

Food security project in Bhutan to benefit 10,000 households

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Should the project prove successful, rice, vegetables, potatoes, cardamom, ginger and citrus production in these five dzongkhags would increase by 20 percent by 2022.

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Agriculture minister Yeshey Dorji said the project areas were chosen considering the potential for commercialisation of certain high value crops as well as incidences of poverty, malnutrition and poor access to markets.

Project director, Jigme Dorji added that under the previous World Bank projects, infrastructure investments have already been made in these dzongkhags. Except for Haa, five gewogs each from the rest of the dzongkhags were chosen as project areas.

While the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) trust fund is providing a grant of \$ 8 million (85.5 percent of the project cost), the government will bear \$ 1.12 million for salaries of the staff under the project. The remaining amount is to be collected from the beneficiaries in the form of labour contribution and cost sharing arrangement for machinery and equipment.

The project also aims to either strengthen or form about 300 farmers' group and 30 producers' group and disseminate awareness on nutrition via a network of communities.