



## SUCCESS STORY

### Tomato Plus Brings Profit

#### USAID Improves Rural Incomes



Farmer sell tomato in the market

*During the 2004-2005 growing season, the **950 farmers** participating in AgFin+ activities planted over **230 hectares** of tomatoes. Through the help of Local Service Providers (LSPs), the farmers increased their tomato yield an average of **10.3 tons per hectare** and generated more than **\$300,000** in additional income for participating farmers.*

*AgFin+ is a three-year initiative designed by USAID to increase rural incomes by developing profitable agricultural product value chains in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan.*

USAID's AgFin+ Project works to strengthen agricultural product value chains in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. In Kyrgyzstan, where land reform has progressed furthest, the land and assets of large state and collective farms were parcelled out among rural residents and farm employees. In the south, where population density is high, the average land share per person is .04 to .2 hectares.

It has been ten years since the land reforms began in earnest, and the farm sector has changed significantly in southern Kyrgyzstan. With such small plots of land, many rural households have transitioned out of the traditional field crops of wheat and cotton, and into higher value horticulture crops such as tomatoes. Second, the average yields of most crops have decreased, mainly due to the absence of agricultural knowledge among "new owners".

AgFin+ is helping rural communities through the transition by strengthening Local Service Providers (LSPs) that operate within the tomato value chain. This group of activities is known as Tomato Plus. AgFin+ has subcontracted the Training and Extension Service (TES) in Osh and the Rural Advisory Service (RAS) in Jalal Abad to train farmers in group formation, farm economics, tomato production technology, seedling production, business planning, and delivery contracts.

Together, TES and RAS have organized 950 tomato farmers into groups for training, bulk purchase of inputs, and bulk marketing. As a result, tomato farmers bought seeds and fertilizer for over **1.2 million Som (\$30,000)**, and bulk purchases have yielded a **20% discount** in the price of inputs.

Tomato buyers have expressed an interest in purchasing even more tomatoes next year. In 2006, Agfin+ will train farmers to process **dried tomatoes for export markets**, providing yet another market linkage for tomato growers.