

ITOCHU Corporation says it will begin pineapple production in Sierra Leone through its subsidiary Dole Asia Holdings (DAH).

The move is aimed at pursuing further growth in the Dole packaged foods business, Japan-based ITOCHU said.

Singapore-based Dole Asia's packaged foods business currently has production facilities in the Philippines and Thailand. The products it sells include canned pineapple and Fruit Bowls.

However, the company says it wants to diversify to mitigate potential weather-related risks.

"ITOCHU has concluded an MOA [Memorandum of Understanding] concerning the business with the government of Sierra Leone to launch full-scale commercial production of pineapples in the Republic of Sierra Leone as our third facility," it says.

The corporation has already started test production of pineapples locally. It says it aspires to "commence full-scale commercial production at an early stage".