

AMERICAN SAMOA  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

POINT OF CONTACT  
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USDA AMS AGREEMENT NUMBER  
12-25-B-1654

REVISED FINAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

JANUARY 5, 2017

## Import Substitution Initiative (Specialty Crop)

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### Final Report

#### Project Summary

The American Samoa Import Substitution Initiative (ASISI) (Specialty Crops) was developed to introduce, educate, train, and promote the production of specific highly imported and highly consumed specialty crops within the Native Samoan farming community. The goal of the project was to increase the economic opportunities of Native Samoan and disadvantaged farmers, reduce the quantity of imported produce, and improve the food security position of the territory. Throughout the project the Department of Agriculture along with the support from other American Samoa Government Departments, such as Samoan Affairs, the Department of Education-School Lunch Program, and the Department of Health, continued to provide educational materials, training, and technical assistance to the farming communities. The Department of Agriculture continues to visit the registered farmers for the ASG DOE-School Lunch Program to make sure they are in compliance with the department's local farm certification.

#### Project Approach

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The project goals were: 1) Improve the rate of participating Samoan farmers to continue supplying the ASG DOE-School Lunch Program (SLP) with high quality and affordable produce; 2) improve the diversification of the Samoan farmers products to include a higher percentage of non-traditional specialty crops; and 3) Improve the Samoan farmers knowledge regarding farming non-traditional specialty crops.

We have fulfilled the project goals by working closely with our partner organizations, ASG departments and especially the local Samoan farmers. It was initially difficult convincing the local farmers to grow non-traditional crops. Once they saw how easy it was and how much money they could earn from farming vegetables, their interest arose and through this project, there was a slight increase of Samoan farmers growing non-traditional crops. The extension workers continue to assist and monitor the farmers with their needs. The demand of seeds is high and another order will be placed. We continue to hold meetings and trainings for the farmers especially for new farmers but existing farmers are welcome as well.

The funds allocated were used solely for the purpose of enhancing the competitiveness of specialty crops in an effort to achieve our program goals. The project funds supported the efforts by leasing and/or renting equipment used to plant and grow specialty crops only; traveling to Aunu'u and the Manu'a islands to work closely with farmers to provide on-site training for specialty crop farming. Employees from Manu'a and Aunu'u also travelled to the main office on Tutuila for training in farming specialty crops as well. In addition, specialty crop seeds and supplies were ordered and received for the farmers of the territory and other budgeted funds were used accordingly.

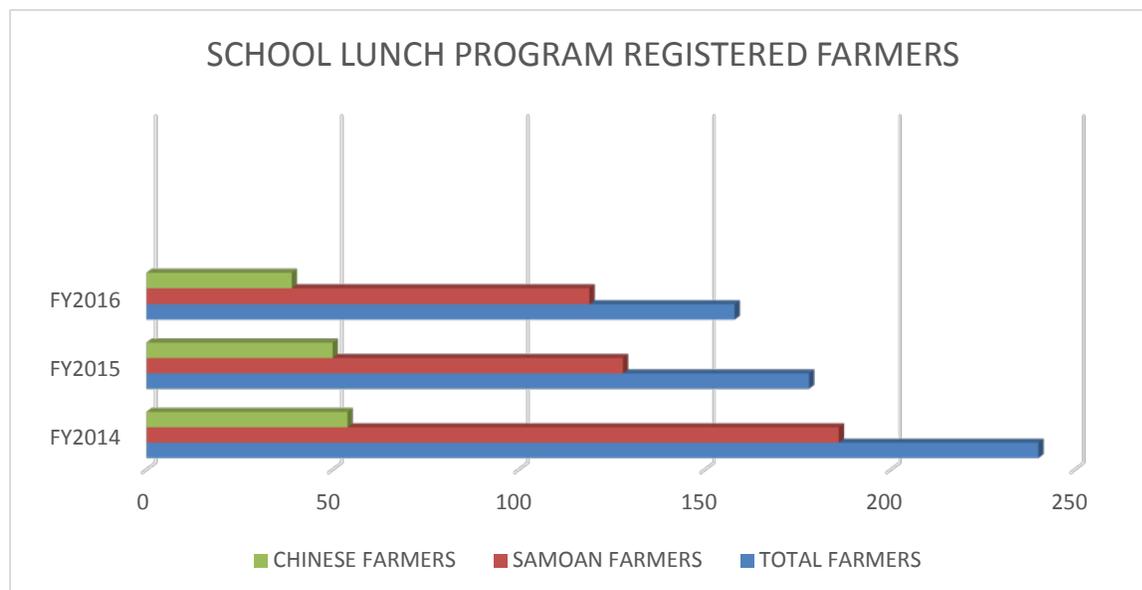
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## Goals and Outcomes Achieved

