

# Fintrac CDA Technical Assistance Support Program

Jose Rodulio  
Alvarado

Independent Grower of Jalapeño  
Pepper in Siguatepeque



## Grower Background

Rodulio Alvarado is a small-scale vegetable grower in Siguatepeque. During 1999 and 2000, he produced cabbage, tomato, cucumber, and green pepper which unfortunately were not profitable. Gross sales in 2000 were \$9,571 with a net loss of \$990 for the year. These losses were caused principally by market problems with his main crop (cabbage). Land preparation is done with animal traction, and all of the work in the field is done with hand labor. Before CDA assistance he used a sprinkler irrigation system.

**With jalapeño pepper, Rodulio obtained an 84% increase in gross sales - from \$9,571 in 2000 to \$17,630 in 2001, and earned a profit for the first time after two years of losses. Net profit for 2001 was \$6,980.**

## CDA Support Activities

CDA support started during January 2001, with the introduction of jalapeño pepper as a new crop for Rodulio. CDA assisted in establishing a commercial contract between this grower and a local processing/exporting company at a fixed price in US dollars. The project also provided technical assistance, training and technical bulletins related to the production of this crop, and also provided the seed for one hectare of jalapeño plants. CDA technical representatives helped Rodulio establish improved agricultural practices including contour beds, raised beds, wind break barriers, pest sampling, crop rotation, introduction to new crops, fertilization and fumigation programs, and implementation and use of a drip irrigation system.

## Results / Impact

- Good results during the 2001 season earned Rodulio a contract extension with the exporter for production in 2002. This time the contract is for production of 2 hectares of jalapeño – twice the area in the 2001 contract.
- He has invested \$1,500 of his earnings on improving his irrigation system. He bought 1,200 meters of piping and built a water dam on his farm. He also invested in improvements and extension of his current drip irrigation system.
- He has improved the land preparation systems with contour designs and high beds to help avoid soil erosion during the rainy season.
- His yield for the 2001 season was 87,000 pounds (1 hectare), of which 67,000 pounds were sold to the export company and the remaining 20,000 pounds were sold to markets in San Pedro Sula. The 2001 yields were more than 30,000 pounds/hectare above the season average.
- Rodulio has implemented integrated pest management practices, such as yellow traps, live barriers, pest sampling, and the use of highly selective and environmentally friendly pest and disease control products.
- For the 2002 season, Rodulio has already planted the 2 hectares of jalapeño peppers and the plantation to date appears to be in very good shape.
- Rodulio has financed all infrastructure improvements himself and is financing the cost of production for 2002 from his 2001 earnings. Fintrac CDA will continue to provide technical assistance for the 2002 season.