

# Haitian Farmers Increase Agriculture Productivity through Support of U.S. Government

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Haitian farmers experienced dramatic increases in crop yields this year thanks to an innovative program led by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented in partnership with the Government of Haiti. The increase will help boost incomes of small farmers and promote sustainability of the Haitian agriculture sector.

According to data provided by USAID, Haitian farmers participating in the [Watershed Initiative for National Natural Environmental Resources \(WINNER\)](#) increased their production of food overall by 75 percent in the Spring 2010 planting season. This includes an average increase of 139 percent for sorghum, 118 percent for corn, 100 percent for beans, and 18 percent for potatoes. To achieve these gains, farmers worked with advisers who provided planting and fertilization advice, as well as different seed mixes.

Haitian agricultural production, processing, and marketing have been stagnant or declining for 50 years. Sixty percent of Haitians are employed in agriculture, but still, 23 percent of all imports into Haiti are food.

USAID Assistant Administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean Mark Feierstein announced the increased agriculture yields to a [group of farmers at the Wynne Farm in Haiti](#).

“This is encouraging news for a country that has experienced declining agricultural production in recent years, and suffered one of the largest natural disasters in recent history just nine months ago,” said Feierstein. “It demonstrates that with the right techniques and proper inputs, Haiti can increase agricultural productivity and increase income for farmers. USAID will continue to support Haitian farmers and the Government by investing in Haiti’s agricultural.”

Funded by USAID, WINNER is a five-year, \$126 million dollar project to build Haiti’s agricultural infrastructure, capacity, and productivity in a sustainable way. WINNER aims to increase agriculture productivity through a number of activities including: strengthening farmer associations, training farmers and supplying them with vital supplies (seeds, fertilizers, credit, and tools), widening rivers, and constructing dams. To achieve these goals, WINNER utilizes a network of over 275 farmers associations working in conjunction with local government officials, NGOs, and other entities. WINNER is implemented by DC-based contractor, Chemonics, Inc.

Lyonel Valbrun, the Director General for the Haitian Government’s Ministry of Agriculture, expressed appreciation for USAID’s support to Haiti’s agricultural sector.

"This project supports the priorities of the Haitian Government to increase our national production and to train our farmers," said Valbrun.

WINNER is one of several U.S. government-sponsored projects underway in Haiti that promote food security by boosting Haitian incomes – in this case through agricultural productivity.

U.S. Ambassador to Haiti Kenneth Merten said, "The U.S. government is committed to providing concentrated and transformative support to the Haitian agricultural sector, given its importance to the Haitian economy, so that Haitian farmers become more productive and more prosperous."