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**QUARTERLY REPORT #5  
SMALLHOLDER TECHNOLOGY &  
ACCESS TO MARKETS PROGRAM  
(USAID-STAMP)**



**October-December 2011**

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# SMALLHOLDER TECHNOLOGY & ACCESS TO MARKETS PROGRAM (USAID-STAMP) QUARTERLY REPORT #5

**October-December 2011**

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2. PROJECT OBJECTIVES .....</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 Project Description and Objectives .....	6
2.2 Geographic Focus .....	6
2.3. Communications and Reporting .....	6
<b>3. ACTIVITIES .....</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1. Increased Agricultural Productivity .....	7
3.1.1 <i>Crops</i> .....	7
3.1.2 <i>Technologies</i> .....	12
3.2. Expanded Market Access .....	12
3.3. Other Cross-Cutting Themes.....	14
3.3.1 <i>Gender</i> .....	14
3.3.2 <i>Health and Nutrition</i> .....	15
3.3.3 <i>Environment</i> .....	15
<b>4. LESSONS LEARNED.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>5. CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>6. NETWORKING AND COLLABORATIONS.....</b>	<b>17</b>
6.1 Current Partners .....	17
6.2 Potential Partners .....	17
6.3 Other Partners .....	17
<b>7. CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>8. FINANCIAL SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>ANNEX I: PROGRESS AGAINST INDICATORS.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>ANNEX II: LIST OF PRODUCE BUYERS.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>ANNEX III: CALENDAR OF EVENTS.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>ANNEX IV: SUCCESS STORIES.....</b>	<b>33</b>

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the fifth quarterly report (October-December 2011) for United States Agency for International Development's Smallholder Technology and Access to Markets Program (USAID-STAMP), funded under the USAID/Zimbabwe Cooperative Agreement No. 674-A-00-10-00088-00 with Fintrac Inc.

Fifth quarter achievements included:

- 4,524 smallholder farmers attended 120 training events focusing on good agricultural practices, composting, farming as a business, and postharvest handling during the first quarter of 2012. 2,003 (44 percent) of the participants were women. 1,587 unique trainings were held this quarter.
- 797 female smallholder farmers participated in agricultural business trainings through 34 sessions conducted by an agribusiness consultant. Topics covered included costing and pricing, basic budgets, record keeping, and market information. The total number of participants was 1,629.
- 106 demonstration sites have been established in the five operational districts to showcase good agricultural practices for paprika, bananas, protea and potatoes.
- 890 new farmers have been contracted by USAID-STAMP partners to produce paprika and other cash crops in the first quarter of FY2012.
- The dissemination of two snapshots and two monthly bulletins has increased public awareness of USAID-STAMP's successes with smallholder farmers in Mashonaland East and Manicaland provinces.
- Gross returns for smallholder banana farmers have doubled since the USAID-STAMP activities began.
- USAID-STAMP is providing new technologies and technical assistance in production and postharvest practices to 890 rural families in Marondera, Makoni, Nyanga and Chimanimani districts.
- Technical assistance on productivity continued for all crops, with 113 visits made during the first quarter impacting farmer groups, individuals, lead farmers and partners in various aspects of crop production.

Deliverables for next quarter include:

- Implementation of two new health and nutrition partner fund agreements that will impact 1,850 smallholders, improving their knowledge of health-related issues.
- Business trainings will continue to expand outreach in all areas.
- Field days will be scheduled in all growing areas in February and March once crops have reached an advanced stage of maturity.

## 2. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

### 2.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

USAID-STAMP is an 18-month initiative supported by the American people through the United States Agency for International Development. The program aims to increase the food security of smallholder farmers by expanding market access and increasing productivity, which will result in improved income generation and significantly impact the lives of more than 4,500 rural families.

USAID-STAMP's mission is to increase and sustain smallholder sales and incomes from the production and marketing of high-value horticultural crops and products using environmentally-friendly farm technologies and good agricultural practices. All proposed activities will include efforts to address the impact of HIV/AIDS on rural communities, and will encourage women and youth to become aware of the business potential of horticulture. The program is scheduled to continue through March 2012, with long-term sustainability achieved through partner alliances.

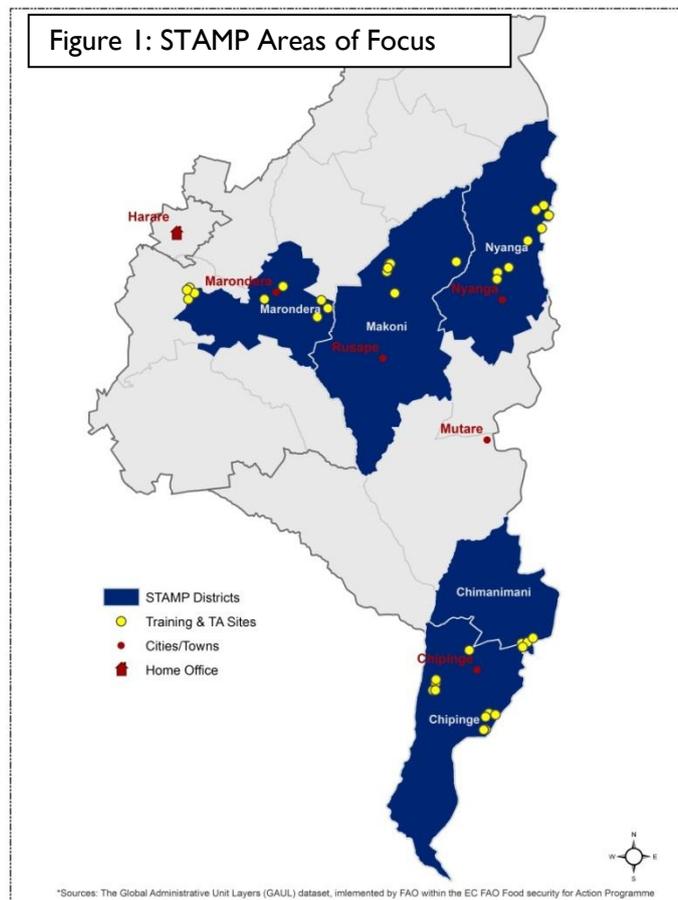
### 2.2 GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

USAID-STAMP is being implemented in Mashonaland East and Manicaland provinces, with three field agronomists managing five partner alliances in Marondera, Nyanga, and Chipinge. The geographical focus for the 2010 to 2011 season focuses on five districts (Chipinge, Chimanimani, Nyanga, Makoni, and Marondera), which encompasses 16 wards in total.

### 2.3. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTING

Following the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding from the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Mechanization in September 2011, visits were made during the first quarter of fiscal year 2012 to meet local government officials in both Mashonaland East and Manicaland. These visits were crucial to field operations and were necessary to inform the District Administrators (DA) and District Agricultural Extension Officers (DAEO) of the modalities of the Memorandum. Approval has been granted at Provincial and District levels for USAID-STAMP activities to continue in all the operational areas.

