



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

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An Eggplant-Sized Difference

Mohammed Azad has been involved with eggplant production since 1998, when he joined his father in vegetable farming after finishing eighth grade near Hurgati, Jessore, in southwestern Bangladesh.

In 2006, the then-22-year-old Azad took over management of his father's farm, growing eggplant and other seasonal vegetables on his quarter-hectare plot (about half the size of an American football field). Eggplant is one of the crops most prized by smallholder farmers in Bangladesh, and it is the second most commonly grown vegetable in the south, where demand is high.

But Azad's crops—like those of many Bangladeshi farmers—suffered from pest attacks, poor yields and high production costs. Each year, around 30 percent of his produce was ruined.

With two families to support—his own wife and child, as well as his parents and siblings—Azad nearly gave up on the lucrative but fickle cash crop. But with USAID's help, he was able to take advantage of several agricultural technology initiatives and turn his fortunes around.

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