



La Cosecha

Happy Holidays!

(The Harvest)

Yovany Munguia's Field Report

Progress in Honduras and Belize

Yovany Munguia assumed the role of Central American Regional Coordinator for Sustainable Harvest International in January 2002. SHI President Florence Reed praised Munguia's skills as an extensionist and an administrator in her announcement of his promotion last spring.

With Munguia, a native of Honduras, in this new position, SHI has moved one step closer to helping Central Americans help themselves achieve sustainability. His supervisory role also helps SHI save on travel costs for field supervision visits.

Munguia is doing outstanding work. The following is a summary of his trip to visit work sites in Honduras and Belize.

New families and communities in Honduras

One hundred and two new families are working with SHI in Honduras, including new participants in existing work areas and new communities who have asked for SHI's assistance. "Despite the economic limitations due to decreased income...and [an] unexpectedly large increase in participating families," he

Continued on page 2



Honduran boy in his family's organic vegetable garden.



Left: View of Don Goyo's sustainable farm. Above: Don Goyo working. Photos by Yovany Munguia.

Sticking with Sustainability

Participant Don Goyo's Story

A leader of one of the few surviving indigenous tribes in Honduras, Gregorio Licona, "Don Goyo", has worked with Sustainable Harvest International since March 2001. The "Cacique", or representative of his Xicaque or Tolupan people, Don Goyo was instrumental in securing SHI's assistance for his community of El Salitre in the Yoro Department (state).

Don Goyo sought out SHI because he knew that the slash-and-burn farming practices that his people used to grow corn and beans were not sustainable and had led to soil erosion and lost fertility. Harvests had decreased, resulting in food shortages and poverty among his people. Word about SHI's success in reversing these crises while improving the environmental situation spread and Don Goyo wanted this kind of assistance for his community.

Working with Extensionist Manuel Bueso, Don Goyo started with an abandoned one-hectare (2.5 acres) plot to

cultivate sustainably. He established an organic vegetable garden to improve his family's nutrition. Since he started working with SHI, he has had three vegetable harvests.

Encouraged by his success with the vegetables, Don Goyo then moved on to cultivating corn and beans sustainably with contour planting and erosion barriers. With shoots provided by SHI, Don Goyo also planted pineapple and plantains. He used a live barrier of gandul (bean shrubs) planted in with the pineapple. SHI has also provided him with a hose so that he can irrigate his crops, allowing him to grow food during the dry season. He now has 1.75 acres in sustainable production, thereby saving 21 acres of land from slash-and-burn destruction.

Don Goyo now wants to continue diversifying his crops so that he will have healthier land and more crops to sell to increase his family's income. He has added chayote to complement his plantains and pineapple. At this writing, his sustainably grown fruit trees are about to bear fruit.

He's had great success, but Don Goyo admits that changing from unsustainable slash-and-burn to sustainable land-use

Continued on page 2

Fiscal News

Summary Statement of Activities for Year Ended June 30, 2002

Fiscal Year 2002 was a challenging one for Sustainable Harvest International. Despite the fallout from September 11th, natural disasters in the field and the recession, SHI donors made it possible for us to strengthen our field programs, begin new initiatives and hire new staff. Your support will help to make Fiscal Year 2003 our best one yet.

The following is a summary of Sustainable Harvest International's financial report for Fiscal Year 2002. You may obtain a complete report from our web site, www.sustainableharvest.org, or by contacting the SHI office.

Summary Statement of Activities

Total Revenues, Gains and Other Support:	\$366,153
Expenses:	
Program:	\$329,629
Supporting Services:	
Management & General:	\$ 40,892
Fundraising:	\$ 59,306
Total Supporting Services:	\$100,198
Total Expenses:	\$429,827
Change in Net Assets	\$ (63,674)
Net Assets, Beginning of Year as Restated*:	\$161,932
Net Assets, End of Year	\$ 98,258

Note: Change in Accounting Method and Restatement of Net Assets: For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2002, the Organization changed its method of accounting for payments to its partner organizations [in country organizations]. In prior years, payments to the partner organizations were presented as expenditures as they were incurred. In the current year, the Organization has recorded those payments as advances to the partner organizations when the payments are intended to fund activities in periods following the fiscal year end. At June 30, 2002, payments had been made to partner organizations to fund their operating activities for the quarter July—September 2002. Those amounts are presented to the Statement of Financial Position as Advances to Partner Organizations and totaled \$50,083 at that date.

