

WINE MADE FROM BANANA SURPLUS PRODUCTION

REDUCING POST-HARVEST LOSSES IN MALAWI

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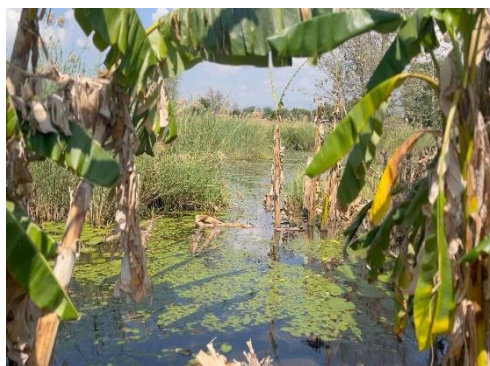
[In 2026 the sagepub.com website presented the case study *Malawian Banana Wine: A Growing Industry*](#) exploring the emerging banana wine industry in Malawi, an innovative response by small-scale farmers and entrepreneurs to climate-induced agricultural challenges. With bananas being a widely cultivated staple in regions like Thyolo, Mulanje, and Nkhotakota, surplus production often leads to post-harvest losses. Faced with erratic weather and declining yields, Malawian farmers have turned to banana wine production as a sustainable income source.



Banana wine-making blends traditional fermentation methods with modern agro-processing techniques, transforming overripe or damaged bananas into a marketable alcoholic beverage. The industry has created new economic opportunities, particularly for women-led cooperatives such as the Twitule Cooperative, which produces and sells banana wine in local markets. Beyond income generation, the sector reduces food waste, strengthens community resilience, and preserves cultural heritage. Despite its promise, the banana wine industry faces challenges, including regulatory hurdles, limited production capacity, and competition from imported alcoholic beverages. However, with strategic investment, improved infrastructure, and access to international markets, Malawian banana wine has the potential to become a significant player in the global artisanal beverage industry. This case study highlights key business opportunities, economic impacts, and policy considerations for fostering the industry's growth while promoting sustainable agricultural practices.



[The agri-malawi.com website also published an article in 2026 highlighting the experience of the innovative farmers producing wine from bananas](#), reducing food waste and strengthening their capacity to cope with climate change while boosting their agricultural incomes.



[The article *Banana wine brings sweet taste of success to Malawi farmers* published in 2024 by BBC News](#), had also told the story of the Twitule Cooperative, highlighting that for the farmers, this innovative way of processing surplus banana production was not just about making wine, but also about survival, resilience, and embracing the new possibilities that come with a changing climate. They used to farm next to the shores of Lake Malawi and their banana plantations were being washed away by rising water levels due to increased rainfall, forcing them to move to higher but hotter ground, where temperatures soar to 42°C. At the old farm, their challenge was the large amount of water from the lake, where some of the bananas used to be submerged. In their new location, they had to cope with the intense heat, which makes bananas ripen very fast and go to waste. In this context, the group of women who



have come together at the Twitule cooperative took the initiative to seek alternative uses for their banana crops, which ripen quickly under the intense heat.

“Wine production is a small-scale venture in the women’s backyards, where they plant banana crops. The wine-making process happens in a small compound with a four-roomed house in the village of Mchenjere. The process is simple: the overripe bananas are peeled, cut into small pieces, weighed, and mixed with sugar, yeast, raisins, water, and covered with lemon slices. The mixture is then left to ferment for several weeks, transforming the banana pulp into a potent, aromatic wine, containing 13% alcohol similar to wine made from grapes. It’s very good quality wine.”

The Twitule Cooperative produces between 20 and 50 litres of wine a month and is hoping to buy machines to help them expand. They want to produce more wine and move from this small production house to a factory. Furthermore, the cooperative is exploring export opportunities, pending approval from the Malawi Bureau of Standards.

The success of banana wine in Malawi shows how agricultural communities can adapt to climate challenges through innovative practices. This initiative not only mitigates the waste of overripe bananas but also enhances the economic well-being of the farmers involved in the Twitule Cooperative.

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