadcast list of customers who buy food often.

Step 3

Send weekly updates of available stock.

Step 4

Offer delivery within your area when possible.

This simple system can bring daily orders.

Supplying offices and families

Another powerful way to sell foodstuffs fast is by supplying groups of people.

Examples include:

- * offices
- * hostels
- * schools
- * restaurants
- * small catering businesses

These places buy food regularly and in larger quantities.

Example: Office supply

Imagine a small office with 15 workers.

If some of them decide to buy food items monthly, the demand becomes steady.

Example monthly purchase:

Worker A - ₦15,000

Worker B - ₦12,000

Worker C - ₦10,000

If 10 workers buy food worth about ₦12,000 monthly:

₦12,000 × 10 = ₦120,000 monthly sales.

Now imagine supplying three offices like this.

The numbers grow quickly.

Example: Restaurant supply

Small bukas and restaurants buy items like:

* rice

* beans

* pepper

* onions

* palm oil

These buyers restock often.

If you supply them consistently, you can move large volumes.

The secret here is **reliability**.

Restaurants like suppliers who **deliver on time** and at **fair prices**.

Simple customer-building checklist

If you want steady customers, ask yourself these questions:

Do people around me know I sell foodstuffs?

Have I told neighbours and friends?

Am I posting regularly on WhatsApp?

Have I approached any offices or small restaurants?

Do I measure fairly and keep products clean?

These small habits build **customer trust**.

Why trust matters in food trading

Food is sensitive.

People care about:

- cleanliness
- correct measurement
- honesty

If customers trust you, they will come back.

Some traders keep customers for many years simply because they are known to be reliable.

Final thoughts

Selling foodstuffs fast is not only about having a shop.

It is about **being visible and building relationships**.

You can sell from:

your house
your phone
your street
your network

When people trust you and know you always have what they need, sales will start coming more easily.

In the next chapter, we will go deeper into something very important for steady income.

You will learn how smart traders turn occasional buyers into **repeat customers who buy again and again**.

Chapter 8

Creating Daily Cashflow From Food Items

One of the biggest advantages of the foodstuff business is this:

It can produce **daily cashflow**.

Many businesses depend on occasional sales.

But food trading can bring money almost every day because **people eat every day**.

However, not every trader experiences daily cashflow.

Some traders sell well only on market days or weekends.

Others sell regularly throughout the week.

The difference is not always location.

The difference is **how they structure their sales system**.

In this chapter, you will learn how to turn occasional sales into steady income.

You will also learn how to create weekly customers and how to use simple food bundles to increase sales.

Turning occasional sales into daily income

Many new traders start like this:

They buy foodstuffs.

They display it.

Then they wait for customers to come.

Sometimes customers come.

Sometimes they do not.

That kind of selling leads to irregular income.

Smart traders do something different.

They create **multiple sales channels**.

Instead of depending on one source of buyers, they sell through different paths.

Examples include:

- * walk-in buyers
- * neighbors
- * WhatsApp customers
- * office workers
- * restaurants/food vendors
- * weekly household buyers

When these small channels combine, sales begin to happen almost every day.

Example

Imagine a trader selling these items:

- * rice
- * beans
- * garri
- * palm oil
- * crayfish

Now imagine the trader has these customers, some of them will buy daily or at random, some weekly, some monthly, some twice a week. The important thing is that they return regularly to become **repeat customers**.

Even if each group buys small quantities, the total sales can become steady. Because cooking happens every day, the trader who is visible and trusted begins to see steady movement of goods.

This is how daily cashflow begins.

A lot of times from **numerous small daily sales**, and not one big buyer.

This is how foodstuff trading quietly produces steady money.

Creating weekly customers

One of the biggest upgrades a trader can make is turning random buyers into weekly customers.

Weekly customers are powerful because they bring predictable income.

These customers may include:

- * families
- * students in hostels
- * small offices
- * food vendors
- * restaurants

These people buy food regularly.

If you serve them well, they may keep buying from you every week .

How to create weekly customers

The secret is simple.

Make life easier for your buyers.

Many people are busy.

They do not enjoy going to crowded markets every week.

If they know someone reliable who can supply food close to them, they often prefer that.

You can say something simple like:

“I supply weekly food items for families. If you want rice, beans, garri, oil, and soup ingredients, I can help you arrange it weekly.”

Some people will be interested immediately.

Others may join later.

How traders turn buyers into repeat customers

Here are a few simple habits that help with this.

✓ First, be consistent. Consistency builds trust.

Customers must know that when they need something, you will likely have it.

✓ Second, be fair with measurement.

Many traders lose customers because people feel cheated in measurement.

✓ Third, keep products clean.

Clean rice, clean beans, clean garri, and fresh vegetables attract repeat buyers.

✓ Fourth, be approachable.

Subscription food bundles for families

One powerful method many smart traders use is **food bundles**.

A bundle simply means grouping several food items together as one package.

This makes buying easier for customers.

It also helps traders sell more items at once.

Example: Weekly staple bundle

A simple bundle may include:

- * 1 paint bucket rice
- * 1 congo beans
- * 1 paint bucket garri
- * 1 litre palm oil

This type of bundle can feed a small family for several days.

Customers like bundles because they save time.

Traders like bundles because they increase **basket size**.

If the bundled items normally cost about ₦9,500 individually, the trader may package them as a bundle for ₦9,000 or ₦9,200.

The customer feels they got a small deal.

The trader moves more goods at once.

Example: Monthly family bundle

For families who like buying in bulk, you can create larger bundles.

Rice - 1/2 bag
Beans - 2 paints
Yellow Garri - 1 paint
White Garri - 1 paint
Palm oil - 5 litres

These bundles can also help customers plan their household food spending.