USAID-STAMP's work with smallholder farmers and commercial partners was highlighted in a December monthly bulletin produced by the project, which created a high-level of interest in current field activities amongst key stakeholders. In addition to the monthly bulletins, USAID-STAMP produced two success stories this quarter which have been posted to the project's website and included in this report (Annex IV). Field agronomists and USAID-STAMP consultants continue to use photographs to record ongoing impact with smallholder farmers.



This quarter, USAID-STAMP produced three technical bulletins on agronomic and business development topics including: Farming as a Business, composting, and potato agronomy. The bulletins are translated into the local language and distributed to smallholders during training and technical assistance visits.

Three monthly financial statements were submitted and posted to the intranet site ([www.fintrac.com/stamp](http://www.fintrac.com/stamp)).

## 3. ACTIVITIES

### 3.1. INCREASED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY

#### 3.1.1 Crops

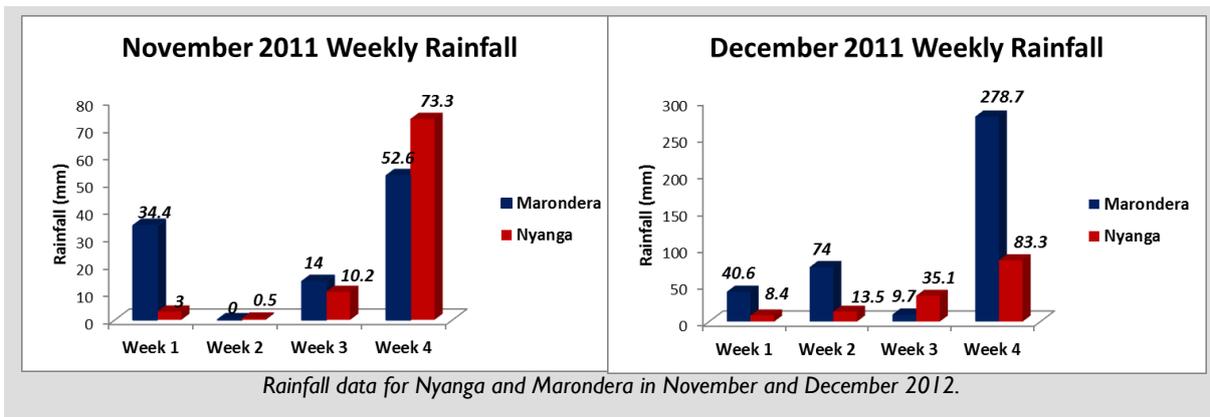
##### *Paprika*

This quarter, program partner Extracts contracted 1,500 smallholder farmers to produce 375 hectares of paprika with assistance from USAID-STAMP. The program's partnership with Extracts has increased the number of smallholder farmers growing paprika in Mashonaland East and Manicaland over the last year. This quarter, USAID-STAMP and Extracts focused on providing continuing support to those farmers who had repaid their input credit loans in full and on recruiting new farmers from the areas with high repayment levels such as Sabvure (96 percent repayment rate) and Samanyika (100 percent repayment rate). USAID-STAMP and Extracts are now working with beneficiary paprika farmers in three districts: Nyanga, Makoni, and Marondera.

Paprika production continued this quarter and USAID-STAMP assisted smallholder farmers in planting seedbeds in gardens close to water sources during September and October and transplanting into the fields in November and December. Unpredictable weather patterns have made the beginning of this paprika season difficult for smallholder farmers and USAID-STAMP is working with Extracts to ensure successful harvests for program beneficiaries. Some examples of challenges faced and solutions imparted were:

- A heavy hailstorm in early October destroyed the young seedlings of approximately ten percent of the smallholder farmers in Chiendambuya. Extracts replaced the seed and the farmers were able to replant their seedbeds within two weeks of the hail storm. As the seedlings were already two to three weeks old, this pushed back the transplanting date by five weeks.
- Although the first heavy rainfall occurred in a few places in early October, in other areas the delay in the start of the rains resulted in the drying-up of shallow wells used for seedbed irrigation. Verification of seedbed planting was completed by USAID-STAMP and partner agronomists in November, and it was noted that 29 farmers in Charamba and Chinhenga were forced to abandon their seedbeds due to delayed rains. USAID-STAMP assisted these farmers in procuring new seedlings from neighboring farmers, so they could continue production.

- Rainfall patterns during November and early December were erratic with long stretches between showers. As the majority of the growers are producing paprika as a dry land crop, it is common practice to plant with the first large rainfall and assume the rain will continue long enough for the plants to become established. Because rains are traditionally consistent from mid-November onwards, farmers know that it is relatively safe to transplant their seedlings during the November rains. However, this season the rains only started in earnest in mid-December, and in some areas the earlier plantings had no rains for 10 days following field transplanting. This delay, combined with sandy soils, which have low water holding capacity, resulted in the loss of many smaller seedlings. In drier areas like Chinhenga and Charamba in Nyanga district, growers had to infill or in some cases transplant seedlings two to three times. However, many delayed their plantings until mid-December when the rains became more regular. Ongoing trainings in water conservation techniques, such as mulching, have yielded positive results in reducing the impact of these dry spells.



USAID-STAMP and partner Extracts continue to provide training to smallholder farmers to support paprika production. This quarter 1,660 people attended 38 training events on topics as diverse as compost making, business skills, and basic paprika agronomy. USAID-STAMP makes a point of supporting smallholder farmers in looking at paprika production as a business, and the business training has been well-received by many growers. Jeniffer Choruwa, one of the participants from Macheke, said “I am very grateful to Hyveld (Extracts). No one ever taught us how to do a budget before. I am going to make one for all my crops.”

USAID-STAMP recognizes that the project works with farmers of diverse educational backgrounds and develops training tools and messages that everyone can understand; even those smallholders with limited mathematical and literacy skills. USAID-STAMP and Extracts agronomists continue to reinforce business principles through ongoing technical visits that include both agronomic advice and support in filling out field log books to ensure accurate recordkeeping. Recordkeeping is an essential part of good business practices, as it helps farmers understand the costs, time, and labor involved in production.

Extracts provided key inputs to support the smallholders’ adoption of good



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Farmers participating in a USAID-STAMP sponsored farming as a business training in Chiendambuya.

agricultural practices and successfully distributed lime and fertilizer to all smallholder beneficiaries by the end of December this year. These inputs will help farmers achieve greater returns on their crops, improving household incomes and food security.

### Bananas

Banana production in Rusitu Valley has peaked with the onset of the rains and high temperatures during this quarter. These ideal growing conditions, combined with the application of fertilizers supplied on credit, have resulted in top-quality bananas. Prior to USAID-STAMP involvement, only a few farmers had been applying fertilizer to their crops. Banana farmers traditionally used a simple nitrogen fertilizer and, by doing so, failed to meet the plants' requirements for other key nutrients like phosphates and potash, which are essential for crop health. Through USAID-STAMP support, 222 smallholder farmers received "Banana Blend" fertilizer during the months of November and December. The application of this fertilizer has already shown significant visual results in the overall health of the plantations by improving crop color and vigor, as well as increasing the number of suckers and size of the new emerging leaves.

