



**WINROCK**  
INTERNATIONAL

With Volunteer Assistance  
Women's Cooperative Creates  
Nepal's First Organic Center

# With Volunteer Assistance Women's Cooperative Creates Nepal's First Organic Center

The Panchakanaya Agriculture Cooperative Ltd., an exclusively women's organization, has made history by forming Nepal's first organic produce center.

Women from Thaligaun, a village only 11 kilometers from Kathmandu yet 25 minutes from the nearest road, established the cooperative in early 2004. Members were concerned about food safety and family health. They began growing organic



Women farmers carry produce to market.

vegetables with support from the local District Agriculture Development Office. Members were convinced of the positive health and financial advantages of organic farming. Their assumptions were correct.

The benefits of organic farming in Nepal are far reaching—for jobs, income and nutrition. The market price for organic produce is 25-percent higher than the cost of premium fruits and vegetables. Community members endorsed creation of the organic zone created for all products, including livestock, and received technical assistance in organic farming, certification and marketing provided by the Farmer-to-Farmer Program/Nepal.



Farmer-to-Farmer staff, cooperative and community members, and volunteer Nathan McClintock gather following an organic production training session.

The cooperative constructed a 1 kilometer agricultural road with funding from the government and the contribution of land and labor from the community. The road enables rural farmers to transport

**Program Unit:**  
Enterprise & Agriculture

**Country:**  
Nepal

**Funding:**  
U.S. Agency for  
International Development

goods to the organic center and then on to market.

Organic certification was critical. Volunteer Samuel Welsch, president of US-based international certification agency *OneCert*, assisted in developing an Internal Control System manual for the cooperative. The cooperative now keeps records to comply with formal certification requirements.

The cooperative members have succeeded in gradually increasing sales of organic products, and in the past year achieved a nearly 30-percent gain. Net income for the same period increased by \$4,000.

The Farmer-to-Farmer Program helped the cooperative establish linkages with the National Cooperative Development Board and the Department of Agriculture. It received credit from NCDB to construct a collection center for village produce. Similarly, a presentation by volunteer Nathan McClintock, as requested by the Department of Agriculture, led to the Director General taking note of the volunteer recommendations for future programs, and pledging support to the Panchakanya Cooperative Society.



Women cooperative members met with Winrock staff member Demetria Arvanitis in 2004 to begin a formal relationship with the Farmer-to-Farmer program.



[www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov)



[www.winrock.org](http://www.winrock.org)

Arkansas Office:  
2101 Riverfront Drive  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72202-1748, USA  
Telephone: 501.280.3000  
Fax: 501.280.3090

Washington DC Office:  
1621 N. Kent Street, Suite 1200  
Telephone: 703.525.9430  
Fax: 703.525.1744

E-Mail: [information@winrock.org](mailto:information@winrock.org)