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Better Veggies Yield Bigger Profits



Photo: CNFA

As Ukrainian farmers gained ownership of former state-owned cooperatives, they realized how difficult it is to assume responsibility for the agronomic and business decisions required to succeed in private, commercial agriculture. In response, USAID's Farmer-to-Farmer program brought volunteer farmers and experts from the U.S. to help Ukrainian farmers from Zaporizhya improve both their vegetable production and marketing efforts. A total of 14 American volunteers worked with three groups of farmers in

Peter Ferretti, left, a horticulture expert from Pennsylvania, volunteered for three weeks with farmers in the Zaporizhya region to help them improve vegetable production and business skills. The farmers now sell their products at higher prices to more lucrative markets.

the Zaporizhya region over the course of two years. They shared skills in vegetable production, pest control, and marketing and business planning with their Ukrainian counterparts.

The production training helped the farmers increase both crop yields and quality, while marketing assistance helped them obtain optimum prices and establish sustainable commercial relationships with reliable buyers such as supermarkets and processors. Increased sales revenues brought greater profits for the farmers, who in turn created new jobs and raised the salaries of their employees.

A total of 207 farmers and farm workers increased their incomes by almost 75 percent—together totaling more than \$460,000—over the two-year life of the project. By bringing the knowledge and goodwill of US agribusiness experts directly to their counterparts, USAID is helping improve the businesses and lives of farmers in Ukraine.