



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

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Dairy Cooperatives Give Farmers a Competitive Edge in Kenya

Joseph Maina is one of the 700 members of the Kitiri Dairy Farmers Cooperative Society. He is a dairy farmer from Kinangop, Nyandarua County, and has worked closely with the USAID/Kenya Dairy Sector Competitiveness Program (KDSCP) since 2008.

Maina and his wife Beth Wangari invested in dairy farming to supplement their income. They have built a zero grazing unit and a feeds store, including a hay barn on their four-acre farm. Since then, milk production has doubled from 20 liters to over 50 liters a day. Zero grazing is a system of feeding cattle or other livestock, in which freshly cut forage is brought daily to animals that are permanently housed, instead of being allowed to graze.

Pleased with the results that he had achieved by applying the knowledge he had received from the USAID/Kenya Dairy Sector Competitiveness Program, Maina began helping other farmers from his area increase their milk production. The Kitiri Dairy Farmers Cooperative Society has since tripled its milk production from 2,000 liters a day, to 6,000 liters a day.

The USAID/Kenya Dairy Sector Competitiveness Program helps small-scale farmers organize themselves into dairy cooperatives in order to increase their bargaining leverage and incomes. A hundred and thirty five dairy cooperative societies have benefitted from the KDSCP program and Kitiri Dairy Farmers Cooperative Society is one of them. The Program also ensures that Kenyan milk meets domestic and international quality standards. Farmers that participate in this program are educated on ways to increase their milk productivity, by using high-quality formulated feeds and productivity-enhancing technologies like artificial insemination, to help them improve the quality of their herd.

Maina encourages members of the Kitiri Dairy Farmers Cooperative Society to participate in capacity building opportunities that are facilitated jointly with the KDSCP program. One such opportunity is the organized farmer-to-farmer exchange visits called the farmer field schools. The farmer field schools enables farmers to learn better farming practices while visiting farms that are already working with the KDSCP program.

Maina expects to boost his efforts in helping the members of the Kitiri Dairy Farmers Cooperative Society through; competitions organized between individual farmers and also between the various farmer field schools. His farm is one of the demonstration farms and is to be used as a farmer field school by the KDSCP program.

This story originally [appeared](#) on the USAID Mission Kenya website.