

Support Sustainability For Guatemalan Farmers Villa Linda Summer Report 2012

Community Organization

Recently sixteen community members from four different committees participated in trainings on the function of their leadership roles and how to contribute to transformation and growth in the community. Community members also completed long term plans for their families and a vision for their community.

Sustainable Economic Development

The honey bee project in Villa Linda has really blossomed in the last few months; training and technical assistance was recently provided for the families involved. Furthermore, two more families have now become involved in the project.

Four families in the community have ended another stage of successful tilapia production and half of those families have reached an improved level of management and productivity. Ten community members planted family gardens including cucumber, beans, jalapenos, pimiento chilis, cilantro, etc.

Community Education & Training

Three young people participated in a workshop at the Technical Institute of Training and Productivity (INTECAP) on how to diagnose internal combustion gasoline engines. They are hoping to learn to become mechanics.

Thirteen women and young ladies were approved for the first stage of the literacy training, and will be beginning to program shortly.

Forty community members were trained in preventative health care in the areas of reproduction & personal hygiene.

Making a Difference.....

Vitalino and Mercedes have been blessed with a large family: six boys and two girls. Their oldest three children René, Freddy, and Wilson are all married and living on their own. Their younger children, Sandra (21), Ingrid (18), Darvin (16), Witman (12), and Erick (8), all still live with Vitalino and Mercedes.

Before becoming a part of the community of Villa Linda, Vitalino worked as a construction worker fixing roads in the neighboring communities of Nueva Esperanza and Yula San Juan. He barely made enough money to provide for his family. Vitalino and his family were one of the last families to join Villa Linda about 3 years ago and as soon as he joined, he was eager to begin planting coffee and cardamom crops on his land with the help of his family.

Vitalino and Mercedes five children that still live at home have been very helpful in keeping the family garden and crops growing successfully. Vitalino has been able to establish almost two acres of coffee, and half an acre of cardamom. He has also started growing tilapia, and his family's garden produces cucumbers, beans, jalapenos, and pimiento chilies.

His wife, Mercedes has been an active member of the community. She is currently a member of the women's community bank, through which she has purchased chickens and pigs. The income that she is able to generate with these animal projects is going towards paying off her community bank loan and helping to provide her family. Despite some initial difficulties Mercedes' projects continue to expand as she has now purchased ducks, hens, and other local birds via community bank loans.