

Monthly Update – June 2012

Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program

OVERVIEW

USAID-TAPP is **increasing incomes for smallholder farmers, improving nutrition, and expanding markets** through agricultural innovation and commercialization. The program is part of Feed the Future, the US government's global hunger and food security initiative to break the cycle of hunger and poverty in the developing world. Feed the Future is focusing on the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor (SAGCOT), a region the Tanzanian government has identified as the most conducive for agricultural growth. Working with our partners and the Government of Tanzania, USAID-TAPP is concentrating our efforts on selected crops and regions, especially SAGCOT, to help transform the country's food security.

DEMONSTRATION PLOTS INSPIRE FARMERS TO TRY NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Members of the Oitera Pre-Rural Cooperative Society for small holder farmers had heard about USAID-TAPP's package of recommended technologies and good agricultural practices (GAPs), but they thought it might be too risky to try something new—like farmers around the world, Oitera's cooperative members are hesitant to change the way they grow their crops.

USAID-TAPP organized a site visit to project-sponsored demonstration plots in Arusha where Oitera members could observe the use of these recommended technologies by farmers like themselves growing under similar conditions. Seeing the technology in action inspired the cooperative members to incorporate what they had seen into their own production plan. "Field visits are great to farmers, because one can observe and easily learn how to practice the good agricultural practices," said Augustino Elias, a member of the group.

Now the cooperative plans to use GAPs on their own three-acre onion farm. For example, hybrid seedlings will be transplanted after 40 days of germination onto raised beds using proper spacing to give room for plant growth. The onions' young roots system will also benefit from the application of starter solution for strong development. By implementing these technologies, the cooperative members expect to produce a **30 ton harvest**, which can be sold in local markets for a **profit of approximately Tshs 30 million (\$20,000)**. These profits will be divided among the 24 cooperative members, including seven women farmers.



Photo by Fintrac, Inc.

Demonstration plots like this one become working classrooms, encouraging smallholder farmers to adopt good agricultural practices such as raised beds and starter solution.

NATURERIPE BRINGS NEW MANGO PRODUCTS TO MARKET

USAID-TAPP has been working with program partner NatureRipe Kilimanjaro Ltd. since 2011 to support smallholder production of mangoes and to develop new value-added mango products. With assistance from USAID-TAPP, NatureRipe has supplied 15,306 high-quality mango seedlings to smallholder farmers to improve production around this crop to date. Recently, an additional 20,000 mango seedlings were planted and 5,252 were sold to 270 farmers who were trained by NatureRipe on mango production.

All of this support is geared towards increasing the supply of raw materials for NatureRipe’s new processed mango products. This month, NatureRipe **purchased 4.4 tons of mangos** from beneficiary farmers. These mangoes were used to support the production of **six new value-added mango products**, including mango jam, mixed fruit jam, mango pilipili sauce, mango pickle, mango zodo sauce, and mango juice, all of which are produced in small batches and sold in local supermarkets. USAID-TAPP also supported NatureRipe in the purchase of a larger mango processing machine so that they can increase the volume and quality of these new processed mango products.

MEET OUR NEW PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNER: BUTURI INVESTMENTS LTD

Buturi Investments Ltd. (BIL) has been working with 400 smallholder farmers in the coastal areas south of Dar es Salaam for a number of years, sourcing and exporting sweet potatoes produced on smallholders’ farms. The company also has 300 acres of its own land in Mukuranga that is dedicated to horticulture and food crop production. In 2010, BIL began exporting sweet potatoes to the Middle East, a growing market for fruits and vegetables produced in Tanzania, in two 36-ton consignments. In 2011, BIL exported five containers of sweet potatoes to the Middle East.

The potential for sweet potato export is considerable, but smallholders’ reliance on traditional production methods and varieties results in limited yields and income. To overcome these limitations, USAID-TAPP is now partnering with BIL to introduce GAPs and recommend technologies to **2,400 sweet potato growers** in the coastal towns of Mkuranga, Gezaulole, Kimbiji, Mwandege, Mkuza, and Mvuti to ensure better crop establishment, improved crop growth, and increased yields. This partnership will help expand market opportunities and further secure the livelihoods of sweet potato farming communities in this region. On June 23, USAID-TAPP staff and BIL participated in a discussion hosted by the Helen Keller Foundation on potential advocacy strategies to promote production and consumption of orange-fleshed sweet potato to fight Vitamin A deficiency in Tanzania, Mozambique, Ghana, Burkina Faso, and Nigeria. The strategies are expected to encourage farmers to produce the orange-flesh over the white-flesh variety and improve the sweet potato’s image from a subsistence crop into a healthy food for all.

USAID-TAPP’S NEW PINEAPPLE PRODUCTION INITIATIVE

USAID-TAPP is starting a new initiative to develop the pineapple industry in Tanzania by working with project partner the Tanzania Horticultural Association (TAHA) to improve pineapple productivity through the introduction of new planting material and GAPs. The local market for pineapples is growing. “Prices have tripled over the past three years alone...a pineapple that would have sold for Tshs 300-1,000 now sells for Tshs 500-2,500 depending on its size” (*The Citizen*, March 18, 2012). By introducing GAPs such as selection of improved planting material, correct plant spacing, soil fertilization, integrated pest management, and raised beds, pineapples yields could increase significantly—correct plant spacing alone could increase yields six-fold.

USAID-TAPP will **distribute 75,000 pineapple suckers** to large-scale growers; for each sucker distributed, the growers will repay the project with two suckers each season for three seasons. Over a three-year period a quantity of 20,000 suckers given to a large-scale grower results in 2,260,000 suckers for the farmer, 40,000 suckers for USAID-TAPP to distribute to small-scale growers, and 452,000 pineapples picked.

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“Increased food security through enhanced productivity”

TAPP is a five-year program implemented by Fintrac Inc. in conjunction with TAHA, the Tanzania Horticultural Association. It is designed to increase smallholder farmer incomes through enhanced productivity, crop diversification, and improved market access.

P.O. Box 15035 | Arusha, Tanzania
Tel: 255 (0) 27 2545325

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