**Strengthening Farmer Cooperative Competitiveness**

*Strengthening Farmer Cooperative Competitiveness* is a holistic, common sense, business-driven strategy to transform local household-level dairy and beef producers and their cooperatives into commercial entities that participate in value chains — as suppliers to local and regional processors, as sellers of value-added products, and as buyers of inputs from local and regional organizations.

After 8 years of implementing a major program, the U.S. Agency for International Development awarded GENEX a new 5-year Cooperative Development Program (CDP) that builds on its progress in South Africa and expands to Peru. This project will:

* strengthen and expand the number and value of multiyear commercial transactions—sales, contracts, product lines, capital, joint ventures—where there had been none or few before
* develop market linkages with business, industry, government, firms and associations.

**Partner** **cooperatives** receive training and technical assis­tance to build the needed foundations in:

* *Cooperative governance*—legal compliance, organizational structure, governance, cooperative culture, purpose and member focus
* *Agriculture and animal husbandry*—farm management, animal nutrition, improved genetics
* *Business operations*—accounting, business plans, access to credit, marketing and processing, value-chain networking

Outcomes include: stronger cooperative structures and governance; more robust leadership; improved business planning and member services; rational reinvestment of cooperative earnings; transparent and accurate data; expanded opportunities with buyers, investors and lenders; increased knowledge in animal husbandry and production; and greater awareness and compliance with relevant laws.

Since 2010, GENEX has worked in the development sector to utilize a **time-proven strategy** to create new, expanded and more stable business activities, designed to continue long after donor funding has ended. With experience as a developed service and supply cooperative in the United States, GENEX leverages the knowledge and expertise gained from decades of cooperative business and applies it at a relevant level for emerging cooperatives and farmer organizations. Often these groups aren’t equipped with the tools to meet their members’ needs, mitigate risks, or improve incomes. When given access to affordable financing, technical assistance, and mentoring, producers and their cooperatives *can* improve their profitability, productivity, resilience, and hence their *compet­itiveness* in the marketplace.

GENEX is a trusted provider of world-class beef and dairy genetics, progressive reproductive solutions, value-added products and innovative services. It is comprised of 12,000 member-owners, exporting 10 million units of semen annually in more than 60 countries. Since the 1990s, GENEX has applied cooperative know-how, expertise, and technology to addressing livestock development challenges in emerging economies around the world with support from USAID and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.