

July 2004 – Monthly Summary of Activities

Fintrac - Centro de Desarrollo de Agronegocios (CDA) is a USAID-financed project working to assist producers, processors, and exporters of non-traditional agricultural products. The main goal is to increase production and sales of horticultural products to increase incomes in this sector. This report provides a brief summary of some of the most relevant activities. USAID will continue to support the non-traditional products sector through the CDA project, and the activities will carry on until March of 2006.

Marketing and Market Information

Buyer information for peeled plantain in the US; info on IQF products for an investor; marketing support to plantain cooperatives with processors and distributors, and buyers' visits to farms; coordinate with cucumber exports for the 04/05 season; international dried fruit buyers for a processor; entry of sweet corn into supermarkets; linkages between pineapple producers and a plant; contacts between frozen chilli pepper buyers and a processing plant; market stats for processed pineapple; tour with an onion buyer to CDA production zones to establish contracts; tour with wholesaler of plantain plantations; linkage with Salvadoran onion and sweet pepper buyer to establish a production program in the west; start of planting promotion for Zucchini; linkages with black pepper buyers; samples of processed products to fast food chains.



Producción de Cebolla, San Marcos de Colón



Cosecha de Chile Dulce

Production

Technical Assistance in: planting for cucumber season –looking to “soften” the weeks that have a production peak; plantain, age control with tape, control of *Sigatoka*, dehanding and sucker removal, surgery, fertilization, erwinia control; use of agribon for insect control, virus and weed control; programming of calendarized plantings of several crops; control of weevil, mildew, bacterial freckle and alternaria in horticulture; fertilizations through the irrigation system; use of fertilization programs; yuca sampling for harvesting; installation of irrigation systems; plant tutoring; onion nursery planting and transplanting; calendarized planting of cold weather vegetables; nursery handling; media collection for nurseries; field days for producers; farm training covering several production topics: plague sampling, nozzle calibration with fluorescent ink, use of starter solution; coordination of planting of Asian vegetables; worm control for corn; plastic covering of beds; leaf removal for eggplant; macrotunnels for onion drying.

Processing

Technical support with container specs for microprocessors; improvements in the baby corn packing process; support to a new plant that will process sauces, and jalapeño, habanero, and mashed cayenne trials were run; passion fruit processing; garlic sauce trials; trials with frozen fruit cuts; visit to a vinegar processing operation using pineapple waste material; approval of sanitary records for several microprocessor products; quotes for canning equipment and costs; support with the improvement of juice processing; linkages between processors to improve frozen plantain and costs; quotes for line equipment for juices.



Jalapeño Relleno de Queso – Congelado IQF

Postharvest / Special Coffees - Diversification

Review and correction of the flow of the packaging process; grading and postharvest handling of plantain for local buyers; design and installation of tables for chilli grading; changes in plantain ripening process to improve yields; summary of quality inspections to cucumber packhouses; monitoring of postharvest defects for onion, sweet potato and chillies; correction of mechanical damage in sweet potato harvest; onion drying and tail removing. Participation in the e-auction of special coffees; pH measuring of special coffee zones; visit to black pepper production zones and continuation of diversification plantings of vanilla and pepper; monitoring of new vanilla plantations and corrective actions; incorporation of organic matter in vanilla plantings.

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Contract Planting Programs, Calendarized Plantings and Results/Impact



Onion Curing

Onion

Fifty hectares have been harvested, and 61,000 onion bags have been sold in the first 7 months of 2004 (3.05 million lbs), worth Lps. 7.25 million to the producers. Local onion production is equivalent to the substitution of 73 imported containers. Competitiveness: The yields have averaged 1,300 bags per hectare and the average unit cost of production is Lps. 66 per bag, which allows producers to compete directly with the imported product.

Sweet Potato

Four containers of sweet potato were shipped in July – 2 to Canada and 2 to the Netherlands. From January to July 2004 a total of 17 containers have been shipped (715,000 lbs), worth US\$ 155,000 FOB.

Jalapeño Pepper

July deliveries of usable product to the main Honduran processor totaled 790,000 lbs. In 2004 up to this date, deliveries have totaled 7.8 million lbs (worth \$ 1.35 million). From January to July 2004 the deliveries have exceeded those for the same period in 2003 by 460,000 lbs. A total of 82 hectares have been completed, with average yields of 100,000 lbs/ha. Shipments to Guatemala and other markets have totaled 1.5 million lbs (\$312,000).

Sweet Pepper

July sales to Supermarkets and Wholesalers totaled 58,000 lbs, worth Lps. 210,000 for this month.

Plantain

New markets were open for 4 cooperatives. Deliveries in July to local processors and distributors amounted to 500,000 lbs (Lps. 600 mil).



