



Entrenamiento y Desarrollo de Agricultores

As Fintrac's EDA program completes 18 months of implementation, several of the initial crop programs have expanded based on increased demand from existing markets, identification of new markets, and with the selective substitution of imports. Expanded crop programs include onion, tomato, sweet pepper, sweet potato, plantain, potato and watermelon.

EDA needs to be continuously opening and expanding markets in order to obtain significant increases in local, regional and export sales, to incorporate additional growers into the value chain and to expand production area under high value horticultural products. The following are examples of new programs that are currently being developed under the MCA-Honduras/EDA program.

EDA PROMOTES NEW MARKET-LED PRODUCTION ACTIVITIES



PLANTAINS

Both local and export markets for plantains are highly attractive. Prices in the export market have increased, as has local market demand from the fresh and processing sectors. Improved prices and expanded demand are providing opportunities for new suppliers. EDA is promoting plantain production under contract with local supermarkets, local and regional processors, and multinational exporters. With high-density planting systems and the recommended production management, EDA growers are earning an average of net \$3,400 per hectare. To date, 202 hectares have been planted by 126 growers in 9 departments. Sales to date total \$164,200. EDA projects that program clients will plant 500 hectares of plantain in 2008.



CUCUMBERS

Cucumbers are one of Honduras' main exports to the US during the winter season but production for the local market is sporadic and insufficient in consistency and quality. Working with major supermarket distributors, EDA developed a calendarized cucumber programs with 70 growers in three departments. With technified production systems, high yields and quality, and stable buyers and markets, growers can earn average net incomes of \$5,500 per hectare. EDA growers in this activity have grossed \$156,000 so far, and an estimated 100 hectares are projected to be planted in 2008. These growers, grouped around a product and market, are also looking at the possibility of entering the export market in 2009.



GREENHOUSES

Greenhouse production offers advantages over open-field production by lowering pest and disease risks and increasing yields per unit of land. Prior to EDA, greenhouse production was limited to three large-scale growers and a few other small-scale operations. During the last several months, EDA helped install 17 model greenhouses in La Paz, El Paraíso, Ocotepeque, Comayagua and Francisco Morazán, which are producing tomatoes, sweet peppers and strawberries for local supermarkets. First harvests have yielded high quality fruit, and some greenhouse growers are also producing plantlets to sell to other growers. In 2008, EDA expects another 20 greenhouse operations to begin.



Entrenamiento y Desarrollo de Agricultores



CARROTS

Carrot production for local markets is traditionally sporadic, and usually lacks consistency and quality. Working alongside a major supermarket distributor, EDA developed a calendarized production program with 65 growers in Ocotepeque, Francisco Morazán and Lempira. Carrots are providing growers a crop diversification and rotation alternative to traditional crops such as potatoes and cabbage. With technified production systems, high yields and quality, and stable buyers and markets, growers can earn an average net income of \$7,800 per hectare. EDA growers in this activity have grossed \$80,000 to date. EDA projects that program clients will plant 50 hectares of carrots in 2008.



ONIONS

Onions are one of Honduras' five largest imports, usually during the rainy season when it is more difficult to produce locally. EDA introduced calendarized onion programs in various zones (including Comayagua, El Paraíso and Lempira) and developed local market links with the main onion distributors and local supermarket chains. With high-density plantings and technified production systems, EDA onion growers average 2,000 50-lb bags per hectare and net incomes of \$10,000 per hectare. While the primary focus is on yellow onions for the local market, selected growers and zones are also producing red onions for the local market and white onions for export to El Salvador. EDA projects that program clients will plant 200 hectares of onions in 2008.



PAPAYAS

EDA is promoting expanded papaya production to meet increased demand from local market buyers. With an initial focus in Comayagua, new plantings with technified production systems for the smaller Mexican and Taiwanese varieties are providing regular weekly sales for growers. Local, larger varieties also continue to be in demand and improvements in production systems have helped increase yields and quality. To date, EDA growers have planted 22 hectares and, while the first crops have not completed their 18-month production cycle, net incomes are projected to average \$3,500 per hectare annually. EDA projects that program clients will plant 50 hectares of papaya in 2008.

Other new production and marketing activities carried out by EDA include: development of regional exports through an international distributor (including plantains, sweet potatoes, onions and potatoes); upgrading traditional production practices in passion fruit, cabbage, potatoes, strawberries and oriental vegetables; and the introduction and increased availability of improved planting materials for sweet potatoes, pineapples, Hass avocados, rambutan and coconuts.

Other new activities, not directly related to production, include intensive training programs for NGO and government agronomists, development of a local industry for building irrigation filters, and the incorporation of new exporters and processors into the value chain.

EDA will continue to develop and expand the incorporation of growers into formal market channels through market-led production programs while supporting the implementation of updated systems in production and postharvest to ensure competitiveness, profitability and sustainability of farm operations.