Munguia continued from page 1

writes, all families “are receiving sufficient technical assistance...” to switch from slash-and-burn to sustainable land-use practices. Participants have planted more Tabasco peppers, plantains, cassava, cabbage, onions, passion fruit and soybeans to increase income and improve nutrition.

Community Loan Funds a Smashing Success

A year after SHI laid the groundwork for the establishment of community loan funds, Munguia reports that they have been a smashing success. As of June 2002, 169 members were participating in the program’s 15 loan funds. From just \$4,450 of seed money provided by SHI, the funds have nearly doubled and are now worth over \$8,000! Most of the loans have gone to agricultural collectives whose members donate a portion of the proceeds from the sale of crops in order to increase the funds.

Demonstration Farm Started in Honduras

Thanks to a special donation collected by some Swiss donors, SHI-Honduras now has a 20 acre demonstration farm and education center in Santa Barbara. SHI-Honduras extensionists work there on their days off to perfect sustainable land-use practices that they will pass along to participants. By the middle of July, the extensionists had planted more than 1,000 tree seedlings. Extensionists had also established plots of plantains with fertilizer beans and soybeans intercropped with pineapple and nitrogen-fixing trees that support black pepper vines.

New Planting in Belize

In Belize, Munguia writes, participants were busy establishing new trees and other crops to take the place of those destroyed in Hurricane Iris. New trees and crops include plantains, coconuts, pineapples, breadfruit, cacao, cedar, mahogany and madre de cacao. Munguia observed that participants had also established new vegetable gardens to improve family nutrition. A special donation of seeds from the Universal Aide Society and the financial contributions of SHI donors are helping participants get back on their feet.

Don Goyo continued from page 1

practices can be difficult and time-consuming. “There have been moments when I did not want to continue since this work is very hard and some friends have told me that I am wasting my time [but] I feel happy about my work”, he says. “The plantains worried me because they didn’t grow, but now they are big and are ready to produce. Soon I will see the fruit of my efforts”.

Thanks to SHI, Don Goyo and his family will see the fruits of their labor not only this year, but every year.



Chocolate Lovers Forever

Maya Farmers Cultivate an Ancient Taste Sensation

An Ancient Taste

The Maya have been chocolate lovers for a very, very long time. Apparently, even longer than most archeologists originally believed.

A recent discovery of an ancient Maya “teapot” and the analysis of its residue suggest that the Maya have consumed chocolate for about 2,600 years, according to Bijal P. Trivedi’s article “Ancient Chocolate Found in Maya ‘Teapot’” in *National Geographic Today*.¹

It had been thought that the Maya began consuming chocolate in about AD 460. Now archeologists have pushed that date as far back as 600 BC after their discovery of the “teapot” in Northern Belize.

While chocolate is an ancient taste sensation, we would not necessarily recognize the chocolate that the Maya raved so much about in hieroglyphs. Have you ever had hot peppers in your hot cocoa?

The ancient Maya made a thick, cacao-butter rich, foamy dark drink with a paste made from roasted cacao seeds, chili pepper and water mixed with honey and/or maize. Hieroglyphs depict Mayas standing up to pour the concoction from one jar to the next in order to form the prized dark chocolate foam that would rise to the top of the drink.

Michael Coe, a co-contributor to *The True History of Chocolate*, suggests that if there is evidence that the Maya were drinking cacao in 500 BC then it seems likely that cacao had been cultivated in the rainforest

for a long time before that. Because cacao is a shade-loving crop indigenous to the Central American rainforest, the Maya did not need to use slash-and-burn to clear the forest in order to produce it. Cacao as a crop thrived in an organic, forested environment.

SHI: Helping to Restore Sustainable, Organic Cacao

SHI and our partner organization, Plenty Belize, work with the Toledo Organic Cacao Growers Association (TCGA) to help Maya farmers in Southern Belize to cultivate this crop sustainably. Recent years have brought cacao hybrids that grow in full sun and do not flourish nearly as long. However, with TCGA’s exclusive Fair Trade contract with Green & Blacks to supply the cacao used to produce the organic “Maya Gold” bar, farmers are motivated to produce cacao in a natural forested environment without using chemicals or slash-and-burn.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Iris, which destroyed most of the cacao in the Maya villages of the Toledo District, SHI extensionists are redoubling their efforts to help participants restore this ancient crop. By restoring the cacao, SHI participants are also helping to restore the forest cover. This will prevent the out-of-control fires and flooding that have hit the region in Iris’ wake from happening again in the future.