Sweet Chilli Pepper under Agribon

Impact Results/– July

- Obtain FDA permits for small processors, allowed baby corn exports to the US in initial shipment.
- Opening of new markets in Tegucigalpa, El Paraíso, Pimienta and Villanueva for several microprocessors.
- Participation of several microenterprises in Foods Fair in El Salvador.
- First direct deliveries of sweet corn by producers to supermarkets.
- 3 of the winners in the Cup of Excellence competition were assisted by CDA, including the 1st place winner.
- Certification of 8 producers in EurepGap.
- Start of the market information and marketing program with Foprیده. This will benefit members of this institution.



Sweet potato field day



Plantain production procedures

Training

July 2004 – 1,046 trainees for the month (704 men, 342 women). There were 104 training events/themes.

EurepGap – 121 trainees; use and fill out of SACP sheet, use of protection equipment, adequate pesticide application, motor pumps calibration, pesticide safe handling and use, internal audits prior to certification.

Postharvest – 215 trainees; onion harvest and curing, sweet pepper packaging, id of sweet potato defects, plantain postharvest handling, onion grading, jalapeno harvest, sweet potato harvest and packaging.

Processing - 51 trainees; sanitary registry procedures, bar codes, jelly production, passion fruit and guava concentrates.

Producción - 563 trainees; onion seedbeds and transplant, Natalie and Tabasco peppers, guava crops handling, irrigation filter backwash, installation, handling and maintenance of drip irrigation systems, control of Sigatoka and cultural handling of plantain, seedling planting in trays, plague control and sampling, bed raising, fertilization programs, nutrition, carrot planting, fertigation, use of agribon.

Mercadeo – 46 trainees: How to look for buyer references in the Blue Book; local and regional plantain market; how to deal with buyers.

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Auditoria de EurepGap

EUREPGAP

Review of progress in farms, mixing stations, warehouses, latrines, washing are, review and training in the use of personal protection equipment, use and filling in of field log book, warehouse set up, hiring of EurepGap certifying institution, pre-certification audits, follow up to corrective action plans.

An initial total of 8 Honduran producers have been certified in EurepGap. They now comply with the most stringent European market standards.

Counterpart Collaboration

FHIA: results from onion varieties, work planning with cucumbers.

FOPRIDEH: Training and set up of marketing programs for NGO clients.

FONAPROVI: Design phase for access to funds for producers in collaboration with other companies.

Covelo Foundation: Joint work for financing access to clients. Two loans granted in July.

CURLA/FHIA/Galiltec: vanilla project.

SwissContact: collaboration with farm certification in EurepGap.

CARANA-Hermandad de Honduras: Possible financing of producers in the west.

IHCAFE: Information regarding diversification to other crops.

World Vision: Talks between projects to discuss collaboration in technical assistance and marketing support.

FIDE: Marketing studies for fresh cuts and final results in jalapeño study.

FPX: Quality certifications for cucumber season.

MSU: presentation on the activities of CDA –MSU PFID.



Tomato in Danli

PRONADEL: Coordinated support to plantain groups.

Zamorano – Sur Project: Support in technical assistance for producers.

PACTA: Support in marketing and production to beneficiaries of financing from this institution.

SAG/SENASA: Provided production costs for several crops, as well as manuals for distribution. Worked to get Mexican documents to enable exports of several products. Personal visit to the Mexican Ministry of Agriculture, with the Honduran Minister of Agriculture and SENASA officer.

Colegios Agrícolas: Technical assistance for students in several crops.

Secretary of Commerce and Industry: Information concerning opportunities, which will be presented in trip to Puerto Rico.

Lead Partners

Three new partners were added in July 2004, for a total of 397 lead partners, which span a total of 10,550 individual producers and processors in the program.

General Activities



Meeting between Honduran and Mexican Agriculture Ministers

Investments: Lead partners have reported investments for \$2.9 million for the first seven months of 2004. The main investment areas for this month include the acquisition and installation of drip irrigation systems, land purchases for production, greenhouse infrastructure, purchase of safety equipment for handling of farm chemicals, agricultural machinery, infrastructure for field safety (EurepGap). The total reported in July was \$259,000.

AID: Information on the onion project, summary of the Cup of Excellence activities; meeting to discuss possible areas of opportunity for MCA; presence at a meeting with cucumber exporters.

Market Information: preparation of weekly market (USA) bulletins for plantain and yuca.

Information / Miscellaneous: local plantain market for sector support institutions; pineapple buyers for producers' group from the west; production costs to financial institutions in order to approve loans; info on yuca, jalapeño, and IQF for college students; nutrition requirements for plantain concerning the "plantain formula" for fertilizer; complete report on the pineapple project and presentation to interested investors; fertilization and spraying calendars for several producers and crops; meeting with a group of producers from the west in order to program plantings for a Salvadoran buyer; support to producers for the formation of a national association of chilli producers; information to producers in Cantarranas for plantain and cucumber export projects; greenhouses; out-of-season cucumber trials; information on freight and box options for the upcoming cucumber season.

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