

# Maize, legumes project - Fiji Times Online

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IN a bid to minimise the heavy import of legumes and maize, the Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises and Development (FRIEND Fiji) is working with farmers to grow the products locally.

Maize and legumes are most commonly used to make livestock feed.

FRIEND Fiji director Shashi Kiran said they had reached out to 1500 cash crop farmers, of whom 500 were clustered in groups to start with the production.

"Our model is simple. We use traditional existing skills and crop knowledge they already had and looked at our import bills," she said.

"The idea was to work with local markets and do import substitution."

Ms Kiran said this area had been beneficial to farmers as exporters had also worked with clusters.

"We still have scope for more products as we have ready markets in processed foods that we have developed.

"While we were working largely with men in developing farms, we trained 1500 women in food processing. There are crops easily grown in the country and farmers have these in abundance but there is no market."