We can also have stew bundles, tuber bundles, soup bundles, spice bundles, etc.

Why bundles work

Bundles work well for three reasons.

- First, they reduce decision stress for the customer. Instead of thinking about many items separately, the customer buys one pack.
- Second, bundles help traders move multiple products at once.
- Third, bundles help build repeat buyers. If a family buys the same bundle every month, the trader gains predictable income.

A simple weekly sales system

Here is a simple system any trader can use to increase daily cashflow.

- ✓ Identify regular food buyers around you. Families, restaurants, small offices, and hostels.
- ✓ Offer them weekly supply.
- ✓ Let them know you can supply basic food items.
- ✓ Create simple bundles. Weekly bundles or monthly bundles.
- ✓ Use WhatsApp to remind customers. Send weekly updates of available stock. Pictures also help. When people see neat food items, they feel more confident buying.
- ✓ Deliver consistently. Let your customers be able to rely on you.

A small worksheet for building weekly customers

You can write something like this in a notepad.

Customer name: _____
Location: _____
Usual items: _____

Buying frequency: weekly / monthly
Average order value: _____

When you track customers like this, you begin to understand your sales pattern better.

You will begin to know answers to key questions like:

- which customers buy weekly ?
- which customers buy monthly ?
- which products move fastest ?

This information also helps you plan your stock better.

The power of steady customers

Many traders think success comes only from large buyers.

But steady customers are just as powerful.

This is why many successful traders focus on **customer relationships**.

Final thoughts

Daily cashflow in the foodstuff business is not an accident. It is about building a steady flow of buyers. It is created.

When you combine:

- * neighborhood buyers
- * weekly families
- * office customers
- * small bundles
- * consistent supply

Your business becomes more stable.

Instead of waiting for random sales or for occasional big buyers, you begin to see **steady money flow into the business throughout the week**.

In the next chapter, we will talk about another important part of the foodstuff business.

You will learn how proper storage, preservation, and handling of food items can protect your profit and reduce losses.

Chapter 9

Storage, Preservation and Waste Prevention

One of the quiet secrets of successful foodstuff traders is this:

They protect their goods very well.

Many new traders focus only on buying and selling.

But experienced traders also focus on **storage and preservation**.

Why?

Because food items can spoil.

When food spoils, profit disappears.

Sometimes a trader may think the business is not profitable, when the real problem is waste and poor storage.

In this chapter, we will look at how to store food items properly, reduce spoilage, and manage inventory in a smart way.

Why storage matters in the foodstuff business

Food items are living products.

Even dry foods like rice and beans can still spoil if stored badly.

Fresh foods like vegetables and pepper can spoil even faster.

If a trader loses just small quantities regularly, it can reduce profit greatly.

Example

Imagine a trader loses only **₦2,000 worth of food every week** due to spoilage.

In one month:

$₦2,000 \times 4 = ₦8,000$ lost.

In one year:

₦8,000 × 12 = ₦96,000 lost.

This is why experienced traders pay serious attention to storage.

Proper storage techniques for common food items

Different food items require different storage methods.

Understanding this helps reduce waste.

Rice and beans

Rice and beans are dry foods.

But they can still suffer from:

- * insects
- * moisture
- * mould

Good storage tips include:

Keep them in **airtight containers, sealed pouches or strong sacks.**

For beans meant for storage, there are special reusable sacks called PICS bags (Purdue Improved Crop Storage bags) which are specialized, triple-layer hermetic storage bags designed for storing dry grain without chemical pesticides.

Do not place bags directly on the floor, whether the regular sacks or PICS bags.

Use wooden pallets, planks, or blocks to raise them slightly above the ground.

Keep the storage area dry and well ventilated.

If possible, expose the grains to sunlight occasionally to reduce moisture.

Garri

Garri absorbs moisture easily.

When garri becomes damp, it can spoil quickly.

To store garri well:

Keep it in **sealed nylon-lined waterproof sacks or covered containers.**

Store in a dry environment.

Avoid placing garri close to walls where moisture can build up.

Some traders also place small moisture absorbers or dry sacks around the storage area.

Palm oil

Palm oil requires careful storage because light and air can affect its quality.

Use **clean plastic kegs or drums.**

Keep on wooden pallets and never on the floor.

Keep containers tightly closed.

Store away from direct sunlight.

Do not mix new oil with old oil if the old one has started smelling.

Some experienced traders also keep palm oil in slightly cooler areas of their storage room.

Vegetables and fresh produce

Fresh foods like:

- * tomatoes
- * pepper
- * onions
- * leafy vegetables

spoil faster than dry foods. To reduce spoilage:

Do not pile them too high.

Ensure good airflow around them.

Moisture fastens the spoiling process, so keep them whole and clean, not wet.

Remove damaged or rotten pieces immediately.

Spoiled vegetables can quickly affect others.

This is one of the most common causes of waste in vegetable trading.

The enemy called moisture

One of the biggest enemies of stored food is **moisture**.

Moisture can cause:

- * mould
- * insects
- * bad smell
- * product damage

This is why storage areas should always be:

- * dry
- * well ventilated
- * clean

Some traders place charcoal, dry sand, or absorbent materials in corners to help control moisture.

Reducing spoilage through smart buying

Storage begins even before the goods arrive.

Smart traders do not buy more than they can handle.

If a trader buys too much fresh produce but sells slowly, spoilage increases.

This is why experienced traders balance:

- * buying volume
- * storage space
- * sales speed
- * weather conditions
- * market demand

Example

If a trader sells about 3 baskets of tomatoes weekly, buying 10 baskets at once without an already existing order for them may lead to losses.

Buying 3 or 4 baskets more frequently may be safer.

Many new traders get excited when they see cheap vegetables or peppers in the market.

They buy large quantities.

But fresh produce moves quickly toward spoilage.

