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Beyond the Farmgate: JT Solis and the Philippine Food Supply Chain

Mayani co-founder JT Solis is building a commercial connection between smallholders and institutional buyers. His next challenge is to make cold-chain infrastructure and market access work together at scale.

JT Solis · Mayani
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What happens to produce after harvest

How cold storage and reliable buyers change the equation

Farmers may grow a good crop and still lose value before it reaches a consumer. Without reliable buyers, cooling facilities, financing and transport, produce can deteriorate or pass through multiple intermediaries before arriving at an urban kitchen.

JT Solis, co-founder and chief executive of Philippine agritech company Mayani, has built his business around this gap. The company connects smallholder farmers and fisherfolk with institutional markets and provides additional services across the agricultural value chain.

Solis came to the problem with experience in e-commerce and logistics. His insight was not that agriculture lacked an app. It was that digital distribution systems serving urban consumers had not necessarily created similar advantages for rural producers.

BEYOND THE FARMGATE

JT Solis

That distinction shapes the business. Market access is useful only when a producer can reliably fulfil the buyer's requirements and earn a fair commercial return.

From Digital Matching to Physical Capability

Mayani's early approach focused on connecting producers more directly to customers. Over time, the company broadened its activities to address the practical challenges of aggregation, transport, quality and storage.

During 2025, the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture reported plans for pre-cooling storage facilities in Batangas and Benguet, supported by approximately US$1 million in catalytic capital from the Temasek Trust ecosystem. Solis described the planned units as a response to produce losses and fragile cold-chain infrastructure.

Plans and construction schedules should not be confused with confirmed operational facilities. Their significance lies in the direction of investment: Mayani was moving beyond an online marketplace towards systems that could preserve fresh produce and support larger buyers.

A March 2026 interview with Sustainable Food Business described a network of more than 144,000 farmers and fisherfolk across eight Philippine regions. The number is a company-reported network figure, not proof that all members transact regularly or receive the same benefits.

Why the Buyer Matters as Much as the Farmer

A smallholder market-access platform cannot scale without dependable demand. Restaurants, hotels and food manufacturers need quality, consistent delivery and traceable sourcing. Farmers need reasonable prices, confidence that produce will be purchased and support when conditions change.

Mayani has therefore worked on relationships with institutional buyers, agricultural partners and climate-resilience initiatives. Its 2026 activities include conversations about cage-free sourcing and water-saving agricultural practices. These are examples of how commercial market access can connect with changing procurement expectations, rather than evidence that every partner has fully changed its supply chain.

For Solis, the operational challenge is substantial. Agricultural production is seasonal. Product quality is variable. Transport between islands is complicated. Working capital can be strained when producers need timely payments but buyers operate on credit terms.

Technology can help coordinate these relationships, yet it cannot eliminate the physical constraints of a food system. The business will be judged by deliveries completed, reduced losses, farmer outcomes and the economics of each transaction.

GCEIP Analysis

Mayani illustrates a useful transformation in agritech thinking: successful agricultural technology often depends on infrastructure and relationships, not only consumer-facing software.

Solis' leadership is notable for extending the company's model towards cold storage, standards and institutional procurement. These investments are harder to scale than an app, but they address the parts of the value chain where value is frequently lost.

The risk is that expanding services creates operational complexity faster than the underlying business can absorb it. Disciplined sequencing and transparent measurement will matter.

GCEIP View

JT Solis is building at the intersection of rural livelihoods and commercial food distribution. His work at Mayani asks whether technology can help small farms participate more effectively in demanding institutional supply chains.

The most persuasive evidence will come from measurable improvements in delivery reliability, food loss and producer returns, rather than the size of a registered network alone. If Mayani can repeatedly create value on both sides of the transaction, Solis' leadership will have helped turn a fragmented agricultural market into a more dependable business system.