

2009 Annual Report

Project Harvest

A project of the Niagara
Warehouse of Hope

Guatemala

Hand sewn banner expressing thanks was presented to Project Harvest by group participants of Guayabo, July 2009.

Mission of Project Harvest

- To improve family food security and the nutrition of campesino families through the application of an integrated horticultural method.
- To provide campesino families with enough knowledge and capacity to implement this horticultural method and maintain the health and well being of their families.
- To enhance the diet of campesino families with protein from the production of small animals.
- To enable campesino families to become independent of outside help in the maintenance and the production of a family vegetable garden.
- To enable campesino families to become more self-confident as they become more self sufficient.

Summary of Activities

In 2009 the project was active in ten communities in two areas of Guatemala. Over the course of the year:

- 15 new participants joined the project bringing the total to 215,
- they have created 141 individual family gardens and six communal gardens,
- there are over a thousand beneficiaries.

In 2009 the project continued to incorporate more of its key program components into a model which supports families to become more food secure. Some of these components were:

- over 2,000 fruit and forest trees planted
- over 1000 bags of animal manure for soil enrichment incorporated
- many varieties of seeds dispersed and saved
- five new above-ground nurseries constructed
- numerous rabbits and cages distributed
- new worm composting systems initiated. (con't on page 4)



Doña Candelario Jax Castro and her children of Xecaja check out the progress of their garden.

Testimonials

Benefit of Long-term Accompaniment

"This is the best program we have ever had. Other programs have come, left a few things, and soon gone. Project Harvest has helped us, our family, our children, our community by assuring a greater degree of food security, especially in the dry season by: showing us how to capture & store rain water; by the introduction of organic methods of gardening, without the use of chemicals; and by introducing the "red wiggler" to create worm composting. Our family life has improved through this reliable and ongoing training."



Doña Roberta of Pitahaya tells why this project makes a difference.



Juan, Doña Candelario's husband, sells family's surplus produce in Tonicapán's market.

Diversification of Incomes

"We earn about 20 quetzales per month through the sale of surplus vegetables such as broccoli, cilantro, beets, cabbage and radishes. This includes the sale of two to three dozen eggs at 3 to 4 quetzales per dozen. We may also sell a few chickens, keeping some for our table, and of course, leaving the hen chicks to mature. Before Project Harvest we had nothing to sell. Now it is different."

Doña María of Chiquimula

Education for Sustainability

"With the training we receive via Project Harvest, we have learned the importance of vaccinating



Santos Mendez checks out her hens.

the chickens. Before, all our chickens died. Now not one dies. We also have a fund from which we can buy the vaccination."

Santos Mendez of Guaybo

Organic Soil Conservation

"With my cup of coffee in hand, I am happy to go to work with the "red wigglers" in the morning. They have become part of the family; we feed them, they feed us. I have three barrels for worm composting. One of the barrels is ready soil from the worms. I share the wigglers as they multiply. We have collected five quintales (500 lbs.) of this compost since we began. This worm compost has improved our gardens enormously. The vegetables are bright green and not yellow. And the plants have no diseases. We also collect 4 litres of exudate per week to spray our plants every two weeks, and to add to the soil."

Doña Juana of Chiquimula



Doña Vilma Esperanza's family separates the worms from the highly nutrient worm compost.

Project Harvest's Guatemalan Team



Oto Bravo,
Project Co-
ordinator

Oto is an agronomist, married with an 8 year old son. He had worked in rural areas of Guatemala with various "campesino" organizations before coming to Project Harvest to continue his work with the poor.

"No amount of money can pay me for the satisfaction I receive from the work I do. I see many successes as people put into practice what we teach them. Most of the participants are women with families and they no longer have to worry day to day what they are going to feed their children. When I visit them, they feed me also and treat me as one of the family."

