



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

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In Tajikistan, Feed the Future Trains Women to Take Charge of Nutrition



Feed the Future Tajikistan

Maryam Hasanova shows some of her harvest of quince, a nutrient-rich crop she grows on her household plot.

Maryam Hasanova lives with her four children in southern Tajikistan. Like most women in her village, she has a husband who is out of the country. He works in Russia and sends money back home. To help stretch her husband's income, Hasanova worked in the family's vegetable garden in the hopes of providing her family with enough food. However, like many women in Tajikistan whose access to farming resources and information is limited, she was unfamiliar with basic farming techniques, leaving her family with meager harvests and a higher risk of undernutrition.

Then, Hasanova participated in a Feed the Future-funded training which helped turn her family's hopes around. The training is part of a project that works to improve the health and nutrition of mothers and children in half of the districts of Tajikistan's poorest province, Khatlon, where Hasanova lives. Through it, Hasanova learned about basic gardening, crop disease and pest management, techniques she could use to increase her production of nutrient-rich vegetables and fruits at home. In 2016, 14,760 people—over 11,000 of them women—participated in the training.

Feed the Future also teaches people in Khatlon, such as mothers like Hasanova, the value of foods that are rich in vitamin A, iron, zinc, and animal proteins. Eating more of these kinds of foods is vital to many families in Tajikistan, which has Central Asia's highest rate of chronic malnutrition and where stunting affects 26 percent of children under 5. To reduce these rates, Feed the Future helps families access more nutrient-dense foods.

Today, Hasanova uses farming techniques like crop rotation, fertilization and irrigation on the 10,000-square-foot plot she cultivates next to her home. She prepares natural pesticides with pepper, onion, garlic and a soap solution, and she uses fertilizer to increase nutrients in the soil. In addition to having good food to feed her children, Hasanova grew enough this year to have potatoes, tomatoes and plums left over to sell. Her surplus earned her \$250, a welcome sum that will help to cover other household expenses, including purchasing nutritious foods like milk, yogurt and eggs. Hasanova also preserved sweet peppers and tomatoes, and made plum, apricot, cherry and mulberry juices for her family to drink during the winter.

Hasanova has been impressed by the increased yield and quality of vegetables and fruits she's produced in her garden. She attributes this success to the training she received from Feed the Future. "Because I followed the advice from Feed the Future, I was able to increase agriculture production on my plot," she said.

Today, Hasanova serves as a volunteer community health educator with the Feed the Future project. She provides information and advice to her neighbors about dietary diversity, proper prenatal care, the nutritional needs of pregnant women and small children, as well as details about Feed the Future's work to improve nutrition-sensitive agriculture, hygiene and sanitation. Hasanova is one of nearly 1,400 community health educators in this project—95 percent of whom are women. Through their work, these women are changing the nutritional prospects of their province for the next generation.