If sales are slow, part of the stock may spoil before it is sold.

Experienced traders balance buying with expected sales.

Sometimes it is better to buy smaller quantities more often.

First-in, first-out method (FIFO)

One of the simplest and most powerful inventory systems is called **First-In, First-Out**.

This means:

The items you bought first should be the first ones you sell.

Example

If you bought:

* rice last week and another batch of rice this week

The rice from last week should be sold first.

For packaged foods that have expiry dates as well, the ones who have earlier dates of expiration should be sold out first before selling out new stocks with farther expiry dates.

This prevents old stock from staying too long.

Many successful traders follow this simple rule every day.

Simple visual guide

Product arrives → placed behind existing stock

Older stock → placed in front for selling

This ensures older items move out first.

Sorting and inspection

Another habit experienced traders practice is regular inspection.

They check their goods often.

Look for:

- * insects
- * mould
- * dampness
- * damaged packaging

Early detection can save stock.

Example

If a trader notices insects starting in one bag of beans and removes the problem early, the rest of the bags may still be safe.

Ignoring the problem can spread damage to many bags.

Inventory management for food traders

Inventory simply means the stock you have.

Managing inventory well helps you know:

- * what is selling fast
- * what is slow
- * what needs restocking

A simple notebook, phone or a personal computer record can help.

Example inventory table

Product	Quantity available	Sales Speed
Rice	5 bags	Fast
Beans	3 bags	Moderate
Garri	2 bags	Fast
Palm oil	40 litres	Fast

This simple record helps traders make better buying decisions.

Balancing fast and slow products

Some products sell faster than others.

Fast-moving items may include:

- * garri
- * rice
- * pepper
- * onions

Moderate-moving items may include:

- * beans
- * yam
- * palm oil

Understanding this helps traders balance stock.

Too many slow-moving goods can tie down capital.

Storage space planning

Even small traders should plan their storage.

Basic tips include:

- Keep dry foods separate from fresh produce.
- Allow walking space between stacks.

- Avoid overcrowding the storage area.
- Label bags if possible.
- These simple habits improve organisation.

The hidden cost of waste

Waste is one of the silent killers of profit.

Sometimes traders lose money slowly without noticing.

Examples include:

- * damaged vegetables
- * leaking palm oil containers
- * insect attack on grains
- * rodents in storage areas

If not controlled, these small losses accumulate.

Reducing waste is equal to increasing profit.

Waste prevention checklist

Use this checklist often.

Is my storage area dry?

Are my bags raised above the floor?

Do I inspect my stock regularly?

Am I selling older stock first?

Am I buying quantities I can manage?

These simple habits can protect your business.

Controlling Rats, Cockroaches, Flies and Other Pests

Some hidden enemies of foodstuff traders as mentioned earlier are pests and rodents. These include:

- * rats
- * cockroaches
- * flies
- * ants
- * grain weevils

These pests can destroy goods slowly without the trader noticing early.

Rats can tear bags of rice or garri.

Cockroaches can contaminate food and create a bad smell.

Flies can spoil fresh foods like fish and vegetables.

Weevils can destroy grains like beans and maize.

Experienced traders take pest control seriously because a small infestation can damage large stock.

Simple ways to control rats

Rats are attracted to food smell.

They often enter through:

- * small holes in walls
- * roof spaces
- * broken doors
- * drainage openings

To control rats:

Seal holes around your storage room.

Avoid leaving spilled grains on the floor. Clean your store regularly.

Store food bags on wooden pallets instead of placing them directly on the floor.

Use strong plastic containers or drums for smaller grains.

Some traders also place **rat traps** in corners of the storage room.

Others **keep cats** around their compound to help control rats.

Do all you can to control their access points so that the headache of getting rid of them doesn't wear you out.

Controlling cockroaches and ants

Cockroaches and ants usually come when storage areas are not very clean.

To reduce them:

Sweep the storage area regularly.

Avoid leaving open food overnight.

Use tight containers for items like crayfish or dry fish.

Keep garbage or waste far away from your storage area.

Some traders also sprinkle **boric powder or mild insect control powder** around corners to reduce cockroach activity.

Protecting grains from weevils

Weevils are small insects that attack grains such as:

- * beans
- * maize
- * rice

When they multiply, they can damage the entire bag.

Some **traditional methods** traders use include:

- Drying grains under sunlight before storage.

- Mixing small quantities of dry pepper, dried neem leaves, bay leaves or dry ash inside the bag.
- Using airtight containers for smaller quantities.
- These methods reduce insect activity and extend shelf life.

Reducing flies around fresh foods

Flies are common around:

- * fish
- * meat
- * vegetables
- * pepper

They can contaminate food.

To reduce flies:

- Cover fresh foods with clean mesh or baskets.
- Do not keep damaged or rotten produce around fresh stock.
- Clean the surrounding environment regularly.
- Some traders also use simple net covers for vegetables.

Preservation methods without freezer or electricity

Not every trader has a freezer or constant electricity.

But there are traditional methods many traders still use to preserve food.

Sun drying

Sun drying is one of the oldest preservation methods.

Items that can be sun dried include:

- * pepper * fish * crayfish * vegetable * maize

Sun drying removes moisture, which slows spoilage.

Many traders dry pepper during periods of excess supply and sell it later as dried pepper.

Sorting and removing damaged items early

When vegetables or fruits are stored together, one bad item can spoil others.

That is why traders often **sort their goods daily**.

Remove:

- * soft tomatoes
- * damaged peppers
- * rotten onions

This prevents spoilage from spreading.

Don't ever ignore any sign of spoilage, infestation or quality degradation. Do something about it as soon as you notice.

Turning near-spoilage into saleable products

Sometimes food items begin to spoil but can still be saved.