USAID-STAMP provided farmers with training on timely and accurate application of fertilizers, resulting in an increase in the length of the bananas and an increase in the number of hands per bunch from eight to thirteen. Training on postharvest handling is ongoing and farmers are now taking greater care of their harvested crop after USAID-STAMP and partner agronomists emphasized that poor postharvest handling can potentially turn an A grade crop into an unsellable one. A total of 1,818 people attended 43 training events focused on good agricultural practices and business skills.

This quarter, USAID-STAMP agronomists are focusing on practical training sessions on sucker selection at demo sites after noting that many banana farmers were not choosing the correct suckers to use as new planting material. Program agronomists noticed that smallholders were using water suckers instead of sword suckers purely because water suckers appeared more vigorous. However, water suckers do not become productive plants and tend to remain vegetative for many years. By improving sucker selection, USAID-STAMP agronomists are ensuring maximum yields and incomes for program beneficiaries.



*Photo by Fintrac Inc.*

*Mr. Dzingire proudly displays his thriving banana trees. Thanks to USAID-STAMP intervention, farmers like Mr. Dzingire are learning good agricultural practices that increase yields and incomes.*

Thirty-six demo plots have been established, showcasing key crop management topics such as plant spacing, sucker selection, fertilizer application, mulching, and weeding. The enthusiasm of the growers is tangible as they see the radical improvement in their crops, and many are now expanding their production areas, an investment contribution that will be reported in the next quarter. The following table gives a brief financial analysis for the Mlambo family, one of the households in Rusitu Valley who have benefitted from USAID-STAMP assistance. USAID-STAMP partner Rusitu Valley Fresh Produce (RVFP) has been purchasing bananas from smallholders at US\$0.20 per

kilogram; double what they had previously received from middlemen buyers, which resulted in an immediate doubling of income without any further interventions. Most farmers in Rusitu Valley have

minimal costs associated with their dry land bananas, as they have traditionally not used fertilizers or pesticides in their production. Encouraged by the success of their banana crop, the Mlambo family has decided to expand their plot by half a hectare. This increase in land area combined with an increase in yield due to better fertilization and implementation of best practices introduced by USAID-STAMP will potentially result in an increase of 60 percent in yields and more than 300 percent in income.

	Pre-STAMP	STAMP	
		Immediate	2012/13
Area planted	1	1	1.5
Yield (kg)	7,840	7,840	18,816
Costs (\$)	39.00	39.00	174.00
Purchase Price/kg	0.10	0.20	0.20
Gross return (\$)	784.00	1,568.00	3,763.20
<b>Gross Margin (\$)</b>	<b>745.00</b>	<b>1,529.00</b>	<b>3,589.20</b>
<i>Financial analysis of banana profits for the Mlambo family prior to and following USAID-STAMP assistance. The introduction of better agricultural practices and improved market linkages have doubled household income in one year.</i>			

#### *Proteas*

USAID–STAMP and program partner Zimflora field personnel continue to provide ongoing technical assistance to protea growers in the Nyanga district. Many farmers growing one variety of protea (*Partridge*) faced problems with a fungal disease, known as *Fusarium*, that attacks the roots and causes plant dieback. USAID-STAMP-supported farmers helped conduct a population count and found that 1,998 plants needed to be replaced with new varieties due to the disease. Zimflora helped affected smallholders by supplying new protea varieties to replace the lost crops. USAID-STAMP and partner agronomists provided training on composting to reduce the incidence of this disease moving forward.

This quarter, USAID-STAMP and Zimflora focused on supporting smallholder farmers in general crop maintenance such as weeding and re-ridging. Next quarter, USAID-STAMP will assist growers with the early pruning of their plants, which is necessary to ensure correct stem lengths. Growers have received training in pruning techniques, fertilizer timing, and placement, as well as pest and disease identification. With USAID-STAMP assistance, all beneficiary farmers have attended training on composting and water conservation techniques, which will help ensure long-term productivity.

#### *Irish and sweet potatoes*

USAID–STAMP is working with two partners, Tanganda Ltd. and the Seed Potato Co-op, to increase the incomes of table potato growers in Zimbabwe. In the Tanganda area, a successful field day was held in December, and the top three producers received fertilizer. This field day helped highlight the impact of USAID-STAMP amongst smallholder growers, as farmers who had already harvested their program-supported crops were able to give positive feedback to other smallholders on the increase in their incomes. Those growers with reliable irrigation were able to plant early in the season and will begin harvesting their crop during the second quarter of this year. Training for these growers will focus on postharvest handling, grading, and marketing in the next quarter.

USAID-STAMP is also helping smallholders affected by *Rhizoctonia*, a soil-born fungal disease, in Chinyaduma. These diseases have built up over several seasons of tomato production and were further exacerbated by the use of flood irrigation. USAID-STAMP is using this disease as a training tool for neighboring farmers to emphasize the importance of rotations of not only different crops, but also different groups of vegetables. Because tomatoes and potatoes come from the same

*Solanaceous* family, they tend to be susceptible to the same diseases. Trials will be initiated in the second quarter of this year to introduce smallholders to various crops that may be included for rotation purposes. These rotational crops will help improve soil quality, diversify income streams, and improve family nutrition.



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

USAID-STAMP consultant, Angus Guthrie, conducts a tuber count with beneficiary farmer Mr. Mhlanga. Tuber counts help farmers assess the potential yield of their crop for marketing purposes.

USAID-STAMP provided technical assistance on the storage of potato seed at both Tanganda Estates after their sprouts were wiped out by an influx of tuber moth larvae. USAID-STAMP helped implement improved hygiene practices in the storage area which, combined with the dipping of the tubers in Malathion, soon brought the larvae problem under control.

The Seed Potato Co-op (SPC) is registering smallholder farmers in the Bende area of Nyanga district in order to certify them as seed potato producers with assistance from USAID-STAMP. The first pre-inspection visit has been carried out and the SPC agronomist was impressed with the quality of potato crop being grown by

the farmers. The government inspector will make site visits in January to ensure all potato seed production requirements are met.

USAID-STAMP baseline figures confirmed that poor yields are the norm in sweet potato production in Chipinge district. The average yield per grower recorded in the baseline survey was 1,219 kilograms per hectare where the national average is four tons per hectare (source AgriBiotech). USAID-STAMP recognizes that the main challenge facing sweet potato growers in Chipinge is not access to fertilizer, but access to virus-free planting material. Where growers are able to plant with virus-free vines, yields as high as 16 tons per hectare can be achieved under dry land conditions and as high as 30 tons per hectare with irrigation. To help improve access to virus-free vines, USAID-STAMP supported AgriBiotech in providing training on nursery production techniques to 38 sweet potato producers in November. Following this capacity-building exercise, 15 smallholder farmers received virus-free vines of the popular Chingova variety with which they will establish nurseries. These nurseries will provide top-quality vines for another 150 growers within a three-month period.