Since Iris, SHI-Belize participants have planted over 8,000 cacao seedlings.

¹ Information for this article came from: Trivedi, Bijal P. “Ancient Chocolate Found in Maya ‘Teapot’”, *National Geographic Today*, July 17, 2002. http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2002/07/0717_020717_TVchocolate.html



Photos: Top Left: Cacao pods in Belize. Photograph by Megan Jones. Above: SHI President Florence Reed, Maya Extensionist Candido Chun and Participant Inspect Cacao Nursery.

A Page from Bruce Maanum's Field Notes

The Kukra River Region, Nicaragua-October 2002



Last March, I wrote an article about our rather harrowing trip up the Kukra River in Nicaragua to meet with some potential SHI participants. This trip up the river, we didn't run into nearly as much trouble, and we are delighted with the results that we saw.

Behind Schedule Already

Well...the trip started normally. Our flight to Managua was cancelled, and we lost a day and half scrambling to reschedule and meet up with our volunteer photographer, Scott Vlaun. Now I'm standing under the wing of a 12-seat puddle jumper waiting for Flo and Scott to squeeze themselves out.

It's hot and it's starting to pour. I wipe the sweat off my forehead and watch steam rise from the black tarmac. Part of me will never get used to the rainy season in Bluefields, Nicaragua.

We make our way to the office where we greet our new extensionists, Marvin and Dinis, hired by our Central American Regional Coordinator, Yovany Munguia. We can't spend any more time at the office today, though; it's off to the boat. I don't know about Flo, but I am remembering the last time we took this boat up the Kukra River. We had no life jackets, and we made a five and a half hour return trip in pitch-blackness and rain. Putting it mildly, it was one of the scariest experiences of my life. I'm really hoping that this trip is better.

We find things substantially improved down at the docks, thanks to Marvin and Dinis. There's a boathouse! It's humble, sure, but the boathouse has a watertight roof, a secure storage shed and an on-site



caretaker/security guard. SHI-Nicaragua shares the space with a couple of other organizations. I'm taking everything in when I see Flo motioning excitedly toward the boat itself.

There, in all their orange glory, are six shiny personal flotation devices!

We're Off!

I'm feeling better about this trip already. We get in the boat and start bouncing across the Bay of Bluefields. Scott shouts over the motor and the rain, "How long is this going to take?"

"About five hours!" I shout back. Scott just smiles. He's been to Nicaragua before and his work as a freelance photographer has placed him in many rough situations. Despite getting only a couple hours of sleep the previous night, he actually appears excited at the prospect of a five-hour boat trip in the heat and the pouring rain.

The rain-swollen river is six to eight feet higher than it was the last time we were here. We have to duck to avoid tree branches. We don't mind, though. Some of these trees burst with white, purple and red flowers that smell wonderful.

We get to the community house and having had beans and rice for dinner, drift into deep, restful sleep to the sound of chirping crickets.

Intercropping at the Perez Family Farm

Dawn breaks with crowing roosters and clucking hens directly under us and we get tangled up in our mosquito nets scrambling out of bed. We eat more beans and rice and head further up the river to the Perez family farm.

Petronila Perez welcomes us for a tour of the work that she and her family are doing with their

extensionist Dinis, taking a break from the busy pejibaye harvest. Pejibaye is a palm fruit that the people here boil in salt water, peel and eat. She leads us to an intercropped area with orchid covered grapefruit trees, dense stands of sugar cane, water pear trees and caimito (a fruit tree). Insects, butterflies and hummingbirds buzz and flutter, attracted by the colorful, sweet blooms.

We follow her to another intercropped area that contains plantain, corn, rice, gandul (a staple legume) and cassava (a staple root crop). When planted together, these crops have beneficial by-products that build up the soils, creating a healthier, more productive field.