Experienced traders act quickly.

Examples include:

Pepper - If fresh pepper starts softening, it can be ground and sold as blended pepper.

Tomatoes - Slightly soft tomatoes can be sold at a reduced price quickly before they spoil completely.

Vegetables - Leafy vegetables can be washed, tied in small bundles, and sold quickly at discount.

This method helps recover some money instead of losing everything.

A quick pest and spoilage prevention checklist

Use this checklist regularly.

Is my storage area clean and dry?

Are food bags raised above the floor?

Are there signs of rats or insects?

Am I sorting vegetables daily?

Am I removing damaged food early?

Am I buying quantities I can sell quickly?

These simple checks can protect your business from unnecessary loss.

Final thoughts

Storage and preservation are often ignored in the early stages of food trading. A trader who reduces waste, controls pests, and stores goods properly will keep more money in the business.

Experienced traders know that **good storage protects profit.**

When goods are stored properly:

They last longer.

They remain clean and attractive to buyers.

And they reduce unnecessary losses.

By combining good buying, good pricing, good selling, and good storage, your foodstuff business becomes stronger and more stable.

“Money in the foodstuff business is not only in buying and selling — it is also in how well you protect your goods.”

In the next chapter, we will look at another important area.

You will learn about some of the common mistakes that cause foodstuff businesses to struggle or fail, and how to avoid them.

Chapter 10

Turning Your Small Foodstuff Trade Into a Brand

Many people sell foodstuff.

But not everybody has a **brand**.

There is a big difference between:

- * someone who sells rice
- and
- * someone people remember and trust for rice

A brand is what makes customers say:

“I prefer to buy from this person.”

Even if your price is not the cheapest.

Even if there are many sellers around.

Branding helps you:

- * stand out
- * attract better customers
- * charge better prices
- * grow faster

This is how small traders become **known and trusted businesses**.

What branding really means in foodstuff business

Branding is not only a logo or fancy design.

Branding is the **total experience** customers have with you.

It includes:

- how clean your products are
- how you package them

- how you talk to customers
- how consistent you are
- how reliable your supply is

When people trust your product, they stop comparing too much.

They just come back.

Example:

Think about two garri sellers.

Seller A

- Sells garri in an open basin.
- No covering.
- Measurement is not always full.

Seller B

- Sells clean garri.
- Well packaged.
- Measured properly.
- Consistent quality.

Even if Seller B is slightly more expensive, many people will still prefer Seller B.

That is branding in action.

Branding your food business

You do not need big money to start branding.

You can start small but do it well.

Start with simple things.

✓ Give your business a name. Register it as soon as you can.

It can be something like:

- * Freshgo Foods
- * Fresh Basket
- * Mama's Kitchen Supply
- * Dailyrich Food Mart

The name should be easy to remember.

✓ Next, be consistent.

Use the same name on:

- * WhatsApp
- * packaging
- * receipts
- * social media

Over time, people begin to recognize you.

Packaging and presentation

Packaging is one of the fastest ways to stand out in today's market.

Many Nigerian customers now prefer clean, neat and well packaged food. Especially in urban areas.

Instead of selling everything loosely, you can package items like rice, beans, garri, crayfish, pepper (dry or blended), palm oil, using:

- * nylon packs
- * transparent bags
- * sealed pouches
- * small containers
- * neat bottles

This makes your product look more professional.

Current packaging trends in Nigeria

There is a growing trend toward:

- ✓ transparent packaging (customers want to see what they are buying)
- ✓ labeled products
- ✓ portioned packs (₦500, ₦1,000, ₦2,000 sizes)
- ✓ ready-to-cook packs (stew and soup ingredients)

Customers like convenience.

If your product saves them stress, they will come back.

Example: simple packaging upgrade

Instead of selling crayfish loosely, you can package:

₦500 pack

₦1,000 pack

₦2,000 pack

Seal it neatly.

Add a small label.

Now your product looks more organized and trustworthy.

Tools and small machines for branding

As your business grows, you can upgrade your packaging.

Some useful tools include:

- Heat sealer - used to seal nylon or plastic packs neatly.
- Digital weighing scale - helps you measure accurately and build trust.
- Vacuum sealer - used to remove air from bags and special pouches to extend the shelf lives of packaged products.
- Sticker labels - Used to show your brand name and product details.
- Nylon rolls or packaging bags - Used for packing food items.
- Different funnel sizes - Useful when packaging grains and liquids like palm oil.
- Sealing machines
- Food grade buckets, cups, bowls and scoops.
- Grinding machines (for pepper or crayfish)
- Sealable Oil dispensing bottles in different litres.
- Heat gun
- Tamper proof nylons

You do not need all of these at once.

Start small and upgrade gradually.

Building trust with customers

Trust is the foundation of a strong food business, especially when you start proper packaging and branding.

People eat what you sell.

So they care about:

- * cleanliness
- * honesty
- * consistency

Be consistent with your quality, don't compromise on hygiene and foodstuffs standards all because you have beautiful packaging that makes it attractive.

If your rice is clean today, it should be clean next time.

If your garri is good quality today, it should not drop tomorrow.

Customers notice changes quickly.

Keep products clean

Clean food sells faster.

Remove stones from rice.

Sort beans.

Keep garri dry.

Cover your products.

This alone can make customers choose you over others.

Measure correctly

Many customers leave traders because of poor measurement.

If your paint bucket is always full and fair, people will trust you.

Some traders even slightly add extra to make customers happy.

Also, since you will be labelling, don't be decisive with the weight of your products, be honest.

Be reliable

If a customer orders from you, deliver as promised.

If you say you will supply weekly, keep your word.

Reliability builds long-term customers.

Understanding Net Weights And Gross Weights

The net weight refers to the weight of the product itself, without including any packaging, containers, or pallets.