### *Macadamias*

A modification to the Tanganda partner fund agreement has been submitted to USAID requesting a change in the type of perennial plants distributed to the smallholder farmers. Tanganda would like to distribute Macadamia plants to growers instead of avocados as they had originally intended. The managing director of Tanganda has changed twice since the original partner fund agreement was negotiated, resulting in a decision to site the new export pack house facility at Tingamira Estate in northern part of Chipinge district. However, USAID-STAMP sites are located in southern Chipinge where the road infrastructure is very poor. Any avocados produced in this area would risk excessive bruising during the 160 kilometer trip over badly maintained roads. Therefore a decision was made to replace avocados with Macadamias, which will be transported to the factory in their hard shells. As Tanganda has actively been planting both avocados and Macadamias on their own estates and would like to incorporate their outgrowers into these value chains, they have selected growers in the northern part of Chipinge, close to the pack house, to plant avocados and those in the southern part will produce Macadamias. This smallholder production compliments the Tanganda Estates' plantings and forms part of their corporate social responsibility program.

### 3.1.2 Technologies

One hundred and six demo plots were established in the first quarter of FY2012 throughout USAID-STAMP operational areas. These sites are used as venues for training workshops and field days and effectively showcase a variety of agricultural practices promoting smallholder adoption of new and appropriate technologies.

Water conservation and soil improvement techniques have been particularly important for the growers this season and smallholder farmers working with USAID-STAMP will see the following new technologies in their demo plots:



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

A USAID-STAMP lead farmer inspects a paprika demonstration plot.

- **Raised beds:** plants are established on 30 centimeter-high ridges, ensuring good drainage of the root system and allowing sufficient oxygen to reach the roots. This helps reduce the incidence of *Fusarium*, a soil born fungal disease. *Fusarium* tends to become a greater problem in water-logged soil.
- **Mulching:** the benefits of mulching are numerous, but highlights for USAID-STAMP supported farmers include:
  - Moderation of soil temperatures to provide a better growing environment for plant roots;
  - Prevention of soil splash onto plant foliage, which is often connected to foliar diseases;
  - Conservation of soil moisture and reduction of irrigation frequency;
  - Improvement of the microclimate around the plants through increased relative humidity; and
  - Provision of an ideal environment for beneficial soil microorganisms that have been incorporated through composting.
- **Composting:** It is essential for almost all USAID-STAMP smallholders to produce quality thermophilic compost as it is one of the keys to successful crop production. Its benefits have been proven in commercial plantations as there are no fungicides on the market that control diseases like *Fusarium*, and cultural control measures such as continual application of compost have reduced losses due plant dieback from this disease.

### 3.2. EXPANDED MARKET ACCESS

As USAID-STAMP continues to expand its operations and impact, the number of new growers who have signed contracts with commercial partners is 890, bringing the market linkages facilitated between farmer groups and buyers to a cumulative total of 143. The value of client and counterpart investments during this quarter is \$128,470. The new investments made by farmers in planting perennial crops will be reported in the next quarterly report.

#### *Bananas*

RVFP continued to purchase bananas from smallholder farmers in Rusitu Valley and has bought 564 tons since the beginning of the project. RVFP has faced a number of internal and external problems, which have caused a decrease in banana purchases from USAID-STAMP smallholders. The project is

working actively with RVFP to overcome these challenges and ensure farmers are receiving better prices for their crops, thereby increasing farmers' incomes.

Internal challenges included cash flow constraints, which resulted in delayed payments to growers. Due to these delays, growers have been reluctant to continue selling to RVFP. However, the partner has been actively engaging the farmers through stakeholder meetings and has applied to CABS for an increase and extension on their AgriTrade facility to help improve cash flow. RVFP has also partnered with an entrepreneur who is ripening bananas to be sold at an additional profit. By working with this entrepreneur, RVFP will see higher returns on the fruit (\$0.54 per kilogram for ripened bananas versus \$0.26 per kilogram for green bananas). This is expected to increase revenues and improve liquidity within the project. RVFP is also reviewing internal staffing to bring about greater efficiency and economy in their operations.

<b>RVFP Banana Purchases by Month</b>	
<b>Month</b>	<b>Kgs.</b>
October	48,029
November	81,184
December	31,552
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>160,765</b>

Heavy rains during December have not only hampered farmer activities but also impacted postharvest transportation. Although the poor road infrastructure is an ongoing issue in Rusitu Valley, the local rural district council (RDC) for Chimanamani has resurfaced the main access road to Chipinge. It is hoped that the increased economic activity in the valley combined with ongoing consultation and lobbying by the farmers will encourage the RDC to improve this key infrastructure.

To help overcome the impact of these challenges on project beneficiaries, USAID-STAMP is working with Sunspun, a company that has purchased bananas from Rusitu Valley, to source product directly from the growers at \$0.15 per kilogram. They have been impressed with the quality and potential quantity produced, and as demand for bananas remains buoyant, they are exploring new opportunities to increase their supply base.

This quarter, USAID-STAMP began investigating opportunities for alternative markets for the third grade, small-sized bananas that most large buyers are unwilling to purchase. This will most likely involve value-added processing activities to increase demand for these bananas.

#### *Potatoes*

Mr. Mhlanga, one of the smallholder farmers in the USAID-STAMP supported Tanganda outgrower scheme, started harvesting his potatoes just before Christmas due to demand from local entrepreneurs supplying Chipinge town and Espungabera. He was paid \$13 a pocket for large-sized potatoes and \$10 for the medium size and has sold nearly 1,200 kilograms to date. Although Tanganda has contracted these smallholder farmers to produce potatoes, it is not an exclusive arrangement and the farmers are free to find their own market if they are able to achieve a higher price. However, they are still expected to repay their input credit and farmers have agreed to use the local Paramount Chief as an arbitrator if any dispute arises. The current price being offered by Tanganda is \$8 a pocket so most of the growers have opted to sell their product to local vendors.

A key objective of the USAID-STAMP program is to increase incomes of smallholder farmers and an integral part of increasing agricultural production and rural incomes is to create strategic linkages to markets and financial institutions. USAID-STAMP recognizes that liquidity is a major constraint across all sectors, and that most smallholder farmers have little or no access to formal credit.

Until recently, most banks have preferred to deal with large commercial organizations rather than engaging with rural farmers. Against this background, a Bankers' Day was organized to bring banks and farmers together to explore innovative financial solutions that would allow small-scale farmers to ramp up their production, improve quality, and contribute to a stronger agricultural sector. In November, USAID-STAMP invited banks that have partnered with the Zimbabwe Agricultural Income and Employment Development (Zim-AIED) program through the AgriTrade facility, as well as those with established branches in Nyanga to present their credit models to smallholder farmers. Royal and Trust banks were the only banks who initially committed to working with farmers in the Bende area.

