

Solar-powered irrigation succeeds in Benin

Drip irrigation systems powered by solar energy can boost food and income levels for farmers in sub-Saharan Africa, researchers have found. A team from Stanford University USA has installed solar-powered pumps in two villages in Benin, and analysed their impact on the delivery of groundwater to the surface.

The results of their study were published this week in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. Compared with villages that use hand irrigation, the pumps increased the daily production of vegetables by up to 700 grams per person, equivalent to five servings, during the rainy season. The researchers also found that people in control villages ate 150 grams more than their usual intake, suggesting that the extra vegetables were being sold in local markets.

Source: [Panos London](#)

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