Olga is a Mayan Quiche woman with modern ideas, a part time Project Harvest field worker. She lives with her husband and four children. Olga is a gardener, builder, teacher, and founder of an organization of women called Ixmucan (mother earth). She commands respect from men as well as the women. She can handle a hoe, a hammer and nails, or a computer with equal enthusiasm. She is totally devoted to the plight of the marginalized.

"I see a big difference," says Olga, "in the lives of the women participants since they started with Project Harvest. They have more economic viability now that they have the skills to grow their own food. Their self-esteem has increased to the extent that women in many communities are organizing themselves into associations; this, in turn, leads to greater self-sufficiency and eventual independence."



Olga Tumax,
Promoter -
Totonicapán



Isaura Manso,
Promoter -
Chiquimula

Isaura is a part-time field worker with Project Harvest in the Department of Chiquimula. She is a university graduate in Home Economics and a single mother with four children and four grandchildren. Her work with the Ministry of Agriculture (MAGA) has exposed her to the many problems facing rural populations.

"Food security," says Isaura, "ranks as the highest priority for a people who constantly face discrimination. This program is so different to any other I have encountered. I am so impressed by the direct help, free of intermediaries, and by the consistency of that help. We use organic gardening methods and the ongoing

training is all geared toward increased self-esteem and eventual independence. Project Harvest has been acknowledged by MAGA as a very important model."

Saulo is an agricultural technician who came to Project Harvest with years of experience as an agricultural advisor with CONIC, a peasant organization in Guatemala. Saulo is married with five children 13 to 34, and grandfather of 2.

"In this project", says Saulo, "the women have been so successful that last week I was approached by two men who wanted to join the Project. People are eager to work; and this shared experience brings families together. "



Saulo Ixen,
Promoter - Xecoxol

Summary of Activities (con't from front page)

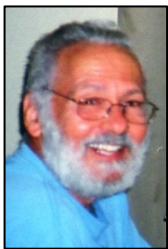
- 14 new coops constructed for 196 laying hens and nine vaccination rounds for the birds
- Over 3,000 seedlings such as pineapple (to prevent soil erosion), yucca and sweet potato planted.

Parallel with these concrete material inputs has been the project's focus on education and formation in 2009. **One hundred and two mini-workshops** averaging 13 people each were held on the themes of soil conservation, the production and use of organic fertilizer, pest control, techniques for saving seeds, small animal care, tree pruning and nutrition and food preparation.

New initiatives included women creating gardens next to their homes in addition to their communal ones; expanding the number of groups generating communal funds for special endeavors; and selling more surplus produce in order to augment family incomes.

Work earmarked for 2010 is to increase the number of rain water catchment systems in order to address the increasing droughts that a changing climate seems to be evoking.

Project Harvest's Canadian Team



Mike Antoniades: Gardener from childhood, advocate for many causes both local & global.



Nancy Wilson: Personal historian with a keen interest in Central America.



Anne Robinson: Mother, nurse and gardener. Volunteer worker in Central A.



Herman Plas: Farmer, union leader, migrant workers advocate.



Paul Lemieux: Educator, photographer and gardener. Deeply rooted in Guatemala.



We thank all our present donors and invite new donors to be a part of this vital work. Tax receipts are available. Help us sustain and expand this project.

Project Harvest - Guatemala	
REVENUE, EXPENSES & ASSETS for 2009	
REVENUES	Totals
Donations from Individuals	22,553.66
Grants from Institutions	24,777.34
Total Revenues	47,331.00
EXPENSES	
Program expenses in Guatemala	55,069.09
Administration in Guatemala	1,504.84
Administration in Canada	598.23
Total Expenses	57,172.16
Excess of revenues over expenses	(9,841.16)
Assets at beginning of the year	17,680.37
NET ASSETS – END of YEAR	7,839.21

Please make contributions payable to: **Niagara Warehouse of Hope - Project Harvest**, 46 Broadway Ave., St. Catharines, Ontario, L2M 1M4

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New Website: <http://www.projectharvest.org>

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