

Finlay shuts down Mara Mara factory

James Finlay (Kenya), a local tea extracts manufacturing firm, has announced the commencement of a phased shutting down of its Mara Mara Tea Extracts factory located in Kericho, Rift Valley. Finlay's sales volumes have been affected by the economic downturn and increasing competition from lower cost production centres.

By [Carole Kimutai](#) 5 Oct 2009



Image courtesy of
[FreeDigitalPhotos.net](#).

Meanwhile, costs in Kericho have been rising rapidly due to inflation and Mara Mara is no longer able to compete globally. The firm has also outlined plans to expand its Saosa Tea Extracts factory, also in Kericho as part of a strategy to maintain market competitiveness in the market.

“We have tried to keep the operation going for as long as we can by reducing capacity to one line in the hope that sales volumes might pick up but this hasn't happened. We now have no choice but to consolidate at Saosa if we want to remain globally competitive. Otherwise our tea extracts business will not be viable as we risk losing more jobs if we don't act now,” said Isaiah Cheruiyot, Finlay's general manager in charge of Tea Extracts.

The closure will be phased over one year but, consolidation is expected to result in a reduction of approximately 430 people, out of 720 Tea Extract employees in Kericho.

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