Royal Bank, who has established a branch in Nyanga, aggressively pursued the opportunity to find an input credit solution for the smallholder farmers in Bende. They provided a letter of guarantee valued at \$73,650 to the Zimbabwe Fertilizer Company who disbursed inputs through its agent in Nyanga. To date, 191 farmers have opened bank accounts with Royal Bank and signed co-liability in groups of up to 10 people. This access to credit has given the farmers an opportunity to secure fertilizers and pesticides, which helps improve both quality and yields.



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

*Farmers in Bende receive fertilizers as part of the USAID-STAMP-supported input credit scheme with Royal Bank. With quality fertilizer, farmers are able to improve yields, resulting in higher incomes.*

### 3.3. OTHER CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

#### 3.3.1 Gender

More than 2,000 women attended training sessions conducted by USAID-STAMP this quarter, representing 44 percent of training participants. This exceeds the project's target of 40 percent female participation in training events. However in some areas, such as Bende, only 23 percent of the participants were women. USAID-STAMP agronomists are actively exploring ways to incorporate more women into training sessions in these areas as the project recognizes that women play an essential role in smallholder farming operations throughout Zimbabwe. Lead farmers have also been sensitized to gender issues and instructed to invite both husbands and wives to the training sessions. An assessment is currently underway to establish suitable times for women to attend training events in light of the additional household activities they undertake during the day. One of the main challenges facing women's participation in training activities is training location. Women do not have the time or resources to travel long distances to attend trainings. USAID-STAMP works actively to identify training venues close to women's homes to encourage participation.

In Rusitu Valley, only 31 percent of bananas purchased by RVFP come from female smallholder farmers. Although the figure suggests that male farmers play a leading role, there are known situations where three or more female farmers sell their product through lead farmers, most of whom are men. Similarly, there are cultural issues that dictate women in polygamous marriages sell their bananas collectively in the name of their husband, who in turn distributes the cash to his wives in proportion to their individual contributions. Older widows also tend to sell their fruit through their adult sons. These practices are guided by entrenched cultural norms that influence gender roles. Gender sensitive issues are being addressed through partner field clerks, but any perceived changes to the status quo are met with strong resistance.

USAID-STAMP aims to include 25 percent of women as lead farmers and is constantly engaging partners and smallholder farmers to overcome cultural barriers that may restrict the program from reaching this target. Currently, 22 percent of all lead farmers are women. In some areas, USAID-STAMP agronomists make elaborate compromises to ensure women's participation in program activities. In Macheke and Chiendambuya, for example, husbands would only allow their wives to become lead farmers if they could accompany them on visits to other growers. Overall, USAID-STAMP works within the cultural constraints to ensure family buy-in, without which it is difficult to achieve success.

### *3.3.2 Health and Nutrition*

Two partner fund agreements addressing health issues within USAID-STAMP operational areas have been approved by USAID. Family Aids Caring Trust (FACT) will conduct health and nutrition training sessions and raise awareness amongst 1,050 communal farmers including agricultural extension officers and village health workers. Engaging government and community leaders such as extension officers and health workers will help ensure the sustainability of the program beyond the length of the partner fund award. By employing adult learning and participatory approaches, communities will be trained on general disease prevention that focuses on symptoms and management (e.g. TB, malaria, and cholera), nutrition, and production of nutritious foods.

Action Contre La Faim (ACF) will conduct training of trainers and target nurses, School Health Masters, and Environmental Health Technicians. Involving these community health leaders will ensure their buy-in to USAID-STAMP activities and improve supervision and mentoring of village health workers. As a result of these training sessions, village health workers will go on to train more than 800 smallholder farmers in a six-month period. Training will revolve around a few key areas such as: Participatory Health and Hygiene Education (PHHE) and Community Infant and Young Child Feeding (CIYCF). Issues related to nutrition and HIV/AIDS are cross cutting and will be incorporated into all ACF training sessions. The 800 smallholders trained will form 16 clubs which will receive continuing support from health workers. Training material used in the workshops will be sourced from material developed by the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare and UNICEF.

### *3.3.3 Environment*

In all districts, USAID-STAMP prioritized water harvesting and conservation techniques to extend and, in some cases, ensure a growing season for farmers. Despite the efforts of the Environmental Management Agency (EMA) in Zimbabwe, natural resource management at the farm level remains under-developed and the local environment is under serious pressure from climate change, population growth, diminishing land availability, deforestation, and soil degradation. USAID-STAMP is providing 776 new smallholder farmers with practical and cost-effective tools and techniques to address many of these challenges. This brings the total number of farmers who have been impacted by natural resource management activities under USAID-STAMP to 5,230. USAID-STAMP's agronomists and partner extension staff are demonstrating the basics of crop rotation and soil conservation, composting, and minimal pesticide usage, as well as more advanced inter-cropping systems to ensure the best management of farmers' land and environment.

Information obtained from snap surveys on ownership of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for pesticide application in Nyanga and Makoni districts indicated that although 53 percent of smallholder farmers interviewed owned a knapsack, their protective clothing was very limited. Gumboots and overalls were the most popular items of protective clothing, which in the more affluent areas like Bende were recorded at 38 and 42 percent, respectively. However, in other areas of Nyanga these figures were as low as 25 and 10 percent, respectively. The most critical time of exposure to pesticides is when measuring concentrated products before diluting them with water in the knapsack. Gloves are an essential piece of the personal protective equipment as dermal toxicity through the hands contributes to the highest number of cases of chronic poisoning. It was noted that less than 10 percent of the farmers owned a pair of gloves. Through ongoing training on safe use of pesticides, the importance of PPE is highlighted and the cost of these items is discussed with farmers. They are often surprised at how little the individual items cost, and indicate they would be willing to

buy them but none are available at their local agro dealer. Discussions have been initiated with some input suppliers to investigate the opportunity of supplying PPE in outlying areas. Workshops cover operator safety, environmental safety, pesticide transport, storage, and disposal.

## 4. LESSONS LEARNED

**Rainfall distribution:** USAID-STAMP recognizes that rainfall distribution patterns are as critical as the quantity of rainfall; in order to accurately record this information, 32 rain gauges were distributed throughout the production area at the end of October. The rainfall data gathered will help growers make key decisions on the timing of their plantings, and will allow agronomists to predict potential increases in bacterial and fungal diseases. This data will also help program partners target the best potential areas for future contract farming interventions.

**Field record books:** Although farmers have received business training and understand the importance of recordkeeping, ongoing assistance is required to ensure their farm log books are kept up to date. Field clerks and lead farmers regularly check these books when they conduct technical assistance visits.

**Memorandum of Understanding:** The roll out of the official approval to operate in rural areas took longer than expected due to the amount of bureaucracy involved. Visits were paid to the Provincial Administrators of Manicaland and Mashonaland East. Following these visits, an additional letter of introduction was required before project personnel could visit the individual District Administrators (DA). This letter did not automatically ensure open entry into the district as several other offices were involved in this decision, including the President's office and the Rural District Council. After three months, this process is now complete and relevant officers are kept informed of USAID-STAMP's progress.

