

Ethiopian Farmer Improves Productivity and Lifestyle for Family

Planting Improved Maize Hybrids Allowed Farmer to Expand Farm and Support Family

Situation

Debebe Ayele, a 46-year-old Ethiopian farmer, lives in a densely populated area of southern Ethiopia.

Prior to working with Ethiopian representatives of Pioneer Hi-Bred, a DuPont business, Debebe lived in a grass roof thatched hut that needed constant repairs and maintenance. His family farm was three hectares; averaging 1.5 metric tons of maize per hectare. He owned an ox and two indigenous-breed cows. His annual income averaged \$1,100, unless drought caused a crop failure.

“Our population is increasing at an alarming rate and usable land is limited. My biggest concern was how to feed my large family,” said Debebe.

Solution

In 1995, Debebe began working with Pioneer Ethiopia agronomists and planting improved Pioneer seed along with fertilizer and other crop inputs. In the decade that followed, Debebe has been able to make significant improvements in his farm’s productivity and his family’s life.



Debebe Ayele and his family

Impact

As a result of planting hybrid seed and adopting new management practices, maize yields increased to eight to 10 metric tons per hectare. Increased income allowed him to purchase better inputs for other crops.

Debebe expanded his farming operations from three hectares to 10 hectares (seven hectares is contracted). He purchased seven more oxen and two improved-breed dairy cows to provide more milk.

Debebe’s yearly net income increased to more than \$6,000. He is a model farmer for the district and now a farmer-dealer for Pioneer.

In Debebe’s words:

“I like Pioneer people because they bring good products, and their advice and support to change the community lifestyle is beyond our expectations.

Now, I feed my family the whole year, my thatched house is changed to corrugated iron sheet and I am sending all my kids to school with proper school supplies. I am paying school fees and accommodation for four of my kids studying at private college. I bought a television and radio for entertainment, agricultural news and now watch grain prices. I bought improved dairy breeds of cows and we earn reasonable income from supply of milk to the community, I also contracted a better storage facility, and constructed 10 rooms for rent in town, collecting US \$60 per month.”

Debebe Ayele’s home

