



# FAO partnerships

working for the Sustainable Development Goals

## ACCESS TO NEW MARKET OPPORTUNITIES



**In collaboration with  
Fertitecnica Colfiorito Srl**  
the Italian market leader for

pulses, cereals and seeds, with a portfolio that ranges from traditional products to quick-cooking recipes, ready meals and snacks



### Timeframe

2017–2020



### Beneficiaries

Family farmers organized in cooperatives



### Geographical coverage

Global, with first pilot in Bolivia

### Contributing to:



## CHALLENGE

Smallholder farmers are often unable to integrate into rapidly changing national and international markets, due to factors ranging from the small scale of their production, to high transaction costs involved in reaching distant markets and inability to comply with requirements that relate to volume, quality, and timely delivery expected by modern agricultural value chains. As a result, many small farmers' incomes remain volatile and limited in size, a problem, which occurs across commodities and countries.

## THE PARTNERSHIP

In an effort to identify new market opportunities for smallholder farmers and cooperatives, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) partnered with Fertitecnica Colfiorito Srl, an Italian market leader in pulses. The partnership aims to support small family farmers' cooperatives in the Southern hemisphere by facilitating access to European pulses markets, relying upon Fertitecnica's distribution network, knowledge of the market, and competence about products and best practices.

Of the approximately 600 million farms in the world, more than 90 percent are run by an individual or a family and 70 percent are less than 1 hectare in size (FAO, 2019).

With limited or no access to market information, many smallholders continue to sell their products at the farm gate or village markets, where profitability and growth potential are limited.



Other initiatives foreseen by the agreement include the design and development of a free downloadable application aimed at educating children on the nutritional value of pulses, scholarships to support research studies on pulses, innovation in mixes of pulses with nutritional benefits, new pulses products and new ways of consumption that contribute to more diverse, healthier diets.

## ACTIVITIES

FAO assisted in identifying participating cooperatives, drawing on the Organization's network of decentralized offices and the expertise of its staff. Fertitecnica Colfiorito's chief agronomist, in collaboration with FAO experts, conducted technical visits to cooperatives in selected countries to assess their capacity to provide innovative, high-quality products, to provide guidance on best practices and market requirements, and to determine the potential value of their products in the markets where Fertitecnica Colfiorito is present.

The partnership has enabled the co-operatives to obtain organic certification where needed, with FAO providing support to Fertitecnica in assessing the quality of the product and the capacity of the co-operatives to export. The partnership agreement also foresees providing support to the cooperatives through capacity development in the areas where they work, as well as

bringing smallholder farmers to be trained in innovative pulses techniques in Colfiorito, Italy.

The assessment process led to the selection of the first cooperative – the Bolivian [National Association of Quinoa Producers ANAPQUI](#) – involved in the pilot initiative. The effort to promote quinoa is part of a broader FAO strategy to promote traditional foods as a way to combat hunger, promote healthy eating and work towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Bolivian Quinoa Real produced through the partnership has been sold in Italy since June 2019.

## PRELIMINARY RESULTS

The partnership has created a new product line of pulses and seeds sourced from small farmers' cooperatives in developing countries. These products are packed and sold as part of the Colfiorito brand, and carry a specific label that certifies the origin of the products and helps the cooperatives to gain recognition in the European markets. The line was launched at Tutto Food in Milan, in May 2019, through FAO's first cause-related marketing campaign.

**We are very grateful to Fertitecnica Colfiorito for enabling us to export quinoa in Europe. Thanks to this partnership we could access to new markets and get new labels that will allow us to increase our production**

Gustavo Barientos, CEO ANAPQUI



## SUSTAINABILITY

The partnership supports small farmers' cooperatives in developing entrepreneurial skills, helps the cooperatives to compete more effectively, and enhances the capacity of farmers to produce products using innovative pulses techniques. Fertitecnica Colfiorito commits not only to setting the purchase price for these products above the market price, but also to investing profits from the sales back into the participating cooperatives. This re-investment enables more producers to obtain organic certifications in the near future, in order to increase the number of cooperatives who are eligible to export.

## References

FAO. 2019. *Putting family farmers at the centre to achieve the SDGs*. Rome. (also available at [www.fao.org/3/ca4532en/ca4532en.pdf](http://www.fao.org/3/ca4532en/ca4532en.pdf)).

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