



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**TAJIKISTAN**

## SUCCESS STORY

# Greenhouses Can Provide Double Benefit

**USAID gives mountain villagers in Tajikistan a more nutritious diet as well as improved economic conditions**



*Ahtam Mahmadaminov is proud of his new constructed greenhouse and the fresh vegetables it provides.*

*“People found the greenhouses very useful for our mountainous village. We are thankful to USAID and Mercy Corps for supporting people who live in rural places” says Ahtam.*

At first skeptical about the greenhouses provided through USAID's Single Year Assistance Program, Ahtam Mahmadaminov, now knows that people in his mountainous village can produce cucumbers and tomatoes using “new” greenhouse technology.

The USAID-funded program with Mercy Corps started its activities in the Rasht Valley in 2009, teaching people like Ahtam how to grow vegetables in greenhouses for early harvesting. The first time he saw his neighbor's greenhouse, he was surprised, “I thought that it was impossible to grow cucumbers and tomatoes in early spring in our climate, high in the mountains. But seeing my neighbor's greenhouse harvest encouraged me to build one”.

Ahtam's village is one of the more densely-populated villages in the area. It is located 8,200 feet above sea level and has a population of 8,700. The nearest market is 4.9 miles away and opens only on Sunday. The larger, central market is 40 miles away. Winters last five months and spring and summer seasons are short with considerable rainfall. Villagers' diets do not always contain vegetables because of the harsh weather, poor infrastructure, and a lack of financial resources. They could never grow vegetables or even potatoes earlier than June because of the late snow melt and constant spring rains.

This year, in early spring, with the support of Juma Saidaliev, a program volunteer, Ahtam constructed a greenhouse in hopes of providing his extended family of 24 with fresh vegetables. He learned the technology of growing vegetables in the greenhouse and has produced potato seedlings three times, and grown cucumbers and tomatoes as well. “I received a double benefit from the greenhouse: first, my family has cucumbers and tomatoes whenever they want; second, I will get 1,100 pounds of good potato seeds from the seedlings I produced, which I can sell for \$0.31 per pound or plant myself. This means I should have \$341 to buy other household needs.” Next year, Ahtam plans to build an even bigger greenhouse for cucumbers and tomatoes and another to experiment with growing more nutritious vegetables like turnips, carrots, and red beets.