## 5. CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS

**PERSUAP:** The current authorized list of pesticides is very restrictive and in some cases has caused potential reduction in yields as partner organizations were kept from purchasing the pesticides needed on behalf of the growers. For example, white ants in proteas can be controlled by Confidor, a pesticide that is EPA registered, has low toxicity and is registered in Zimbabwe for termite control, but could not be purchased because it is not on the approved PERSUAP pesticide list. White ants are notorious for devastating proteas, particularly in dry seasons, by eating the bark of the plants.

**Training:** It has been difficult for USAID-STAMP agronomists to conduct training sessions in Rusitu Valley because many farmers are upset by the delayed payments from RVPF. This has caused some tension and refusal to cooperate with the field team on the part of the farmers. USAID-STAMP agronomists are working diligently to win back farmers' trust in Rusitu Valley and find new markets for the bananas produced.

**Culture:** The death of a local Chief had a lasting negative impact on one farmer, as it was decreed by the Chief's family that no one in the area was permitted to work during the 10-day mourning period. As a result, many of the farmer's plants died as he was not able to irrigate or water his crop.

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## 6. NETWORKING AND COLLABORATIONS

### 6.1 CURRENT PARTNERS

Five partner fund awards signed by USAID-STAMP during 2011 will continue to operate during FY2012. In partnership with these organizations, USAID-STAMP has impacted 5,230 smallholders to date, increasing their incomes, productivity, and food security.

### 6.2 POTENTIAL PARTNERS

As discussed in section 3.3.2, partnerships with two NGOs have been finalized and submitted to USAID for approval this quarter. These two NGOs, Family Aids Caring Trust (FACT) and Action Contre La Faim (ACF), will assist USAID-STAMP with their health and nutrition component. These partnerships will impact an additional 1,850 smallholder farmers.

### 6.3 OTHER PARTNERS

Collaboration with other organizations is ongoing, particularly in the paprika program where discussions have been held with both Zim-AIED and their partner Capsicum, to eliminate overlap of activities and smallholder farmers for the current production season.

Discussions have been held with International Relief and Development (IRD) in connection with their AgriTrade program, specifically about RVFP's loan extension with CABS and to organize the Bankers' Day in Bende. The banks working with IRD on the AgriTrade facility were invited to the November Bankers' Day and given an opportunity to present their input credit models to the farmers. Although none of the banks involved in the AgriTrade facility are currently working with these growers, MicroKing would like to continue pursuing various options with the farmers.

## 7. CONCLUSION

USAID-STAMP continues to make great strides in impacting the lives of smallholder farmers. To date, 106 demonstration plots have been established in five operational districts to showcase good agricultural practices around the production of paprika, bananas, protea, and potatoes. Most of these cash crops will be harvested in the second and third quarter of this year.

This quarter, USAID-STAMP trained 4,524 smallholders during 120 training events on topics as diverse as composting, farming as a business, and postharvest handling. 44 percent of these training participants were women, as USAID-STAMP continues to strive to display the potential of horticulture as a business option for all members of the family. The total unique number of people trained to date by USAID-STAMP is 5,448.

Results data will be included once harvests of cash crops begin next quarter, but anecdotal evidence supplied by USAID-STAMP partners and field staff is showing the prospect of strong increases for smallholders in terms of both yields and incomes.

## ANNEX I: PROGRESS AGAINST INDICATORS

Indicator Data											
Operating unit :		Zimbabwe									
Implementing Mechanism / Project :											
Indicator / Disaggregation	Baseline Value	2011		2012					2013	2014	
		Target	Actual	Target	Actuals				Target	Target	
		Updated	Updated	Updated	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Totals Q1+Q2+Q3+Q4	PPR	PPR
<b>4.5 (4): Gross margin per unit of land, kilogram, or animal of selected product (crops/animals selected varies by country)</b>											
4-a Paprika											
4-b Banana											
4-c Potato											
<b>4.5.2 (2): Number of hectares under improved technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance</b>											
Continuing		1948									
climate mitigation or adaptation											
Association-applied											
Female											
Male											
Disaggregates Not Available											
crop genetics											
Association-applied											
Female											
Male											

Disaggregates Not Available					514.4				514.4		
disease management											
Association-applied											
Female											
Male											
Disaggregates Not Available											
other											
Association-applied											
Female											
Male											
Disaggregates Not Available											
pest management											
Association-applied											
Female											
Male											
Disaggregates Not Available					515				514.4		
post-harvest handling and storage											
Association-applied											
Female											
Male											
Disaggregates Not Available					501				501		
processing											
Association-applied											
Female											
Male											
Disaggregates Not Available											
soil-related											
Association-applied											
Female											
Male											
Disaggregates Not Available					514.4				514.4		
total w/one or more improved technology											
Association-applied											
Female											

Male											
Disaggregates Not Available					514.4				514.4		
water management											
Association-applied											
Female											
Male											
Disaggregates Not Available											
Disaggregates Not Available											
Association-applied											
Female											
Male											
Disaggregates Not Available											
New				1948							
climate mitigation or adaptation											
Association-applied											
Female											
Male											
Disaggregates Not Available											
crop genetics											
Association-applied											
Female											
Male											
Disaggregates Not Available											
disease management					515				515		
Association-applied											
Female											
Male											
Disaggregates Not Available											
other											
Association-applied											
Female											
Male											
Disaggregates Not Available											
pest management											

Association-applied											
Female											
Male											
Disaggregates Not Available					515				515		
post-harvest handling and storage											
Association-applied											
Female											
Male											
Disaggregates Not Available											
processing											
Association-applied											
Female											
Male											
Disaggregates Not Available											
soil-related											
Association-applied											
Female											
Male											
Disaggregates Not Available					515				515		
total w/one or more improved technology											
Association-applied											
Female											
Male											
Disaggregates Not Available					515				515		
water management											
Association-applied											
Female											
Male											
Disaggregates Not Available											
Disaggregates Not Available											
Association-applied											
Female											
Male											
Disaggregates Not Available											

Disaggregates Not Available												
animal genetics												
Association-applied												
Female												
Male												
Disaggregates Not Available												
climate mitigation or adaptation												
Association-applied												
Female												
Male												
Disaggregates Not Available												
crop genetics												
Association-applied												
Female												
Male												
Disaggregates Not Available												
disease management												
Association-applied												
Female												
Male												
Disaggregates Not Available												
other												
Association-applied												
Female												
Male												
Disaggregates Not Available												
pest management												
Association-applied												
Female												
Male												
Disaggregates Not Available												
post-harvest handling and storage												
Association-applied												
Female												



