



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

Online Version: <https://www.feedthefuture.gov/article/senegal-cooking-wild-ingredients-may-help-improve-household-nutrition-outcomes>

In Senegal, Cooking with Wild Ingredients May Help Improve Household Nutrition Outcomes



USAID/Senegal

Community nutrition volunteer Boubacar Sow teaches women the nutritional value of grains indigenous to Senegal under Feed the Future's agro-nutrition program.

Feed the Future Senegal is working with rural women and men to boost household nutrition and cultivate better diets. Through a training program in the Kédougou region, Feed the Future has mobilized 147 community nutrition volunteers to help guide families in how to diversify their diets and use wild ingredients to fortify traditional dishes in rural households.

In Senegal, where women are typically responsible for preparing family meals, one of the best ways to improve nutrition is to integrate vegetables, fruits, and wild-growing foods into diets presently dominated by locally-farmed grains like rice, millet, and corn. In Senegal, these predominant cereal crops have driven some other foods out of style: wild fruits such as *madd* and *ditakh*; West Africa's oldest cereal, *fonio*; and *niebbe*, a traditional blend of beans, tomatoes, onions, and spices, are all local specialties.

"These are foods that my mother used to prepare when I was a young boy," says Boubacar Sow, a nutrition volunteer in the region. "To us, they were delicious! But over time these things that grow in the forest became known as 'poor people food' and people shunned them in favor of rice or millet. We want women to understand that they are nutritious, and valuable for their babies' health."

As in other Feed the Future focus countries, agriculture and nutrition interventions in Senegal's most undernourished rural populations have a strong focus on women's role in food security. A group of community nutrition volunteers trained by Feed the Future is working in the Kédougou region to collect diet diversity information on wild foods gathered by women and children. This data will be used by the National Institute of Food Technology, which is working with USAID in Senegal to test these foods and measure their potential contribution to a nutritional diet. This will allow the Institute to formulate diet recommendations that can be locally disseminated by the nutrition volunteers.

Through a variety of agriculture and nutrition programs, Feed the Future Senegal aims to reach more than 188,000 children with services to improve nutritional outcomes and prevent stunting and child mortality.