On the other hand, the gross weight encompasses the total weight of the goods, which includes all packaging materials, containers, and any protective materials utilized.

Understanding the gross weight is essential for calculating shipping costs, while the net weight plays a key role in pricing and labeling.

Simple branding system for any trader

Step 1 - Choose a business name.

Step 2 - Start packaging at least 2–3 products neatly.

Step 3 - Use a simple label or sticker.

Step 4 - Be consistent with quality and measurement.

Step 5 - Let people know your brand through WhatsApp and word of mouth.

A simple branding checklist

Ask yourself:

Do my products look clean and attractive?

Do I package at least some of my items?

Do I use the same business name everywhere?

Do customers trust my measurement?

Do customers come back to buy again?

If most answers are yes, your brand is growing.

Why branding increases profit

Branding allows you to:

- Sell faster
- Retain customers
- Reduce price competition
- Attract better buyers

Instead of competing only on price, you compete on **quality and trust**.

That is how some traders grow from small sellers into recognized businesses.

Final thoughts

Branding is not only for big companies.

It is for any trader who wants to grow.

You can start from your house.

Start with small packaging.

Be consistent.

Build trust.

Over time, your business will move from:

“just another seller” to “a trusted food brand people prefer.”

In the next chapter, we will move to the next level.

You will learn how to expand from a small trader into a supplier who sells in larger quantities and earns bigger profit.

Chapter 11

Expanding Into Wholesale Supply

At some point, every serious foodstuff trader begins to think:

“How can I sell more at once?”

Selling small quantities is good.

It brings daily cashflow.

But wholesale supply is where many traders begin to see **bigger jumps in income.**

Wholesale does not always mean you must have millions.

It means you learn how to:

- move larger quantities
- work with steady buyers
- position yourself as a supplier, not just a seller

This chapter will show you how to do that in a smart and practical way.

What wholesale really means

Wholesale is simply selling in **larger quantities to regular buyers.**

Instead of selling:

₦500 garri

₦1,000 rice

You begin to sell:

- * **multiple paint buckets**
- * **multiple packaged pouches**
- * **bags**
- * **cartons**
- * **kegs and drums**

Your customers also change.

Instead of only individuals, you begin to serve:

- * retailers
- * food vendors
- * restaurants
- * caterers
- * supermarkets
- * NGOs
- * Cooperative associations

This is where volume increases.

You don't need big capital to start wholesale

Many people think:

“I need ₦1 million before I can supply in bulk.”

That is not always true.

Smart traders use something called:

“demand-first selling.”

This means:

You secure the buyer first, then arrange the supply.

Example

A restaurant needs:

- * 3 bags of rice weekly
- * 1 bag of beans
- * 20 litres of palm oil

Instead of buying everything first, you can:

- agree on the supply
- collect part payment or commitment
- then source the goods from your suppliers

This reduces your risk.

This is how many traders grow without heavy capital.

Supplying retailers

Retailers are small sellers. They include:

- * market women
- * roadside sellers
- * provision stores
- * mini shops

These people buy regularly but may not have access to the cheapest sources.

If you can supply them at a slightly better price than their current source, they will buy from you.

Example

A small retailer buys beans at ₦110,000 per bag.

If you can supply at ₦105,000, you give them an advantage.

They will likely stick with you.

Now imagine supplying 5 retailers consistently.

Even if your profit per bag is small, the volume increases your total income.

Simple retailer supply system

Step 1 - Identify small sellers in your area.

Step 2 - Ask what they buy regularly.

Step 3 - Offer slightly better pricing or convenience.

Step 4 - Deliver consistently.

Consistency is what keeps them.

Supplying restaurants and caterers

Restaurants and caterers are powerful customers. They buy: rice, beans, pepper, onions, palm oil, crayfish, etc.

And they buy often.

Sometimes daily, every 2–3 days or weekly.

Example

A small buka may use:

- * 1 bag of rice every 3–5 days
- * several paint buckets of beans weekly
- * regular pepper and onion supply

If you supply **2–3 bukas**, your volume increases quickly.

What restaurants really want

From experience, restaurants care about:

- steady supply
- consistent quality
- fair pricing
- reliability

They do not want stress.

If you solve their supply problem, they will keep buying from you.

Simple strategy to approach restaurants

Do not go empty-handed.

Carry a small sample or clear offer.

Say something like:

“I supply rice, beans, pepper, and palm oil in bulk. I can deliver the best quality at very fair prices regularly so you don’t need to go to the market often.”

Start small. Let them test you.

If you deliver well, they will increase their order.

Partnering with supermarkets

Supermarkets require a different level of structure. They often prefer:

- * clean products
- * proper packaging
- * labeled goods
- * consistent supply
- * NAFDAC approved goods

If you already worked on your branding (from Chapter 10), you are closer to this level.

Example

A supermarket may need:

- * packaged rice
- * neatly packed beans
- * labeled garri
- * sealed crayfish

If your products look clean and professional, you can approach them.

Simple supermarket entry strategy

Step 1

Package your products neatly.

Step 2

Create a simple label with your brand name.

Step 3

Visit small supermarkets first (not big chains).

Step 4

Offer supply on a trial basis.

Some supermarkets may start with small quantities.

If your product sells well, they will increase orders.

Notes: volume vs margin

In retail, you may make higher profit per unit.

In wholesale, your profit per unit may be smaller.

But your volume is bigger.

Example

Retail:

₦500 profit per paint bucket × 20 buckets = ₦10,000

Wholesale:

₦200 profit per paint bucket × 100 buckets = ₦20,000

Even with a smaller margin, total profit increases.

This is the power of wholesale.

How to get steady bulk customers

Many successful traders follow simple principles taught by top sales coaches.

