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## SNAPSHOT

# Business Dream Becomes Reality

**Rural potato producers finally form their own business, thanks to support from USAID-ACCESO.**



*Photo by Fintrac Inc.*

Gavino Perez supervises the potato drying process held on his farm. With improved postharvest practices and formal market linkages, the farmer group is earning more money from their potato crop.

**“With USAID-ACCESO’s support, we were able to connect to a steady, lucrative market.”**

*Gavino Pérez, producer and entrepreneur*

### Telling Our Story

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In the rural villages of Malguara and Chiligatoro, Intibucá, 20 small-scale potato producers shared a dream of one day owning an agribusiness, which would allow them to earn more money for their families. Despite their ambition and perseverance, the idea remained out of their reach for years.

With help from USAID-ACCESO, the group is finally seeing its dream come to fruition. Project specialists are providing agricultural production trainings, technical assistance, and business advice, which are helping the potato producers farm smarter and formalize their business operations.

The group learned how to create a calendarized planting program to ensure continuous product availability. They are now using good agricultural practices such as better seed selection, soil preparation, and proper fertilization application, which have improved both quality and productivity.

“Our potatoes are much bigger and healthier now,” said Gavino Pérez, one of the producers.

After six months of USAID-ACCESO assistance, the farmers are seeing impressive results. Yields have improved by nearly 60 percent.

In addition to receiving technical assistance, the potato producers are also learning basic business skills. With better knowledge of recordkeeping, computer skills, and market information, plus their increased productivity, the farmers are finally able to operate as the business they had dreamed about.

The Association of Lencan Agricultural Producers of Intibucá (APRALIN) formed in January 2012. With USAID-ACCESO’s help, they contacted potential buyers, and thanks to their new skills and high-quality products, they negotiated a deal to become the official supplier to La Carreta, a national potato distributor.

APRALIN meets twice a week to clean and package the potatoes for La Carreta, who is paying them a fixed price, creating a regular and reliable source of income for the group.

The association members are committed to continually improving and expanding their business, and plan to open up membership to additional producers in the area.

USAID-ACCESO is working with other producers in the area, helping them diversify production and access new markets. The project will assist more than 30,000 clients in western Honduras over its four-year lifespan.