



Your Generosity at Work

in providing land, hope, life to the 29 families in the village of San José

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San José supporters

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

“Agros has been a great support for the women’s organization in the chicken project. They have helped us get ahead and generate income.”

—Eufemia

San José, Nicaragua

Village Update, January 2012

We are so grateful for your ongoing support of San José 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 San José.

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



Community members participate in the construction of a water storage tank.

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

San José Facts at a Glance

- ◆ Founded in 2007, San José is in its fourth stage of development (of 10 stages).
- ◆ Families grow seven different crops to sell for income, and 27 of the 29 families own livestock.
- ◆ All of the families successfully market their products.
- ◆ 24 families are up-to-date on repayment of enterprise loans.
- ◆ All of the families have ready access to clean water for home use.
- ◆ 85% of the school-aged children are attending school.
- ◆ 15% of the community’s leadership positions are held by women.



Girls perform a traditional dance for visiting members of a service team.

Fall 2011 Village Highlights

Housing and Infrastructure

The families of San José worked together on the community's irrigation system. They have been digging ditches for the water pipes, and they have constructed a tank to hold 47,550 gallons of water. Construction of the structure that will house the water pump is 90% complete.

The families are excited about this new irrigation system, which will allow them to grow crops year-round.

San José coordinated with the local mayoralty to repair access roads, facilitating the transfer of coffee harvests. Community members provided food for the workers.

Sustainable Economic Growth

99,293 coffee seedlings were transferred to 42 acres of land. More seedlings will be ready for transplanting in the next quarter.

In total, the community has 94 acres of coffee under cultivation, an average of three acres per family.

Four field trips were taken by community members to learn about the management of coffee and share knowledge and ideas with each other.

Six families invested in the planting of a diversity of vegetables and fruits, which they plan to market.

Community Education & Training

The community's adults, divided into four "growth groups," received training in such topics as values, self-awareness and self-esteem. The goal of this training is to increase community members' sense of empowerment about their ability and potential to achieve a better life.

Specifically to help empower the women of San José, one woman

attended the course "Gender and Development" offered by the Venancia Women's Center. Recently completing the first year of the course, she will share what she has learned with the other women.

The community's designated health promoters also received training from a local hospital in such topics as pregnancy risks, breastfeeding and birth control.

To help assure adequate nutrition and health among youth in the community, the height and weight of children are regularly monitored.

Finally, the community's school supply center received money earned this quarter from the sales of machetes and boots for the upcoming coffee harvest. This supply center, managed by one of the community's young people, enables families to obtain affordable school supplies for their children.

Making a Difference...

Sixta lives in San José with her husband, Rito, and their four sons. Prior to moving to the village, she worked in a chicken factory, where she made only \$1.50 a day. Before that, during the coffee harvest season, she earned a little more working for local farmers.

Now, Sixta is glad that she and Rito no longer labor for others. They work their own land, growing their own crops. In addition, Sixta makes clay pots, which she sells to earn a little extra money for her family.

Sixta is known for the good relationships she has with others in the community. Besides paying off her family's land loan, Sixta's goals are that her children continue their education, that they have a place to live and work and that they become good men.

