

Insights from the Field



An OFSP Success Story in Sofala, Mozambique

When you talk about Orange-Fleshed Sweetpotato (OFSP) with farmers and producers in the Sofala region of Mozambique the name José N'teia is sure to come up.

A small agricultural producer, José, who lives in the small village of Cherezi with his three wives and nine children, is a notable OFSP success story. He has been producing high quality OFSP since 2011.

José first became involved in OFSP through a government agricultural extension worker in his village: "The first person who told me about OFSP and CIP was an government extension worker in my village. Then I got the vines and began to multiply them. Later, I was visited by a CIP agronomist who helped me to develop my OFSP production and knowledge."

During the 2011-12 season, José received four OFSP varieties from the International Potato Center (CIP). This allowed him to establish a small parcel of land for OFSP multiplication, from which he successfully produced enough vines to distribute to 650 families in the province. A very impressive result for the first year!

In return for such a successful distribution, José received 16,500.00 (\$USD 590) in compensation from CIP and he used this funding to invest further in OFSP production with the purchase of 2 ha of land.

The second season (2012-13) saw José expand to



Following a severe drought and then flooding in Southern and Central Mozambique in 2009–2011, the International Potato Center (CIP), at the request of the Mozambique Government, developed a response strategy for disseminating new varieties of Orange-Fleshed Sweetpotatoes (OFSP). The Office of United States Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) provided financial support to help families recover from disaster and simultaneously improve their vitamin A intake.

Working closely with government extension personnel, a two-year effort to mitigate the impact of disasters in 5 provinces of Mozambique succeeded in getting new drought-tolerant orange-fleshed sweetpotato varieties distributed to over 134,000 households.



growing a total of seven varieties and producing a total of 1 ha of vines. This resulted in José successfully distributing to 2,514 families and receiving 75,420.00 Mt (\$USD 2,694) in compensation from CIP.

With this new injection of funds, José purchased a motorcycle, 24 sheets of zinc and 3 ha of land. The money also allowed him to purchase a bike for his daughter so that she was able to travel to a better school in the region.

José has been widely recognized for his agricultural work in the region. He receives many visits from local dignitaries including the Deputy Environment Minister and members of the Assembly of the Republic. Another result of his success is that José has become the key source for OFSP vines in the region. Government extensionists usually purchase OFSP vines from José, then use state money to establish Decentralised Vine Multipliers (DVMs) and then engage in dissemination of the OFSP vines in their respective areas. José also regularly works to train and establish OFSP production with students from the local area.

José has many plans for the future. One such plan is his hope to establish an irrigation system on his farm. Currently, all OFSP vines are produced using by filling a watering can with water from the well and watering by hand; so an irrigation system would help Jose to continue to grow throughout the dry season. Jose was lucky enough to be one

of the beneficiaries of a subsidized irrigation kit from CIP in the 2nd year of the project and will be utilising this new tool in the next round of production.

José involves his family in every aspect of OSFP production and sales and believes this is a powerful tool which has helped him succeed. His family know the names of all the varieties that they grow and can tell you about their key traits and habits. This family involvement is crucial and provides José with the support that he needs to establish and grow his business. As José says "Success comes firstly from working closely with the local extension worker and the CIP agronomist. And secondly, through support and involvement from my family. My success so far has encouraged me to work even harder with my family."

José is thrilled at his success as an OFSP grower although he knows only too well that this success has only come through hard work by him and his family. José is looking towards a bright future as he expands his OFSP production and distribution and embraces new opportunities that arise in the OFSP market.



For more details about the International Potato Center please visit our website at: www.cipotato.org. For further details about CIPs sweetpotato projects and all aspects of sweetpotato production and utilization in Sub Saharan Africa please visit: <http://sweetpotatoknowledge.org>. This story was collected by Antonio Zaqueu and edited by Sara Quinn.