Meet Andrew

Buying a Surehatch egg incubator allowed Andrew to dramatically expand his small poultry business and increase his income.
It’s not every day that a smallholder farmer sells his most prized possession in order to buy a new technology. It’s a risk that not everyone would take. But one person who did is Andrew Mwangangi, a smallholder farmer who lives in eastern Kenya.

Like many smallholder farmers, Andrew raised chickens. His chickens were providing him with about 120 eggs per week, from which he earned about $10, just enough to buy bread and milk for his family and use any leftover money to buy feed for his chickens. Andrew’s chickens were his most prized possession, providing him with a mechanism to survive. But after attending a workshop organized by Surehatch, a South Africa-based company, Andrew realized that if he changed his business model, he could make more money. With one of Surehatch’s small-scale incubators, newly introduced in Kenya with support from Feed the Future Partnering for Innovation, he could increase his egg production beyond what Mother Nature provided and not only sell eggs, but also hatch some of the eggs, growing his flock and hatching even more eggs. He could even start selling chicks to other farmers.

To do this, though, Andrew would have to sell off some of his prized flock in order to pay for an incubator. After much thinking Andrew decided to sell off 25 of his 46 egg laying chickens. This gave him enough money to buy an incubator from Surehatch. After three weeks the first batch of 35 chicks hatched and were ready to sell. Andrew wasted no time and went to his local market where he was met with great excitement from customers wanting to buy his chicks. He sold all the chicks in less than an hour, making him $35. This was the moment that Andrew realized that hatching and selling chicks was far more profitable than selling eggs. The Surehatch incubator enabled him to make 10 times more income on the same eggs by simply placing them in the incubator and hatching them!

Andrew immediately loaded another batch of eggs into his incubator and repeated the process. The only difference now was that he received orders from customers even before he had hatched the chicks. Andrew had so many orders that he soon would need to increase his production capacity in order to keep up with demand, and started planning to buy a second incubator.

Andrew now sells chicks every month at his local market. He is producing enough eggs to sell some as day old chicks, rear some to fully grown birds, and use some of them to produce eggs to sell for eating. Before Andrew bought a Surehatch incubator he was solely relying on one income stream, the sale of eggs. The incubator enabled him to increase to three income streams and significantly improve his standard of living. Andrew is now able to buy food for his family and have enough money left at the end of the month to send his daughter to school, something he would not have been able to do had it not been for the introduction of a Surehatch incubator.

In Andrew’s own words, “Surehatch made me see the light; you have given us hope again.”

--- This story was originally posted on the AgTechXChange by Surehatch.