



## Entrenamiento y Desarrollo de Agricultores

### IMMEDIATE IMPACT AND RESULTS: EDA'S STRATEGY BRINGS HOPE TO SMALL PRODUCER GROUP IN SONAGUERA, COLON



**Grupo Buenos Hermanos**

Grupo Buenos Hermanos (Good Brothers Group) is a small producer group from Las Piñas in Sonaguera, Colon. Its 14 active members are optimistic about the potential of plantain.

The Good Brothers Group used to rent land and cultivate watermelons individually, when they saw an opportunity to join together and acquire land through the Access to Land Pilot Project (PACTA). In 2000 they acquired 25 hectares of land through a loan offered by a local cooperative. At the time, their income was limited to what they could produce from a few heads of cattle, 4.7 hectares of African palm (that would not be in full production for 3 more years) and four hectares of orange trees. The group realized that the most income they could make on the oranges was \$2,016 per year. With an annual payment obligation of \$13,263, they needed another alternative or they would fall short.



**Plantain with drip irrigation**

After learning about the EDA program, the group contacted the technician assigned to Colon and planted 1.3 hectares of plantains in September 2007. They agreed to follow all recommended basic practices to produce good quality product, reduce costs of production and increase their profit margin. In March 2008, they planted one additional hectare. Production for well managed plantain is expected to reach 45,000 kilograms per hectare and generate gross sales of more than \$10,000 per hectare.

"We are motivated and excited about this plantain project, we even want to go ahead and expand what we have on two more hectares," said Good Brothers Group member Santiago Villanueva.

The group members are motivated to improve living conditions for all 68 of their family dependants.



**Following EDA technical assistance**

The group invested \$3,412 in land preparation and infrastructure for their irrigation system, and before commercializing, plans to establish two water stations for washing plantains. The Good Brothers Group also benefitted from \$1,590 of tubing, drip irrigation tape, backpack sprayers, baskets and seedling trays donated by MCA-Honduras.

Santiago Villanueva is full of hope and appreciates the help the group is receiving from EDA.

"The technical assistance has been excellent, our relationship with our technician is great, and he is always reachable and open to questions. We have faith that we are going to reach our goals and pay our loan in a timely manner. ... EDA is an excellent project," Villanueva said.