

TANGA FRESH

Area of Focus: Agricultural extension

How it Works: Tanga Fresh (TF), a dairy company serving the domestic Tanzanian milk market, uses bulk SMS and weekly radio programs to improve the quality of extension and marketing messaging delivered to farmers and to build a direct connection between the company and its 3,500 active outgrowers. The majority of these are smallholders averaging 5 dairy cows each, which produce 8 liters daily. TF sends bulk SMSs to over 2,500 farmers each week, communicating seasonal extension and quality control information, as well as to announce outbreak of diseases and price alerts. Instead of having to route through their cooperative leaders, farmers can text back questions or complaints directly to a full-time TF staff employee, which handles approximately 500 messages each week. The 30 minute radio program, delivered on Saturday and repeated on Sunday on a community radio station, is developed each week by a TF employee and. It includes messages on milk production and quality issues, interviews with a range of dairy stakeholders and service providers, a “meet the Tanga Fresh staff” feature, and listener call-in, where farmers have a voice.

Technology used: MyPhoneExplorer (to group cell phone numbers and send bulk SMS), radio

Implementer/Funder: TF implements the initiative with company staff. It is currently partially subsidized by a time-bound grant from the Africa Enterprise Challenge Foundation.

Fees: There are no fees for farmers to receive the SMS or send back texts, beyond standard messaging rates.

Primary Markets: Targeted at small-scale dairy farmers in TF’s outgrower network in Tanga, Tanzania.

Users: Dairy farmers and the broader community in the broadcast area.

Business Model: This initiative requires two-full time TF staff employees to develop the content and manage the responses. TF pays to send the bulk SMSs and also covers the cost of texts back from farmers, which cost 45 Tsh (US\$0.03) each. The initiatives are currently partially subsidized by a grant from AECF, but TF is committed to absorbing the full cost in the future.

Impact: TF does not have company extension officers but these ICT initiatives serve that important function. Before the SMS and radio programs, outgrowers were dependent on government extension officers or cooperative advisors, who had no direct information link with TF. Now, outgrowers have improved information and can communicate directly with the end buyer. This allows TF to better control the quality and timeliness of communications, and to be more responsive to their outgrower suppliers’ needs—improving transparency within the dairy cooperative structure. As a result of this loyal network, TF mobilized farmers to successfully advocate—via the call-in radio program and SMS campaigns—and revise a law to classify milk and milk-based products as tax exempt. TF views these initiatives as an important “information bridge” between the company and its outgrowers, and over the past two years has seen milk quality increase along with its credibility amongst farmers. Since its end market for milk and dairy products is exclusively domestic, maintaining good local relations and positive brand recognition has commercial benefits for TF as well.

For more information visit: [Tanga Fresh’s Facebook page](#)

Sources: Interviews with Tanga Fresh staff, August 2012

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