New											
Female				3,773	411				411		
Male				4,088	365				365		
Disaggregates Not Available											
Disaggregates Not Available		4,000									
Female											
Male											
Disaggregates Not Available											
<b>4.5.2 (7): Number of individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training</b>											
Female											
People in firms											
People in government											
Producers			1,853	1,920	737				737		
Disaggregates Not Available											
Male											
People in firms											
People in government											
Producers			2,008	2,080	850				850		
Disaggregates Not Available											
Disaggregates Not Available											
People in firms			386	400							
People in government											
Producers		4,000	3,475	3,600	1587				1587		
Disaggregates Not Available											
<b>4.5.2 (11): Number of food security private enterprises (for profit), producers organizations, water users associations, women's groups, trade and business associations, and community-based organizations (CBOs) receiving USG assistance</b>											
Community-based organizations (CBOs)											
Continuing			1	0							
New											
Disaggregates Not Available											

Private enterprises (for profit)											
Continuing											
New											
Disaggregates Not Available											
Producers organizations											
Continuing		5	2	2							
New											
Disaggregates Not Available											
Trade and business associations											
Continuing			2	2							
New											
Disaggregates Not Available											
Water users associations											
Continuing			1	1							
New											
Disaggregates Not Available											
Women's groups											
Continuing											
New											
Disaggregates Not Available											
Disaggregates Not Available											
Continuing											
New											
Disaggregates Not Available											
<b>4.5.2 (13): Number of rural households benefiting directly from USG interventions</b>											
Child No Adults (CNA)											
Continuing											
New											
Disaggregates Not Available											
Female no male (FNM)											
Continuing			891	1,791							
New					83				83		
Disaggregates Not Available											

Male and female (M&F)											
Continuing			3,474	6,984							
New					631				631		
Disaggregates Not Available											
Male no female (MNF)											
Continuing			89	179							
New					62				62		
Disaggregates Not Available											
Disaggregates Not Available		4000									
Continuing											
New											
Disaggregates Not Available											
<b>4.5.2 (23): Value of incremental sales (collected at farm-level) attributed to FTF implementation</b>											
23a - Horticulture		\$ 680,000.00	##### ###	\$ 240,245.00							
23b - Animal products											
23c - Cereals											
23d - Oilseed											
23e - Dry grain, pulses & legumes											
23f - Roots, tubers & other staples											
23g - Other											
<b>4.5.2 (38): Value of new private sector investment in the agriculture sector or food chain leveraged by FTF implementation</b>											
4.5.2 (42): Number of private enterprises (for profit), producers organizations, water users associations, women's groups, trade and business associations, and community-based organizations (CBOs) that applied new technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance											
Community-based organizations (CBOs)											
Continuing											
New											
Disaggregates Not Available											
Private enterprises (for profit)											

Continuing											
New											
Disaggregates Not Available											
Producers organizations											
Continuing			2	2							
New		5									
Disaggregates Not Available											
Trade and business associations											
Continuing			1	1							
New											
Disaggregates Not Available											
Water users associations											
Continuing			1	1							
New											
Disaggregates Not Available											
Women's groups											
Continuing											
New											
Disaggregates Not Available											
Disaggregates Not Available											
Continuing											
New											
Disaggregates Not Available											
<b>4.5.2 (43): Number of firms (excluding farms) or CSOs engaged in agricultural and food security-related manufacturing and services now operating more profitably (at or above cost) because of USG assistance</b>											
# of firms that were already operating profitably in the business cycle, but are now operating more profitably because of USG assistance (costs<revenue)											
# of firms that were operating at a loss (costs>revenue) in the last business cycle before USG assistance											
Disaggregates Not Available											

Title:STAMP Additional Indicators											
STAMP 1.1 Number of people benefiting from USG supported social assistance programming		20,000									
New				230	3,880					3,880	
Continuing			22,270								
STAMP 1.2 Percentage change in on farm net incomes of program assisted farmers											
		50	113	50							
STAMP 1.3 Percentage change in yield of targeted crops/products											
STAMP 1.4 Percentage change in costs of production per unit											
		-5	9	-10							
STAMP 1.5 Number of farmers engaged in contract farming											
New											
Women					438					438	
Men					452					452	
Disaggregation not available		1,125		0							890
Continuing											
Women											
Men											
Disaggregation not available			1,791								
STAMP 1.6 Value of farm sales by all direct program assisted farmers											
Horticulture		1,560,000	753,029	1,490,000							

STAMP1.7 Value of new client and counter parts investment USD		420,000	304,659	130,000	128,470				128,470		
STAMP 1.8 Percentage leadership roles in producer groups held by women											
		25	21	25	24				24		
STAMP 1.9 Percentage of women participating in training events											
		40	47	40	46				46		
STAMP 1.11 Number of public private partnership formed as a result of USG assistance											
New		5		0	0						
Continuing			5	5	5				5		
STAMP 1.12 Number of partner CBO/NGOs providing health /nutrition services to program farmers											
New											
Continuing		3	0	3	0						

## ANNEX II: LIST OF PRODUCE BUYERS

Company	Products	Contact and Title	Telephone	Email
Extracts	Paprika	Mr. Trevor Hedges	0772213991	<a href="mailto:trevor.hedges@yahoo.com">trevor.hedges@yahoo.com</a>
Interfresh	Bananas Fresh vegetables	Stanley Dongo	758520-40	<a href="mailto:wfsales@interfresh.co.zw">wfsales@interfresh.co.zw</a>
Rusitu Valley Fresh Produce	Bananas	Mr. Mike Mataure	4498270/443074 '0772875272	<a href="mailto:mmataure@mweb.co.zw">mmataure@mweb.co.zw</a>
Selby Enterprises	Mange tout; sugar snaps; fine beans; baby corn, potatoes	Adam Selby (Director)	0772250348; 2930490/4	<a href="mailto:adam@selbyzim.com">adam@selbyzim.com</a>
Sunspun	Bananas, fresh vegetables	Mr. N Mitchell	665628/9	<a href="mailto:sunspun@africaonline.co.zw">sunspun@africaonline.co.zw</a>
Tanganda	Potatoes	James Wessels	703786 0774136206	<a href="mailto:jameswessels@telkomsa.net">jameswessels@telkomsa.net</a>
The Potato Seed Co-op	Seed Potato	Cain Manzira	0772909477	<a href="mailto:seedspud@mweb.co.zw">seedspud@mweb.co.zw</a>
Zimflex/ ZimFlora	Flowers; proteas	Nicki Archer Bruce Laver	0772515719; 575541/ 575651	<a href="mailto:nicki@zimflower.co.zw">nicki@zimflower.co.zw</a>