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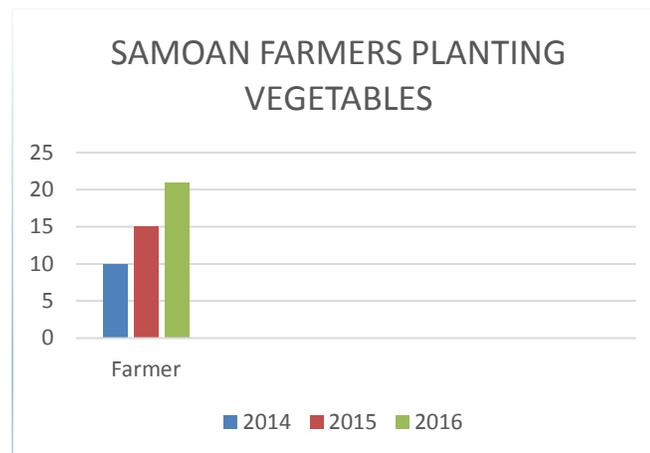
The project goals were:

- 1) Improve the rate of participating Samoan farmers to continue supplying the ASG DOE-School Lunch Program
  - a. Before this project existed, there were always a lot of Samoan farmers supplying the School Lunch Program with produce. It's the only program that the local farmers can supply their produce to besides the marketplace and roadside markets. It was our goal to ensure that Samoan farmers continue this practice, and this goal was met. In addition, it was our goal to increase the number of farmers participating in the ASG/DOE School Lunch Program, and this goal was also met.
- 2) Improve the diversification of the Samoan farmers products offering to include higher percentage of non-traditional specialty crops;
  - a. As mentioned in our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual report, there was an increase of Samoan farmers growing traditional and non-traditional crops. Although there was a slight increase in Samoan farmers raising non-traditional crops, we would like to see a significant increase.
- 3) Improve the Samoan farmer's knowledge regarding farming non-traditional specialty crops.
  - a. The Department of Agriculture continues to educate the Samoan farmers by training and providing them with materials on how to farm non-traditional crops. Technical assistance through professional development sessions and on-site training is also provided to new farmers interested in planting and growing non-traditional crops such as a different variety of vegetables.



There are few reasons why the decrease of registered farmers for the School Lunch Program from 2014 to 2016 (see chart above). Each year there was a decrease due to individuals who lost interest

in farming, farmers not interested in the SLP but are selling crops elsewhere and also because of the Procurement process now, farmers have to bid in order for them to provide produces for the School Lunch Program. Samoan farmers were less interested in growing vegetables in the past, but in the three years of the program, they slowly started to show interest in growing non-traditional crops (vegetables) and they had their reasons. Out of the 186 registered Samoan farmers in 2014, a total of ten farmers started planting vegetables. In 2015, a total of five farmers were added and in 2016 a total of six were added making the total to 21 farmers growing and planting vegetables along with their traditional crops. (see chart below). There was an increase of Samoan farmers growing and planting non-traditional (vegetables) for a living. They found it easy to grow and manage with the help of family members.



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## Beneficiaries

Direct beneficiaries of the project activities were individuals who had the desire and/or interest in planting and growing non-traditional crops such as different variety of vegetables that the School Lunch Program desires. During the program from 2013-2016, there was a total of 200 plus registered Samoan farmers and non-Samoan farmers. The program coordinator for the program and the Department of Agriculture staff continue to provide technical assistance, workshops, training, seeds and hands-on materials to the local farmers so we can have more residents interested in planting non-traditional crops.

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## Lessons Learned

The goals of this project have been achieved throughout the years. The desire of the Samoan farmers to plant traditional crops such as taro, banana, yam, breadfruit, etc. has increased as well as a slight increase in those growing non-traditional crops. Additional work is still needed to encourage Samoan farmers to plant non-traditional crops on their farmland along with traditional crops. The unexpected results from implementing this project were the increase of the Samoan farmers growing non-traditional crops. Although the percentage was slight, we are headed in the right direction, and with continuous support, we believe our local farmers will understand the benefits in growing non-traditional as well as traditional crops. Even

though the project has ended, the department continues to provide technical assistance to new and existing Samoan farmers.

#### Contact Person

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#### Additional Information

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