



## Your Generosity at Work

*in providing land, hope, life to the 16 families  
in the village of La Esperanza, El Salvador*

### PRESENTED TO

La Esperanza supporters

### PRESENTED BY

Agros International  
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**"I paid off my  
community bank loan  
before the due date. I  
am a confident woman  
who keeps her word."**

**—Marisol**

***La Esperanza, El Salvador***

***Village Update, Autumn 2011***

We are so grateful for your ongoing support of La Esperanza and the hope and opportunity it brings to the families who live there.

As we begin a new year, we're happy to present our update in a new format, which integrates feedback we've received over the years about our village updates. Some of the changes we've made include providing an overall country update from Country Manager Oscar López as well as including more photos of the families you've come to know through your support of La Esperanza.

We hope you like this new update, and would welcome any feedback you may have. Thank you for your commitment to La Esperanza!



*Two of La Esperanza's families have beekeeping projects. They are looking forward to their first honey harvest during the next quarter.*

## From the Country Manager . . .

This quarter was the first in the new Agros fiscal year, and I am pleased to say that in El Salvador, the new year has gotten off to a great start!

Countrywide, during the quarter, 80% of the planned economic development activities were accomplished. These activities are focused on empowering Agros families to provide for their own nutrition needs and generate an income.

In the area of human development, actual activities exceeded the quarterly plan. Human development activities are designed to improve our families' lives in such areas as formal education, life-skills training and spiritual growth.

Overall, in the four El Salvador villages more than 93% of the planned activities for the quarter were implemented.

We are also excited to be launching "field schools" in the villages. For these schools, parcels of land are set aside to provide hands-on training to the families in new agricultural techniques and best practices. This method of training has worked well in other Agros countries, and we anticipate that it will greatly increase our families' skills and success.

For all you do on behalf of the 89 Agros families in El Salvador, thank you! You are making a real and lasting difference in their lives.

—Oscar López

## La Esperanza Facts at a Glance

- ◆ Founded in 2003, La Esperanza is in its fourth stage of development (of 10 stages).
- ◆ Families grow six different crops to sell for income, and 100% own livestock.
- ◆ All of the families successfully market their products.
- ◆ 10 families are up-to-date on repayment of enterprise loans.
- ◆ All of the families have ready access to clean water for home use.
- ◆ 69% of the school-aged children are attending school.
- ◆ 72% of the community's leadership positions are held by women.



*A workshop for members of the children's committee helped them plan meaningful learning activities.*

## Autumn 2011 Village Highlights

### Community Organization

La Esperanza leadership reviewed the documents required for the community to be legally recognized.

Eight leaders also attended a workshop to strengthen their ability to work together for the community's best interest.

Leadership is also in the process of selecting new community members. Four families visited La Esperanza this quarter for screening.

### Land Ownership

The process of assigning land parcels to the families has continued.

### Sustainable Economic Growth

A parcel has been set aside to serve as a "field school." This parcel will be used to provide hands-on training to the families in effective agricultural techniques. So far, two families have planted cucumbers on the parcel.

Nine families helped construct a greenhouse for the cultivation of a variety of vegetables.

Families involved in cultivating beans planted another five acres to increase their production. Agros contributed fertilizer, insecticide, fungicide and other supplies to this project. The families contributed the manpower and beans.

Ten families in La Esperanza have dairy cows, three are raising pigs and two have beekeeping projects.

Training during the quarter focused on beekeeping techniques, the eradication of disease in vegetable plants and how to increase bean production.

The women participating in the community bank are in the process of repaying their loans from the second lending cycle. Two additional women have expressed an interest in joining the group and

participating in the upcoming third cycle.

### Community Education & Training

Several workshops for women were conducted during the quarter. Topics included personal and family hygiene, responsible family planning, the prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases, self-esteem and communication skills.

A breast cancer awareness workshop resulted in 14 women undergoing ultrasound screenings and another seven receiving mammograms.

Workshops for the youth encouraged them to be active participants in the community. And the younger children attended workshops focused on the topic of values.

### Making a Difference...

"I like to work," says Marisol, an enterprising mother of four. An active contributor to her family's economic sustainability, she has strong opinions about the value and role of women. "Women don't just cook and take care of the children," she says. "We can give so much more."

When the community bank got underway, Marisol was eager to join. "I always want to learn new things. When I saw the experience of other women in the first round of loans, I asked for a loan for a poultry project."

She repaid her loan ahead of schedule and now says, "I am ready for another loan. I am going to use it to plant beans so that I can continue supporting my home and improving my family's nutrition."

Marisol believes that it is important for women to set a good example for their daughters of positive self-esteem and empowerment. "If we want them to have a better life, it depends on us," she says.