

## Village Update

*Nuevo Amanecer, Honduras*



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A few years ago, following a failed marriage and short-coming in graduating with an agricultural degree Mauro Aguilar, moved into a friend's house and fell into a life overtaken by bitterness, solitude and self-abandon. Later, a member of Nuevo Amanecer told him about Agros and then accompanied Mauro to an Agros orientation meeting. Soon after, Mauro decided to return to farming and applied to be part of Nuevo Amanecer. Once accepted, Mauro integrated himself in the community's work as much as any other member. His agricultural background often showed through his work, and soon an Agros technician recognized that his knowledge and skills could be used to improve the Agros program. Now, two months later, Mauro has found his place among his neighbors and is President of the Board of Directors in Nuevo Amanecer. He has earned the respect of those around him and feels that the hope he had lost has been restored.

### Community Organization

There are still internal divisions among the group, as four community members still have not decided to join the collective sustainable agriculture project and are suffering from alcohol problems. It is likely that some of them will not stay in the community if they are not meeting the community's requirement to participate in the work and communities activities.

The families of Nuevo Amanecer are currently in the process of planning upcoming community activities, creating and executing work plans, and using new agricultural techniques on their crops.

### Sustainable Economic Growth

The farmers of Nuevo Amanecer have been actively involved in a number of agricultural projects recently, including:

- Planting plantains in the nursery to be transplanted to 7.4 acres of land
- Planting 1.3 acres of Flor de Jamaica, a flower used to make drinks and tea, as an experimental crop
- Harvesting and selling 1,600 pounds of beans for certified grains and planting 17 more acres, with marketing assistance through the Secretary of Agriculture & Livestock
- Maintaining the 26 acres of corn planted collectively. This crop will be harvested in November, with an estimated production of approximately 33.75 tons of corn
- Planting and caring for 12 acres of pasture for the upcoming livestock-fattening project

Training received in crop diversification has brought about a new awareness among many of the families in terms of their ability to succeed and develop their own farming initiatives.

### **Community Education and Training**

The families of Nuevo Amanecer have been receiving assistance from a variety of organizations in several areas, including:

- Rural-road maintenance with the Institute of Professional Formation (INFOP)
- Growing saplings in the nursery and cultivating plantains with a USAID locally funded project
- Growing corn and beans with DICTA (a governmental agriculture program)
- A seminar held by FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN) in Tegucigalpa
- A seminar held by FINTRAC (local organization) in Comayagua on Exportable Agriculture

The community leadership is currently in the process of selecting two candidates to attend a workshop on community health promoters that will take place at the Evangelical Hospital in Siguatepeque.

The boys and girls of Nuevo Amanecer have access to the school located near the community. At this moment, community leadership is looking into the possibility of receiving scholarships for the children that have graduated from elementary school and are looking to continue their education.

Community leadership has been in contact with education authorities in Masaguara to learn the requirements for holding Educatodos, an adult literacy program, in their community, which they hope all illiterate adults in Nuevo Amanecer will attend.

The families of Nuevo Amanecer have been receiving training in business guidelines and regulations for their Farmer's Business Association, knowledge that will help them monitor the conduct the economic activities in the community. The workshop will teach the families to hold high standards both for themselves and for the other participants, as well as encourage a deeper level of analysis in business decision-making and trends.

To resolve misunderstandings and divert future disputes, the farmers are working together to further clarify the specific work expectations in the collective agriculture projects. Before beginning each activity, they pause to find balance in the various activities they deal with every day. A workshop on faith in daily life is yet to be held in the community.

A group of women has formed to be responsible for handling the funds for nutritional sustainability and security for the community. These women will ensure that profits from harvests are managed properly as well as surpluses used to purchase other needed food items.