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MOZAMBIQUE

PHOTO & CAPTION

VitaGoat Helps Improve Nutrition



Photo: USAID/Melissa Thompson

Rural entrepreneur Rita Lazaro makes soy milk at home with a VitaGoat machine, which can produce eight gallons (30 liters) of the nutritious product an hour.

Rita Lazaro is a successful businesswoman in Munhinga in central Mozambique's Manica Province, employing three people to help press sesame and sunflower oil. In 2004, USAID installed a VitaGoat food-processing system in Rita's compound and chose her to lead a pilot enterprise project using VitaGoat to make soy milk and other high-nutrition products as part of an effort to improve food security in Mozambique. Now, with USAID support, Rita works with more than 150 families, teaching them improved agriculture and nutrition practices.

Requiring no electricity, VitaGoat is specifically designed for conditions in rural Africa. To make soy milk with VitaGoat, soaked soybeans first are ground using a grinder powered by a stationary bicycle. The beans then are mixed with water and put in a stainless-steel pressure cooker heated by a wood-fired steam boiler. Finally, the product is filtered using a manual press.

VitaGoat gives small-scale producers with limited resources the opportunity to make eight gallons (30 liters) of soy milk and yogurt an hour, as well as other value-added products including peanut butter, tomato

juice and ground coffee.

Rita's machine works well, but milk distribution has been hampered by the fact that the product spoils after 24 hours. So Rita and USAID are now researching what type of packaging will provide longer life for the milk, so that it can be sold and used to fight malnutrition in Mozambique.