Petronila's tree nursery is just on the edge of the field. It is protected on three sides by the huge buttresses of an 80-foot tall tree. As she points out the different types of hardwood seedlings, I notice that Dinis is really sweating. I pass the water bottle and say to Flo and Scott that if our Nicaraguan extensionist is sweating rivers then we better start drinking more water.

As we walk back to the boat, Petronila tells us that she is very happy with the work that she is doing with Dinis' help. She's especially pleased with how SHI has helped her family successfully diversify their crops. Thanks to SHI, she, her husband and their six children will have a better life because they will earn more money from their crops now and in the future.

Not Such a Peaceful Evening

It's now eight in the evening, and we've seen several more farms. We filled our hungry stomachs with beans and rice an hour ago and we are really ready to sleep.

Continued on page 4

Photos: Top Left: SHI President Florence Reed and Petronila Perez discuss her crops. Top Right: SHI Vice President for Programs Bruce Maanum inspects participant's nursery. Below: Petronila Perez in front of her tree nursery sheltered by an 80-foot tall tree! All photographs by Scott Vlaun.





Notes, continued from page 3

Unfortunately, the chirping crickets are drowned out by about a dozen heavily armed young national police on their fifth day of a manhunt for a cattle rustler. Cattle ranching is actually a big environmental problem throughout Central America. Rainforest is destroyed to make way for unsustainable grasslands. In fact, this is the main reason why the residents of this region sought out SHI's assistance. While their land is still in good condition, especially when compared with some of the areas where SHI works, our new participants have seen the damage done by cattle ranching.

However, the police do not want to discuss the ecological consequences of cattle ranching in the tropics. Very dirty, very tired and yet very loud, these men stay in the community house with us. We don't really sleep.

Reforesting the Riverbank in San Miguel

Our anticipation of visiting the more remote work sites is about the only thing that gets us out of bed this morning. The last time we went there we walked through knee-deep mud. This time, we have horses and mules...and more beans and rice for breakfast.

I find that my little gray mule is surprisingly strong and likes to run and jump. Scott's large brown horse does not want to move but Flo's horse seems just right. We are off on a two-hour trek through the rainforest. The mud's up to the horses' bellies this time, so we are glad that we didn't try to hoof it ourselves. We arrive in San Miguel for our first visit.

Estebana Romero shows us around her farm. She's very happy, she says, to be getting technical assistance to complete the projects that she started with the Dutch organization whose work SHI took over. The organization had helped her to establish a tree nursery to reforest the area along the river near her house. She tells us that the project ended before she could learn how to

properly transplant her seedlings and so she is glad to be working with Dinis.

Dinis is helping her to reforest the riverbanks in addition to establishing a multistory cacao plantation to increase her family's income. Interspersed with the cacao are hardwood trees and a fertilizer bean cover crop.

Estebana, however, is most pleased with the organic "bio-fertilizer" that Dinis has helped her to make in a white five-gallon pail with a tube flowing into a soda bottle. Manure, sugar and other ingredients, including anaerobic microbes make up this remarkably effective fertilizer that has brought back some seriously degraded soils. Knowing that Estebana has very little formal education, I am impressed with her familiarity with microorganisms and their role in the nutrient cycle.

A Successful Trip Completed

Back on the trail, our beasts of burden waddling through the mud, we talk about how delighted we are with everything that we have seen. All of our new participants are deeply committed to working with SHI to implement sustainable land-use practices. Scott is certainly impressed with SHI's work. It is encouraging to see people so eager to participate in SHI's program, even when their land is still in good shape. These participants have seen the warning signs of coming unsustainable development and are acting now to stop it. The possibilities for them to prosper sustainably seem endless.

Many more families in the surrounding areas have sought out SHI's assistance, too; with increased support, SHI will be able to



reach them with sustainable alternatives to cattle ranching and other forms of unsustainable development. We look forward to working with them.

Photos: Top Left: SHI President Florence Reed and Scott Vlaun on horseback. Photograph by Bruce Maanum. Below: Petronila Perez and her son. Above: Florence Reed and SHI VP for Programs Bruce Maanum take notes. Photographs by Scott Vlaun.

SHI Makes the Grade!

