



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

Online Version: <https://feedthefuture.gov/article/tanzanian-students-learn-abcs-orange-fleshed-sweet-potatoes>

Tanzanian Students Learn the ABCs of Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potatoes



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Eco Agri Consult promotes orange flesh sweet potatoes at kiosks such as this one at a farmers day in Arusha, Tanzania.

In Tanzania, Feed the Future is working with local partners and companies to increase access to, and provide training in, orange-fleshed sweet potato (OFSP) materials to promote consumption and availability in local communities. Rich in vitamin A, these potatoes bring nutritious benefits to smallholder diets.

One effort with local company Eco Agri Consult has become a model of engagement between clean vine producers, farmer groups, NGOs, OFSP sellers, and consumers. The company produces clean tissue-cultured OFSP planting materials, provides trainings to smallholder farmers, and is conducting an OFSP marketing awareness campaign throughout communities.

With activities in six regions of Tanzania, Eco Agri Consult has been stimulating the demand for tissue-cultured planting materials across the country. OFSP vine multiplication sites have been set up in several communities, where, after four months, they are producing cuttings for dissemination to interested groups and organizations.

Schools are one of the targets for dissemination of vine cuttings. With support from Feed the Future, Eco Agri Consult is teaching students in primary and secondary school about the nutritional value of OFSP. The company shows the students at school how to grow vines in home gardens using simple technology such as net tunnels. The net tunnels protect the plants from insect damage and keep the planting material healthy so that cuttings can continue to be extracted for a long time. Once the vines mature, teachers hand out the vines to the students to take home for their parents to plant at home.

For Eco Agri Consult owner Wilfred Mushobozi, the effort has had wide-ranging impact.

“The schools have been a change agent in increasing awareness in homes. The net tunnels have been used to ensure the availability of clean planting materials for the community, and many more people have been reached through demonstration plots and community training.”

In some communities, there is confusion about the differences between OFSP and the more common white-fleshed sweet potato. With assistance from Feed the Future, Eco Agri Consult has boosted market demand through a campaign that clearly brands OFSP with a bold, bright logo on retail kiosks and umbrellas used by local market vendors. The promotion of OFSP is part of a focused effort to synchronize growing consumer interest with coordinated field production to meet market needs.

Thanks to Feed the Future, demand for OFSP has increased in recent years, and with this new market opportunity, farmers' incomes have improved as well.