1. Solve a real problem

Do not just say: "I sell rice."

Say:

"I help you avoid market stress by supplying your food items regularly."

You are solving a problem.

2. Be visible

Let people know what you do.

Show up constantly on your social media pages.

* WhatsApp

- *Tiktok, Instagram, Facebook
- * word of mouth
- * referrals
- * simple introductions

Many deals come from people who simply know you supply food.

3. Start small, grow big

Do not wait for big contracts.

Start with:

- * one restaurant
- * one retailer
- * one office

Deliver well. Grow from there.

4. Build relationships, not just sales

Some traders focus only on money.

But relationships bring long-term profit.

Check on your customers.

Ask what they need.

Adjust when necessary.

That is how you become their preferred supplier.

5. Be reliable

In wholesale, reliability is everything. The need for being reliable cannot be overemphasized. People want to work with serious people.

If you promise delivery, deliver.

If you promise quality, maintain it.

One failed delivery can break trust.

Simple wholesale checklist

Ask yourself:

Do I know at least 3 potential bulk buyers?

Have I spoken to any restaurant or retailer?

Can I source goods quickly when needed?

Am I consistent with quality?

Am I reliable with delivery?

If your answers improve, your wholesale business will grow.

Final thoughts

Wholesale supply is the next level in foodstuff trading.

It allows you to:

- move larger quantities
- build steady income
- grow faster

And the best part is this:

You can start without huge capital if you use smart systems.

Focus on:

1. building relationships
2. solving problems
3. delivering consistently

Over time, you will move from:

small daily sales to larger, more structured income.

In the next chapter, we will look at something very important.

You will learn the biggest mistakes foodstuff traders make and how to avoid them, so your business can grow without unnecessary setbacks.

Chapter 12

The Biggest Mistakes Foodstuff Traders Make

If you have read this book to this point, one thing should already be clear.

The foodstuff business can bring steady money.

But it can also leak money quietly.

Many traders do not fail because food is not selling.

They fail because of **mistakes that keep cutting their profit little by little.**

Some mistakes look small.

But in this business, small mistakes repeated many times can become big losses.

This chapter is important because it will help you avoid the traps that keep many traders stuck.

If you can avoid these mistakes, your business can become stronger, more profitable, and easier to grow.

- **Mistake 1 - Buying at the wrong time**

This is one of the biggest mistakes in foodstuff trading.

Some traders buy only when they urgently need stock.

They do not study the market.

They do not watch price movement.

They do not ask questions.

They just go and buy.

This is dangerous because food prices in Nigeria move often.

If you buy at the wrong time, your margin becomes weak from the beginning.

And once buying is wrong, it becomes harder to fix profit later.

A simple example

Let us say beans is cheaper during peak supply period.

A smart trader buys when the supply is higher.

Another trader waits until scarcity period and buys when prices have already risen.

Both traders may sell to the same type of customers.

But the trader who bought earlier already has an advantage.

This is why experienced traders always ask:

- * Is this the right time to buy?
- * Is supply increasing or reducing?
- * Can I wait a little, or should I buy now?

Buying at the wrong time can make a trader work very hard for very little gain.

What smart traders do instead

They do not buy with panic.

They observe.

They compare prices across markets. They build a network of stakeholders that give timely information.

They ask transporters, wholesalers, and fellow traders what is happening.

They watch:

1. harvest periods
2. scarcity periods
3. transport costs
4. sudden demand changes

They understand that timing can change profit.

Mistake 2 - Buying too much because the price looks cheap

This mistake is very common.

A trader sees a good deal and becomes excited.

The price is low, so they buy too much.

But cheap stock is not always wise stock.

If you buy more than:

- * your storage can handle
- * your market can absorb
- * your cashflow can support

the cheap goods can become expensive in another way.

You may start facing:

- * spoilage
- * insects
- * blocked cash
- * slow movement

This mistake is common with:

- * tomatoes
- * pepper
- * onions
- * vegetables
- * palm oil during long storage without proper handling

A good trader does not ask only, "Is this cheap?"

A good trader also asks, "Can I sell this well?"

Mistake 3 - Poor record keeping

This is one of the biggest silent killers in the foodstuff business.

Many traders are busy.

Money is entering.

Goods are moving.

Customers are buying.

But at the end of the week, they cannot clearly say:

- how much they sold
- how much profit they made
- what products moved fastest
- what products are reducing cash

This is very risky.

Without records, a trader may think the business is growing when profit is actually leaking.

A real-life type of problem

A trader sells rice, beans, garri, palm oil, and pepper.

Every day, money enters.

But the trader keeps mixing:

- * business money
- * house money
- * transport money
- * personal spending

At the end of the month, the trader feels tired and confused.

Sales happened, but there is no clear growth.

This is what poor record keeping does.

It hides the truth.

What you should be recording

At the minimum, every trader should track:

- * what was bought
- * how much it cost
- * what was sold
- * how much came in
- * how much remains in stock
- * who bought on credit
- * what expenses were made

This can be done in:

- * a notebook
- * a simple ledger
- * a Google Sheet
- * a phone note, if that is what you can manage well
- * a standard record keeping software on the computer

Remember always that simple accurate record keeping is better than no record keeping.

A simple daily record format

Date: _____

Product bought: _____

Cost price: _____

Product sold: _____

Sales amount: _____

Expenses today: _____

Cash balance: _____

This may look small, but it gives you control.

Mistake 4 - Ignoring customer relationships

Some traders think once they have stock, customers will always come.

That is not true.

Customers have choices.

In many places, several people may be selling similar products.

What makes customers stay is not only price.

It is also the relationship.

Many foodstuff traders lose good customers because of things like:

- * rude talk
- * inconsistent quality

- * cheating in measurement
- * delayed delivery
- * not returning calls
- * acting like the customer is disturbing them

Food buyers remember how you made them feel.

