

TACTIC REPORT

Advancing nutrition with a market-based model.

Producers of the highly nutritious Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato are making gains in West Africa through diversified markets.



Nutrition in Burkina Faso: In 2010, one quarter of children under five years old were malnourished, including a deficiency in Vitamin A which is an important nutrient that prevents blindness. Over the last decade various strategies have been adopted to fight Vitamin A deficiency (VAD) including: targeted Vitamin A supplements given to the most vulnerable groups (children under five, postpartum women, and primary school students); fortification of industrially-produced cooking oils; and dietary diversification, such as the production and consumption of food rich in Vitamin A like the Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato (OFSP).

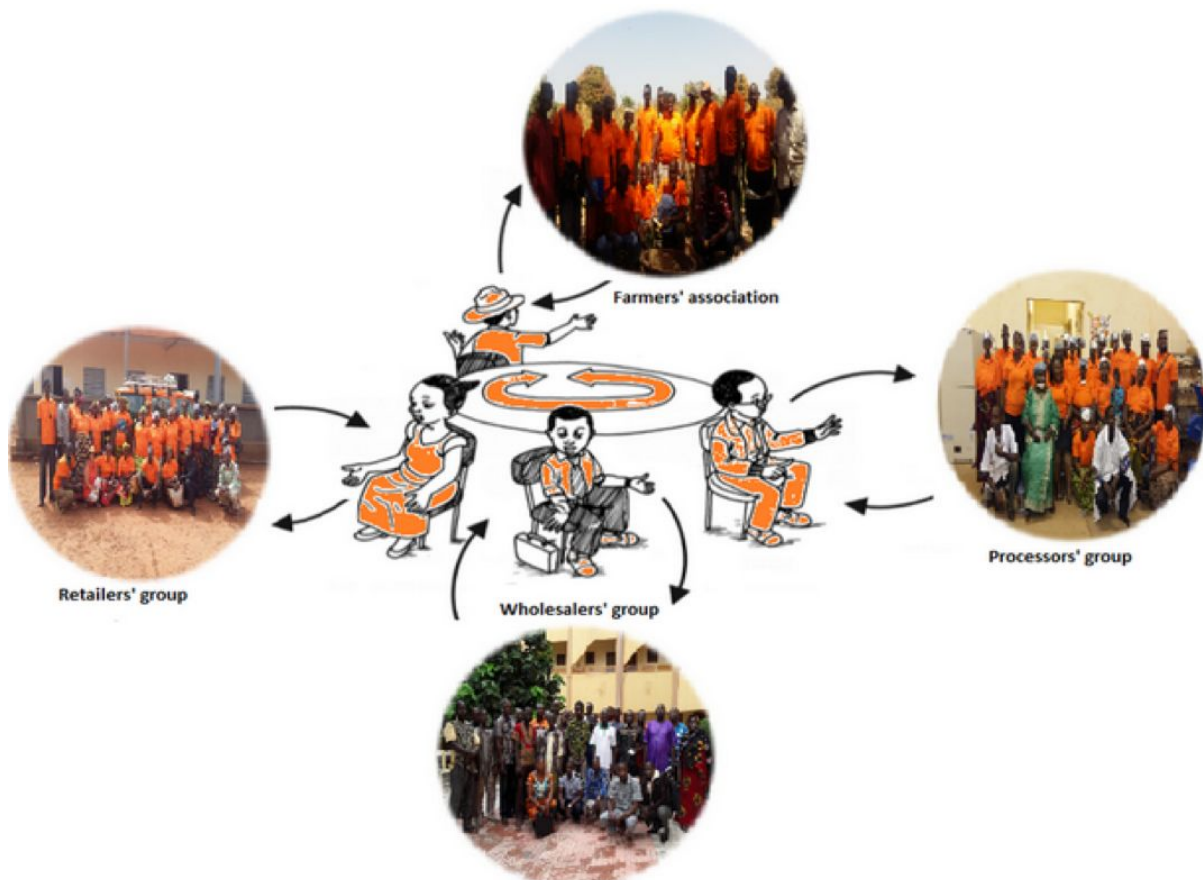
Project Background

In partnership with the International Potato Center (CIP) and National Institute for Environment and Agriculture Research (INERA), iDE leveraged a market-based model to promote the production and consumption of the Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato. Building a value chain of the suppliers, retailers, processors, and customers, the Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato potential reaches beyond improving nutrition to also increase income and livelihood opportunities for all market actors involved.

Intervention

In 2014, iDE conducted a market and value chain analysis to understand the existing sweet potato production and market system in Burkina Faso. The team found that there was room in the existing market to introduce a new nutrient-dense variety of sweet potato. iDE adopted a marketing strategy to promote diverse uses of the potato and its high nutrient contents through local radio, events, flyers, posters, branded T-shirts, and umbrellas. iDE staff trained sweet potato processors to transform the raw good into consumer-friendly products with high market potential such as cakes, cookies, couscous, and infant food mixes. Additionally, the team explored more formal markets for the sweet potato such as school feeding programs, daycare centers, and restaurants.

The Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato Value Chain



Currently, the Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato is being successfully marketed in five rural communities in the province of Kénédougou. The value chain built in these communities includes farmers' associations, processors, retailers, and wholesalers' groups. The long-term goal is to penetrate urban markets in Bobo-Dioulasso and Ouagadougou. The high population density combined with the greater spending power of residents in these cities provides an opportunity for retailers, processors, and farmers to reach more customers and grow their businesses.



“Now that we can easily get OFSP roots for processing, my objective is to process up to 10 tons per year because the products are starting to be known and the demand is increasing.”

Korotimi Traoré,
Sweet Potato Processor

Outcome

- Four Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato varieties are marketed in the targeted communities.
- 50 hectares of farmland and 150 producers are producing Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato in the targeted communities.
- An Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato network of 30 retailers, 25 wholesalers, 10 processors, and a number of local food vendors provides farmers with a variety of buyers for their crop.
- Value chain platform meetings were conducted, strengthening relationships between key market actors.
- Demand for Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato continues to increase in targeted areas. People in these communities are now aware of the nutritional benefits of the sweet potato.
- Farmer's household consumption of Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato has also increased.

Lessons Learned

- Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato's market potential in Burkina Faso continues to grow as consumers become more knowledgeable and demand increases.
- Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato is a high value crop that consumers are willing to pay more for in the market. The potential income gains for farmers and retailers are greater with this variety than other sweet potatoes.
- Further research is needed to adapt the DIT technology year round vine multiplication.
- Linking farmers directly with retailers using mobile money to facilitate transactions can increase Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato sales.
- To ensure that a healthy balance of supply and demand flows between market actors, a value chain platform is needed.
- Farmers are willing to produce Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato if they can see the market demand and the production contributes to the farmer's overall business goals.
- Processed products (couscous, dèguè, infant food mixes) made with Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato are valuable products in the marketplace.

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