



## SUCCESS STORY

# Mushroom Farm Reopens after Tragedy



Photo: USAID Inma Agribusiness Program

*Workers at the Hameediyah Mushroom Farm in Ramadi package freshly picked mushroom and prepare them for market.*

***The Hameediyah Mushroom Farm will provide regular supply of fresh high quality mushroom to local markets. The restored farm is producing 9.5 MT per year in order to address the unmet demand for fresh mushroom***

The Hameediyah Mushroom Farm was established in 1984, just west of the city of Ramadi. The company is privately owned by the Khirbit family.

Tragedy struck in 2004, when a bomb destroyed a house on the property. The explosion also killed one of the Khirbit brothers and forced the family to shut down the company for good.

In 2008 the family revived their business after receiving a USAID-*Inma* Agribusiness Program grant of more than \$600,000 to repair the farm. Production was restarted in June 2009, but throughout 2010, the farm struggled trying to reach full capacity of 9.5 metric tons per month, only managing to reach 75 percent of that goal.

In January 2011, USAID provided technical assistance by hiring a mushroom specialist for two months to work with the company on their production issues. As a result of the training, in the course of several months, the facility surpassed its full capacity goal and is now producing 9.8 metric tons of mushrooms per month.

The USAID-*Inma* marketing team is now assisting the company to address critical marketing strategies. The team has linked the company with packing houses that can store the mushrooms in refrigeration in Baghdad during the summer months, until the mushrooms can be distributed to the company's regular buyers and bulk customers such as hotels and restaurants.

Out of tragedy has come triumph for the Khirbit family and the Hameediyah Mushroom Farm. The company will continue to grow and prosper, making efforts to overcome difficulties with continued technical expertise from USAID. It is the first big step to increasing profits and expanding mushroom production in Iraq.