In this business, trust is everything.

What experienced traders know

A customer who buys from you regularly is valuable.

Very valuable.

Why?

Because getting a new customer is often harder than keeping a good old one.

Good traders understand simple relationship habits:

- * greet customers well
- * be honest about quality
- * measure fairly
- * keep your word
- * make buying easy

These things may look ordinary, but they bring **repeat sales**.

Mistake 5 - Focusing only on price and forgetting value

Some traders believe the only way to sell is to be the cheapest.

That is not always true.

In fact, always trying to be the cheapest can weaken your business.

Customers do not only buy price.

They also buy:

- * cleanliness
- * trust
- * convenience

- * good packaging
- * correct measurement
- * reliable supply

A customer may leave a cheaper seller and buy from you because your rice is cleaner or your delivery is more dependable.

So the goal is not always to be the cheapest.

The goal is to be **worth buying from**.

Mistake 6 - Lack of proper planning

Many traders run their business day by day without clear planning.

They wake up and ask:

“What should I buy today?”

“What should I sell today?”

“Where will I get money today?”

This keeps the business in survival mode.

Planning helps a trader become more stable.

A foodstuff business should have simple plans for:

- * what to restock
- * when to restock
- * how much to buy
- * what products are priority
- * what customers to follow up
- * what money should not be touched

Without planning, the trader keeps reacting instead of leading the business.

Simple planning questions every trader should answer

Every week, ask:

- * What sold fastest this week?
- * What moved slowly?
- * Which stock is reducing?
- * Which customer needs follow-up?

- * Do I need to buy now or wait?
- * What expenses are coming up?

This kind of planning reduces confusion.

Mistake 7 - Ignoring pests in the storage area

This is one mistake many traders do not notice early.

Rats, cockroaches, ants, flies, and weevils can quietly destroy stock.

Rats tear bags.

Cockroaches contaminate food.

Weevils attack grains.

Flies disturb fresh produce and fish.

Sometimes the loss starts small, but over time it becomes serious.

A trader may think the business is not profitable, when the real problem is storage damage.

Good traders inspect their storage often.

They keep it dry, clean, raised, and protected.

Mistake 8 - Allowing one bad product to spoil others

Fresh goods need close attention.

Tomatoes, pepper, onions, ugu, efo, and other vegetables can spoil quickly.

If one rotten product is left inside the basket, it can affect the rest.

This is why experienced traders sort their goods regularly.

They remove weak, soft, or damaged items early.

A trader who checks stock daily saves more goods than the trader who waits too long. Infested grains should not also be kept in the same store with the grains in good condition, else, it only takes time before the infestation spreads.

Mistake 9 - Not knowing when to recover value quickly

This is a deep lesson many traders learn late.

Not every product must be allowed to spoil fully before action is taken.

Some products can still be rescued early.

For example:

- * older dry goods can be moved through bundle offers
- * goods closer to expiration can be promoted more, cross-sold or bundled.
- * soft pepper can be blended and sold quickly
- * slightly weak tomatoes can be discounted fast
- * vegetables can be washed and bundled for urgent sale.

Smart traders do not only think about perfect sales.

They also think about how to reduce total loss.

Sometimes smaller profit is better than total waste.

Mistake 10 - Giving too much credit without control

Credit can help sales, but careless credit can damage the business.

Some traders keep supplying people without clear records.

They assume the money will come later.

Then one week becomes one month.

One month becomes many months.

Meanwhile, the trader needs cash to restock.

This is how businesses become weak.

If you give credit, it must be controlled.

You should know:

- * who collected
- * what they collected

- * how much they owe
- * when they will pay

Credit without structure is not kindness.

It is confusion.

Mistake 11 - Trying to do everything alone for too long

Some traders want to buy, sort, package, deliver, sell, follow up, and keep records all by themselves.

At first, this may work.

But as business grows, it becomes stressful.

Mistakes increase.

Follow-up reduces.

Stock control becomes weak.

Sometimes growth slows because the trader is overworked.

This does not mean you must employ many staff immediately.

But it does mean you should create systems.

Simple systems like:

- * customer lists
- * price lists
- * stock records
- * weekly buying plans
- * delivery routines

Systems reduce stress.

Mistake 12 - Not thinking beyond today

This is one of the deepest mistakes.

Some traders remain stuck because they only think about today's sale.

They do not think about:

- * building a brand
- * building repeat customers
- * packaging better
- * moving into supply
- * improving records
- * improving buying strategy

But growth in this business comes when a trader starts asking:

“How do I move from just selling to building something stronger?”

That is the mindset that changes a trader into a business owner.

The silent profit killers most traders ignore

Let us gather some of the quiet losses that hurt many traders:

- * poor measurement
- * hidden transport cost
- * leakages in palm oil
- * spoiling fresh produce
- * insects in grains
- * slow-moving stock
- * poor record keeping
- * unpaid credit
- * random pricing
- * weak customer follow-up

Each one may look small.

But together, they can reduce profit seriously.

This is why smart traders pay attention to details.

A simple self-check worksheet

Use these questions to check your business.

Buying

- * Do I buy with market knowledge or with panic?
- * Do I compare prices before restocking?
- * Do I buy according to what sells, or only what looks cheap?

Selling

- * Do I know which products move fastest?
- * Am I pricing correctly?
- * Am I selling in units customers can afford?

Customers

- * Do I have repeat customers?
- * Do I follow up on good buyers?
- * Do people trust my quality and measurement?

Storage

- * Is my storage area clean and dry?
- * Do I inspect stock regularly?
- * Am I protecting goods from pests and spoilage?

Records

- * Do I record sales and expenses?
- * Do I know who owes me?
- * Can I say clearly whether I made a profit this week?

