



ENTRENAMIENTO Y DESARROLLO DE AGRICULTORES

IMMEDIATE IMPACT AND RESULTS

Postharvest upgrades generate more profits for farmer

Like many farmers in his area, Santos Joel Padilla of San José del Potrero, Francisco Morazán, had a traditional approach to production and postharvest handling and was frequently disappointed when it came time to sell his produce. With help from MCA-H/EDA, Padilla increased his farm income by 197 percent per hectare in one year.

MCA-H/EDA is working with many farmers in his area to provide technical assistance and training at all levels of the agribusiness value chain including production, marketing, farm certification, business skills and postharvest handling. Padilla joined the program and learned how to establish a proper postharvest handling system to give him access to formal markets, improve quality and reduce losses.

The program supported Padilla with weekly visits and advised him to build a low-cost packhouse and Joel invested \$966 to start construction. The covered packhouse includes a product reception area, water tanks for washing and an area for grading and packing. Padilla also bought a vehicle to transport product and MCA-H/EDA provided Padilla and several other growers in the area with plastic crates for improved handling. His produce now reaches the market at a higher quality and earns a better price.

After one year of the program's postharvest assistance as well as the program's field interventions, Padilla's income per hectare increased from \$3,636 to \$10,787 (197 percent) and production increased by 56 percent.

Since starting with the MCA-H/EDA program, Padilla and his neighbors have established calendarized production for cucumbers and onions, which they rotate with sweet peppers and tomatoes depending on demand. They are now making scheduled deliveries to supermarket chains such as Hortifruti and La Colonia, which both have high standards for quality, consistency and food safety.

Since starting with the program, Padilla and his neighbors have increased their planted area by more than 330 percent and Padilla is now working toward a certification in Good Agricultural Practices (GAP).

As with other successful MCA-H/EDA growers, Joel's small enterprise is also benefitting other families in the community – he now provides 10 new jobs and generates \$2,368 per month in employment income.



Photos by Fintrac Inc.
Santos Joel Padilla on his cucumber farm in San José del Potrero.



Postharvest crates and improved washing are adding value to Padilla's product.



“My packhouse is basic, but my dream is to expand it and continue implementing good agriculture practices and technologies on my farm.”

– Santos Joel Padilla, MCA-H/EDA Farmer in Francisco Morazán