## ANNEX III: CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Start Date	End Date	Activity	Location	Partners Involved	Event Description
3,10,17,24-Feb-12		Workshops	Chimanimani	RVFP	GAPS continued
6-Feb-12	8-Feb-12	Farmer training	Chipinge	Tanganda	Agribiotech training in sweet potatoes
6-Feb-12	8-Feb-12	COP Field visit	Marondera, Makoni & Nynaga	Hyveld, Zimflora & SPC	COP to visit partners and smallholder farmers in program areas
13-Feb-12	24-Feb-12	Farmer training	Chimanimani, Chipinge	RVFP, Tanganda	FAAB training
13-Feb-12	15-Feb-12	Marketing visit	Harare	RVFP	Lead farmer visit to Harare banana markets
20-Feb-12		Field Day	Chipinge	Tanganda	Potatoes
23-Feb-12		Workshop	Nyanga	Zimflora	Training in tunnel production
20-Feb-12	24-Feb-12	Field day site selection	Marondera, Makoni & Nyanga	Hyveld	Preparation for Field days In March
22-Feb-12	24-Feb-12	COP Field visit	Mutare & Chipinge	Health/Nutrition CBO's	Visiting new CBO field programs
24-Feb-12		Field day	Chipinge	Tanganda	Potato /Macadamia field day
27-Feb-12		Farmers Day	Nyanga	SPC	Field day for formal market representatives, input suppliers to profile products and services.
29-Feb-12		Field Day	Chimanimani	RVFP	Banana field day
2,9,16,23,30- Mar-12		Workshops	Chimanimani	RVFP	GAPS continued
1-Mar-12	2-Mar-12	STAMP team meeting	Harare		Field team join HO team for M&E updates and training
12-Mar-12	16-Mar-12	Field days	Marondera and Makoni	Hyveld	Paprika agronomy Prizes for top performers
12-Mar-12	15-Mar-12	COP field visit	Chimanimani & Chipinge	RVFP, Tanganda & ACF	COP to visit partners and smallholder farmers in program areas
16-Mar-12		Workshop	Nyanga	Zimflora	Ongoing training in field management
14-Mar-12		Field day	Nyanga	SPC	Potato agronomy Prizes for top performers
19-Mar-12	23-Mar-12	Field days	Makoni and Nyanga	Hyveld	Paprika agronomy Prizes for top performers
15-Mar-12	18-Mar-12	Marketing visit	Harare	SPC	Lead farmer visit to Harare potato markets
26-Mar-12	30-Mar-12	Farmer group training	Marondera	Hyveld	Post harvest handling
5,13,20,27-April-12		Workshops	Chimanimani	RVFP	GAPS continued
2-Apr-12	3-Apr-12	STAMP team meeting	Harare		Field team join HO team for M&E updates and training
23-Apr-12		Workshop	Nyanga	Zimflora	Ongoing training in field management
23-Apr-12	25-Apr-12	COP field visit	Marondera, Makoni, Nyanga	Hyveld, Zimflora, SPC, FACT	
23-Apr-12	27-Apr-12	Farmer training	Chipinge	Tanganda	Post harvest training in potatoes Perennial crop mgmt

## ANNEX IV: SUCCESS STORIES

### Improved Banana Crops Bring Family Together

**With good agricultural practices and improved market access, small-scale banana farmer drastically improves income.**



*Photo by Fintrac Inc.*

*Judith Mlambo is already earning more than twice the income she did prior to receiving training from USAID-STAMP. With program assistance, she plans to expand her banana farm and hopes to quadruple her income over the next year.*

**“Tendai came home because at last I am making real money. He wants to help me...so we can prepare more land for the banana crop.”**

*Judith Mlambo  
Banana farmer*

Judith Mlambo, like many Zimbabweans, has been a subsistence farmer for years, barely scraping by with her small banana crop.

For the past nine years, she has been selling an average of eight tons of bananas a year at \$0.10 per kilogram, which equates to an annual income of roughly \$800.

After learning about the United States Agency for International Development’s Smallholder Technology and Access to Markets Program (USAID-STAMP), Mrs. Mlambo began attending trainings on agricultural best practices. She has now been attending trainings for five months.

As part of its overarching goal of improving incomes and food security, USAID-STAMP is partnering with Rusitu Valley Fresh Produce (RVFP) to ensure farmers receive fair prices for their crops. RVFP now pays Mrs. Mlambo \$0.20 per kilogram, effectively doubling her income without any changes to production numbers.

The help she is receiving from the program is allowing her to increase yields as well. Through the trainings, she is learning to view her farm as a business, investing time and money into its growth.

“I used to think only shop owners were business people, but now I know that I am a businesswoman, too,” she said.

Thanks to the good agricultural practices Mrs. Mlambo learned from USAID-STAMP, such as mulching and proper use of fertilizer, and improved postharvest handling techniques, her previously neglected banana field is now thriving.

With this significant increase in yields and income, Mrs. Mlambo’s son, Tendai, has returned to the family farm to help his mother with her flourishing banana crop. Previously earning low wages in the distant capital city, Tendai is now able to live at home and help grow the family business.

The Mlambos are expanding their farm, and expect to harvest more than 18 tons of bananas on their 1.5 hectare farm in the 2012/2013 season, which would translate to more than \$3,500 in income – four times more than what Mrs. Mlambo made a year ago.

USAID-STAMP will work to increase the productivity, income, and food security of 4,500 smallholders in two provinces over a two-year period.

## Farmers Harvest High-Quality, Grade A Paprika

**With access to seeds and other inputs, paprika farmers stand to benefit from Zimbabwe's growing export business.**



*Photo by Fintrac Inc.*

*With assistance from USAID-STAMP, Garai Mapuranga is harvesting Grade A paprika for sale to export companies. With access to seed and technical training, Garai is able to drastically increase his income.*

**“I appreciated the inputs package from Hyveld...I hope we will purchase more inputs next season because I want to grow an even bigger area.”**

*Garai Mapuranga*

Zimbabwe's expanding paprika export industry represents a huge opportunity for smallholder farmers, but many of them cannot access the seeds or other inputs needed to take advantage of this growing industry.

With support from the United States Agency for International Development's Smallholder Technology and Access to Markets Program (USAID-STAMP), rural growers are receiving the support they need to harvest high-quality crops.

In 2011, smallholder farmer Garai Mapuranga registered as a grower with Hyveld, one of the country's largest paprika exporters.

Garai, along with 1,500 other registered growers in the Manicaland and Mashonaland East provinces, began receiving inputs on credit such as seed and fertilizer for 0.25-hectare plots.

In addition to the inputs, growers also received training and extension services from USAID-STAMP technicians. The agronomists taught the farmers how to prepare seed beds and apply fertilizer to ensure optimal yields.

Garai worked hard on his paprika crop and agreed to put up a small demonstration plot on his field to show other farmers in the area good agricultural practices such as mulching, tie ridging, and raised beds.

His paprika crop did so well that Garai's field was selected to host a field day on his plot, where program agronomists and government agricultural extension officers demonstrated best practices to a group of local farmers.

To date Garai has harvested and sold 500 kilograms of paprika – two thirds of which was grade A – despite the late season dry spell. He has paid off his loan and earned nearly four times his original investment.

He is using his extra money to buy food and household goods for his family, and hopes to increase his area and yield during the next crop cycle.

“I hope we will purchase more inputs next season because I want to grow an even bigger area,” he said.

USAID-STAMP will work with 4,500 beneficiaries in two provinces over a two-year period.

**Smallholder Technology and  
Access to Markets Program  
(USAID-STAMP)**

[www.Zim-STAMP.org](http://www.Zim-STAMP.org)