If your answers are weak in many places, that does not mean your business cannot grow.

It simply shows where improvement is needed.

The real lesson in this chapter

Foodstuff trading is not only about buying and selling food.

It is about managing movement, money, people, timing, and trust.

The traders who grow are not always the highest capital.

Many times, they are simply the ones who make fewer costly mistakes.

They buy better.

They plan better.

They protect their goods better.

They keep customers better.

They track their numbers better.

That is what creates long-term success.

Final thoughts

If there is one thing to remember from this chapter, let it be this:

Small mistakes repeated often can quietly destroy a good business.

But small wise actions repeated often can build a very strong one.

So do not wait until things become hard before paying attention.

Check your buying.

Check your pricing.

Check your storage.

Check your records.

Check your customer relationships.

When you do this consistently, your foodstuff business will not only survive.

It will grow.

And that is the real goal.

Not just to trade food.

But to build a food business that creates steady cashflow, earns trust, and stands the test of time.

Bonus Sections

Implementation Tool kit

The Foodstuff Trader's Blueprint Toolkit

This section contains practical tools to help you start, sell faster, and grow.

Bonus 1. The Exact Products That Sell Every Day

These are high-demand items that move consistently.

Everyday Staples

1. Rice
2. Beans
3. Garri (yellow, white)
4. Yam
5. Swallow Flours (semo,lafun, amala, fufu powder, pouno, wheat)

Cooking Essentials

6. Palm oil
7. Groundnut oil
8. Pepper (Fresh, dry, blended)
9. Tomatoes
10. Onions

Soup & Protein Boosters

11. Crayfish
12. Dry fish
13. Egusi
14. Seasoning cubes
15. Iru

Quick Cash Items

16. Groundnuts
17. Oil in bottles
18. Pepper in small nylons

- 19. Seasoning cubes
- 20. Salt

Urban Fast-Moving Add-ons

- 21. Tomato paste
- 22. Spaghetti
- 23. Noodles
- 24. Eggs
- 25. Plantain


Other fast selling items

- 26. Chicken
- 27. Fish
- 28. Beef
- 29. Ogbono
- 30. Maize

Bonus 2. Profit Calculation Sheet sample

Use this as a guide to avoid pricing mistakes.

Item	Purchase /Cost Price	Transport	Packaging	Other costs	Total cost	Desired profit	Selling price
Oloyin beans							
Garri ijebu							
Foreign Rice							
Palm oil							
Groundnut oil							
Spaghetti							

 Scan QR Code to access editable version



Bonus 3. Startup Budget Templates

Start based on your capital level.

The list of food items will also depend on the Foodstuffs moving fast in your area/amongst your target audience.

Choose the products that are fast moving.

Set quantities obtainable.

Add current prices, transportation costs and relevant costs.

Add all together till you arrive at your startup budget.

₦50,000 - ₦150,000 Plan

Focus: small fast-moving goods

Rice

Beans

Palm oil

Transportation costs

Nylons/plastic wraps

₦150,000 - ₦500,000 Plan

Focus: balanced stock

Fast moving stocks

Transportation cost

Minimal packaging materials

Basic Packaging tools

₦500,000 - ₦5,000,000 Plan

Focus: bulk + variety


Fast moving sticks

Transportation costs

Packaging costs

Branding costs

Marketing costs (paid ads, banners, etc)

 Scan QR Code for editable planner



Bonus 4. 10 Practical Ways to Sell Faster

1. Sell in small units
2. Use WhatsApp and other social media handles to promote your business daily
3. Offer delivery
4. Bundle items
5. Partner with vendors who have a variety of products in demand that you don't have in stock.
6. Give small bonuses

7. Be consistent and reliable
8. Use clean packaging
9. Follow up customers
10. Ask for referrals

Extra tips from an insider:

- Be honest with your measurements.
- Don't forget to ask for and post reviews from your satisfied customers.
- Never delay customers' orders or keep them waiting, their time is precious.

Bonus 5. Weekly Bundle Strategy

Create simple bundles customers need.


Example - Sabi bundle

Get all these for **₦35,000** instead of ~~₦37,000~~

Rice 5kg
Beans 2kg
Garri 2kg
Palm oil 1L
Groundnut oil 2L
Blended Pepper & tomatoes 1kg
Tomato paste 2 rolls
Spaghetti 3 pcs
Noodles 5pcs
Eggs 1 crate

Strategy

Sell slightly cheaper as a bundle
Encourage repeat weekly purchase

 Scan QR Code for bundle planner



Final Note

This is not just a book.


It is a working system.

Start where you are.

Use what you have.

Grow step by step.

Consistency will take you far.

 Scan QR Code for daily sales and expense tracker



📌 Scan QR Code for customer and weekly orders tracker



📌 Scan QR Code for inventory and restock tracker



The Foodstuffs Business Action Sheets

Files included:

1. Foodstuff Profit Calculator.xlsx
2. Foodstuff Startup Budget Planner.xlsx
3. Weekly Food Bundle Planner.xlsx
4. Customer and Weekly Orders Tracker.xlsx
5. Inventory and Restock Tracker.xlsx
6. Daily Sales and Expense Tracker.xlsx

How to Use the QR Code

1. Open your phone camera, google lens or any QR scanner app.
2. Point it at the QR code
3. Tap the link that appears
4. It will take you to the resource page

*** How to use the sheets (contents embedded in the QR code) :**

- Upload each Excel file into your Google Drive folder.
- Right-click a file in Drive > Open with > Google Sheets.
- Google Sheets will preserve most formulas and formatting.
- Rename each converted Google Sheet if you want shorter titles.

For more guidance and resources, send an email to [**kofoworolakorede@gmail.com**](mailto:kofoworolakorede@gmail.com)