



Your Generosity at Work

*in providing land, hope, life to the 25 families
in the village of Luz del Mañana, Nicaragua*

PRESENTED TO

Luz del Mañana supporters

PRESENTED BY

Agros International
2225 4th Ave. 2nd Floor,
Seattle, WA 98121

**"I thank God and Agros
for the support they
have given us. Now I
have my own
business."**

—Migdalia

Luz del Mañana, Nicaragua

Village Update, Autumn 2011

We are so grateful for your ongoing support of Luz del Mañana 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 Director Ricardo José Espinoza Bejerano as well as including more photos of the families you'll come to know through your support of Luz del Mañana.

We hope you like this new update, and would welcome any additional feedback you may have. Thank you for your commitment to Luz del Mañana!



"Growth groups" encourage community members to share their goals and dreams for the future.

From the Country Director . . .

Through the help of our faithful supporters, since Agros was launched in Nicaragua in 1998, nine villages have been established, and more than 2,100 people have been assisted. Three of the nine villages are now Agros "graduates." Six villages are currently supported, empowering 275 families to work their way out of poverty and achieve their dream of land ownership.

During this quarter, 299 families established 1,195 acres of crops, and 50 new beehives were started for the production of honey. Most exciting, during the quarter, families in Nicaragua earned a total of \$17,575 selling produce. This income allows them to repay their land loans and loans for various agricultural enterprises. Over the course of the whole year, 92% of all families in Nicaragua sold produce.

In the area of personal growth and life-skills development, 333 people participated in 25 workshops/training sessions. These sessions helped attendees identify their personal gifts and potential, as well as learn important practical skills like hygiene and proper food handling. We're excited about a new pilot program called "growth groups", which encourage individual, family and community spiritual nurture.

It was a busy quarter for the Agros team, but the results are worth the effort, as we see our villages steadily develop self-sustainability and hope for the future. Thank you for the important role you play in this!

—Ricardo José Espinoza Bejarano

Luz del Mañana Facts at a Glance

- ◆ Founded in 2008, Luz del Mañana is in its third stage of development (of 10 stages).
- ◆ Families grow five different crops to sell for income, and 20 of the 25 families own livestock.
- ◆ 19 of the families successfully market their products.
- ◆ 23 families are up-to-date on repayment of enterprise loans.
- ◆ 20 of the families have ready access to clean water for home use.
- ◆ 79% of the school-aged children are attending school.
- ◆ 30% of the community's leadership positions are held by women.



This small resource center, a micro-enterprise for a community teen and her family, provides school supplies at a minimal cost.

Autumn 2011 Village Highlights

Land Ownership

Topographical measurements of the village's common areas were completed. Each family was assigned 1.7 acres for individual cultivation.

Housing and Infrastructure

The community's storage tank for domestic-use water was repaired, and seven composting latrines were completed. Now all the families have hygienic latrines that also turn waste into compost for crops.

Sustainable Economic Growth

The focus was on planting basic grains for food security as well as for selling. All 25 families were supported in planting corn.

Four families planted a total of 3.4 acres in watermelons. Two families planted green peppers, and another two planted plantains.

Community Education & Training

Community leadership coordinated with the police department of the local municipality to conduct workshops for the youth. These workshops provided fun instruction in sports, as well as serious instruction in avoiding drugs and crime.

Leadership also coordinated with another community to have a medical team visit and provide vision, dental and general medical services. All 25 families participated in this health campaign.

The community's adults, divided into four "growth groups," were led in an analysis of their strengths and weaknesses as individuals and as a community. They discussed their values and life goals.

The health promoters underwent training in the importance and how-tos of chlorinating the community's potable water system twice a month. They also coordinated a community-wide clean up campaign and provided instruction on the proper cleaning of the composting latrines.

A presentation to 25 community members trained them in the sanitary handling of food.

The height and weight of the children were measured to identify those lagging in their physical development because of malnutrition. The children identified as "at-risk" are receiving special intervention.

Making a Difference...

Oswaldo and his wife, Elizabeth, used to live with her parents, and they farmed a small parcel of land that they rented for \$110 a year. However, after paying the land rent, their harvests netted only about \$55—not nearly enough to provide for basic food, clothing and medical needs.

Thrilled to be selected to join the new Luz del Mañana community, Oswaldo and Elizabeth saw Agros as a heaven-sent opportunity. "We give thanks to God for being generous with us," Oswaldo says. "I am happy to have a house and land to work, with friends and neighbors living in harmony."

Recently, Oswaldo increased his crop diversity by planting plantains. He also participates with a group that raises cattle. A member of the community's leadership, he says his dream is to pay off his land loan and provide his two young children with a good home.

