

## SUCCESS STORY

# Strawberry farm flourishes with agricultural training

Before 2008, Nuredin Strawberry Farm produced low quality strawberries on one hectare, earning very little at the market. “Poor agronomic practices, soil salinity and low productivity were among the main challenges,” notes Amsalu Bekri, Nuredin’s farm manager.

Today, the farm exports fresh strawberries to Dubai, Djibouti, and Yemen, and employs 110 people, including 93 women. Nuredin also sells fresh produce locally.

USAID-ATEP began supporting the farm in 2008 with training to improve crop management throughout the strawberry production cycle. The program also conducted trials for a local produce program on 1.5 hectares using new hybrid varieties of tomatoes, peppers, onions, cabbage, carrots and lettuce. After seeing the production possibilities of the new vegetables, the farm expanded the production area to 8 hectares.

In October 2009, USAID-ATEP provided the farm with a \$7,415 technology grant to cost-share the purchase of improved planting material and irrigation equipment. The company imported 45,000 seedlings of two new strawberry varieties and expanded the area under drip irrigation to 12 hectares.

“The introduction of the new strawberry varieties through the assistance of USAID-ATEP has changed the history of the farm,” Amsalu said.

In 2009, Nuredin Farm generated export sales of \$29,000, while local fresh produce sales reached \$80,000. Strawberry production has increased by 50 percent to 1,800 kg. The farm is also sending strawberries to a local processing plant to make jam. The plant produces more than 8,000 jars of jam per month, selling more than \$41,000 worth of jam in 2009.

The farm plans to continue expanding strawberry production and invest in a new packhouse, which will generate additional employment. Nuredin Hassan, the farm’s owner has seen his dream come true with the success of his business and he wants to help others prosper as well.

“I have always dreamed of establishing a farm and processing plant,” Hassan said. “We are not only benefiting the local community by creating job opportunities, but also helping them to grow vegetables on their own plots of land,” Hassan said.

USAID-ATEP is a five-year initiative supporting four major industry sectors: horticulture; coffee; hides, skins and leather; and oilseeds and pulses. The program is improving productivity and competitiveness for thousands of Ethiopian farmers, processors and exporters, resulting in increased sales, investments, employment and incomes. Activities in the horticulture sector are expanding and diversifying Ethiopia’s fruits, vegetables and processed foods industries.



Photos by Fintrac Inc.

Women farm workers show off strawberries at Nuredin Farm.



The farm sells strawberries to a processing plant in Addis Ababa to be made into jam.

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— Amsalu Teffera, Farm Manager