

# Why growing fruits and vegetables matters

## What horticulture can do

- **Enrich diets:**

Horticulture—growing fruits and vegetables—provides critical nutrients for a balanced diet. Diets low in fruits and vegetables contribute significantly to some of the world's most widespread and debilitating nutrient-related disorders.

- **Increase incomes:**

Farmers growing high-value crops, such as fruits, vegetables, flowers or herbs, consistently earn more than those growing other commodities. Horticulture can be an engine for agricultural and economic diversification.

Improving livelihoods—through higher profits and diversified, nutrient-rich diets—is a major goal of the Horticulture Innovation Lab's research efforts around the world.

## What horticulture needs

- **Gender equity:**

Vegetables, fruits and cut flowers are often grown and marketed by women, but women often have less access to markets, land, inputs and education. Addressing these constraints places women growers on the path to increasing productivity and expanding horticultural markets.

- **Technological innovation:**

Given the complexity of horticulture, innovative “leapfrog” technologies can reduce constraints and input costs that limit the ability of smallholder farmers to achieve maximum profitability.

Gender equity, technological innovation, and information access are themes in all projects of the Horticulture Innovation Lab.

- **Access to information and research capacity:**

Commercial success in horticulture depends on improved cultivars, management tools, market knowledge and effective postharvest practices. Sustained horticultural growth requires access to reliable information, a well trained workforce and local capacity to conduct both original and adaptive research.



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