



Entrenamiento y Desarrollo de Agricultores

IMMEDIATE IMPACT AND RESULTS: Woman Producer from La Pancha improves farm income with calendarized plantings of scallions and fresh herbs

Margarita Corrales owns 1.05 hectares of land in the hillsides of La Pancha, Francisco Morazán. Because of the integrated technical assistance she has received since October 2007 from the MCA-H/EDA Program, she has diversified her farm and achieved high productivity and an increase in quality and income.

Since beginning with the program, Corrales has increased her calendarized scallion (green onions) crop from 3 to 12 plantings per year and has introduced new, market-driven smaller scale herb crops including parsley, dill, basil, and spearmint. Her calendarized planting program averages 0.07 hectares per month, allowing her to generate consistent sales with less risk.

Corrales has harvested 0.59 hectares of scallions and fresh herbs resulting in gross sales of more than \$10,000 and more than \$7,000 in net income, representing a 230 percent return on her investment. With MCA-H/EDA assistance in expanding market contacts, Corrales is delivering her products twice a week to two supermarket chains, a restaurant and a micro-processing company.

Among the basic production practices recommended by the MCA-H/EDA field agronomist that Corrales is implementing are proper land preparation with raised and contoured beds, crop rotation, drip irrigation, fertigation, live barriers, use of starter solution during transplant, improved planting density, integrated pest management and the use of biological controls.

Also with the technical assistance provided by MCA-H/EDA's postharvest and GLOBALGAP specialists, Corrales has substantially improved her harvest techniques and is implementing the practices and systems necessary to obtain farm certification (a requirement for one of the supermarket buyers). Corrales plans to produce her own plantlets and expand production area to further increase volume and income.

As a result of her expansion, Corrales has also generated five new full-time employment positions, covered by three women and two men, all residents of La Pancha.

With the implementation of market-driven production and updated production systems, Corrales has diversified her farm and her markets, helping her to produce year-round, spread out risks and provide the technological and market base to enable further growth.



Scallion harvesting.

Photos by Fintrac Inc.



Scallion postharvest cleaning and grading.



Scallion postharvest cleaning and packing.

“I am really happy and thankful for the technical assistance the EDA project is providing me, my farm is diversified and the results are excellent.”
 – Margarita Corrales, farmer in La Pancha, Francisco Morazán.