



## Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

Online Version: <https://feedthefuture.gov/article/american-innovators-bring-agricultural-technologies-global-markets>

# American Innovators Bring Agricultural Technologies to Global Markets



Fintrac Inc.

EthioChicken, the poultry company Flow Equity invested in, sells its chicks through rural sales agents like this one. The agents buy day-old chicks from EthioChicken, raise them to pullet stage, and then sell them to farmers.

America is known for its agricultural productivity. In 2015, it exported more than \$133 billion dollars-worth of agricultural products, yet farm and ranch families comprise just 2 percent of the U.S. population. According to the American Farm Bureau Federation, U.S. farmers today produce 262 percent more food with fewer inputs than in 1950. What accounts for this incredible rise in productivity? Innovation.

American ingenuity has produced some of the most important agricultural technologies in history, including John Deere's steel plow, mechanical reapers and combine harvesters. U.S. companies and researchers continue to produce innovations in agricultural manufacturing and in seed, fertilizer, precision agriculture and drone technologies. As they do so, U.S. companies, NGOs and the U.S. Government are helping these products reach markets around the world.

Five hundred million smallholder farmers in the world need products like these to sustainably increase their productivity and improve food security and nutrition for their families and communities. That's why Feed the Future [Partnering for Innovation](#), a U.S. Agency for International Development program, helps companies commercialize agricultural innovations in smallholder markets. The program partners with U.S.-based companies and organizations to increase smallholders' access to their technology and innovations.

One of those companies is **Moana Technologies**, a Hawaii-based firm that developed a breed of disease-free shrimp. The biotechnology company then [collaborated](#) with Partnering for Innovation and MKA Hatchery in Bangladesh to introduce this new variety of shrimp to the country. More than 1 million Bangladeshis are involved in the shrimp sector, yet shrimp farmers have traditionally relied on disease-prone wild shrimp taken from the Bay of Bengal. Through this partnership, Moana and MKA Hatchery built a new market for the disease-free shrimp and, as of September 2016, MKA Hatchery had sold 150 million of these shrimp to 3,000 farmers in Bangladesh.

**Store It Cold**, a Denver-based company, was born out of one American farmer's need for affordable cold storage for his produce. When Ron Khosla, a farmer in upstate New York, found that he could not afford a walk-in cooler to prevent his produce from spoiling, he decided to create a solution. He designed and brought to market the **CoolBot**, a small device that, when used along with an insulated room and standard air conditioning unit, creates a cold storage unit by lowering and regulating the room's temperature to just above freezing. With Partnering for Innovation's support, Store It Cold is introducing the CoolBot to Central America, where companies that market fruit, vegetables and other fresh products in the region and for export to the United States often lack access to reliable and affordable cold storage.

**Flow Equity**, a New York-based **firm** working with Partnering for Innovation, is investing in a poultry company in Ethiopia, EthioChicken. EthioChicken has introduced poultry breeds that grow faster and produce more eggs than local breeds. In the first year and a half of its partnership with Partnering for Innovation and Flow Equity, EthioChicken has already sold 3.2 million chicks to nearly 330,000 small-scale farmers, helping improve family nutrition and earnings from the sale of chickens and eggs.

Maryland-based **Tolaro Global** is investing in the first cashew processing and packaging facility in the West African country of Benin, which produces and exports a large quantity of raw cashews. With support from Partnering for Innovation, Tolaro's **Benin facility** will supply American and European grocery stores with high-quality salted and roasted cashews, while also providing employment and income opportunities for 3,200 small-scale cashew farmers and employees working in value-addition processing. It will also be working with cashew growers to get Fair Trade and organic certification, which will increase the price farmers get for their cashews. Additionally, Tolaro has developed a profit-sharing model whereby its farmer suppliers receive a percentage of the company's profit—a new model for the cashew industry and for Benin. This investment is helping connect Benin's farmers to the global cashew market while supplying American consumers with high-quality cashews.

Agricultural innovations like these, born out of American ingenuity, are helping drive economic growth in smallholder markets through increased yields, productivity and incomes. By scaling technologies and integrating new markets, Feed the Future is helping both U.S.-based companies and smallholder farmers thrive across the world.