Professors win award for case study about SHI

Sustainable Harvest International makes the grade! Margaret J. Naumes, Ph.D. and Jill A. Kammermeyer, Ph.D., both business professors at the University of New Hampshire, performed a case study on SHI during the winter of 2000-2001. This fall, both professors were awarded the Curtis J. Tate Award for outstanding case study at the North American Case Writers Association conference. The case study on SHI appears in the Spring 2002 *Case Research Journal*.

SHI President Florence Reed and Vice President for Programs Bruce Maanum provided interview material and attended course sections where the students discussed the case.

Naumes and Kammermeyer donated their prize money, totaling \$500, to SHI.

Calling Parents and Teachers!

SHI's New Kids' Corner

This issue marks the first time that SHI has produced a section especially for children. In our first Kids' Corner feature, we talk about the Mayas and their role in the development and discovery of chocolate. For a fun activity, you might want to have your children or students draw a "chocolate tree" growing in their yard or a park.

For more information, you might want to refer to our article "Chocolate Lovers Forever" and "SHI & TCGA: a Sweet Relationship" from the June 2001 *Cosecha Quarterly* (reprints available upon request).

We'd love suggestions on subjects that your children would enjoy and learn from! Please let us know what you think!






THE MAYAS AND CHOCOLATE

HI, KIDS! Do you know where chocolate comes from? This is a story about the ancient Maya and how they started eating chocolate! SHI helps Maya farmers today grow this yummy treat!



The Maya people have lived in Central America



for a very long time. A very, very long time ago, the Mayas discovered that they liked


chocolate. They found it growing on a tree  in the rainforest! No, it wasn't a candy bar on a tree!



Hanging off cacao (ka-cow) trees were pods that look like this . It doesn't look like chocolate does it?

Well, the Mayas cracked open the pods and discovered that the pods had seeds  in them. The seeds are what make chocolate. To make chocolate, the Maya would process the seeds and then dry them. After they dried the cacao seeds, the Mayas would cook them over a fire. Next, the Mayas would peel the seeds and mash them up into a paste. They would add things like cinnamon bark and chili pepper  (hot



peppers in chocolate!) that also grow in the rainforest. They would mix this with water. Then, they would pour it from one jar to another over and over again (it's a lot of work!) to make it foamy and delicious. Then, they would drink it! I bet that you have never had that kind of chocolate! The Mayas would tend the trees and

some even planted cacao trees near their homes . Can you imagine having a chocolate tree in your

yard? Cacao needs taller trees  to shade them, so the Mayas did not cut down the rainforest to grow

cacao. Some Mayas still grow cacao today. This is Candido . He works with SHI  to help his community learn to grow organic cacao. Organic means that it is natural and does not have chemicals in it that hurt the earth, people and animals. SHI farmers grow cacao in the rainforest without cutting down trees.

Here are some Maya kids  with cacao seedlings.

SHI helps Maya farmers to grow cacao so that they can earn more money so that their families  have enough to eat and have other things that they need. And, so that we can have yummy  to eat!



Sustainable Harvest International

104 Congress Street, Suite 401
Portsmouth, NH 03801

E-mail info@sustainableharvest.org
Web www.sustainableharvest.org

Subscribe to La Cosecha Today!

By making a donation to Sustainable Harvest International, you will receive a free subscription to our newsletter, La Cosecha (the Harvest). Please **donate** today! For more information about SHI's programs and a free copy of our newsletter, please e-mail us: info@sustainableharvest.org.



La Cosecha is printed on recycled paper using soy based inks. Enjoy it and pass it on!



Happy Holidays!

We here at Sustainable Harvest International hope that you and yours have a joyful holiday season.

Gift of Hope Certificates

Give your friends and family a Gift of Hope this holiday season. Donations of \$25 or more to Sustainable Harvest International qualify for a personalized full-color Gift of Hope Certificate to be sent to the recipient of your choice. Participants in SHI's program will receive assistance to plant either trees or organic vegetable gardens. Please provide the name and mailing address of recipients as well as a tree or organic gardening designation along with your donation.

SHI's New La Cosecha (the Harvest)

Here's your new and improved SHI newsletter, La Cosecha! More photos, more stories from the field and an all-new Kids' Corner. We hope that you enjoy our new La Cosecha. You will receive La Cosecha twice a year!

Inside:

- ✘ Yovany Munguia's Field Report
- ✘ Sticking with Sustainability
- ✘ Financial News
- ✘ Chocolate Lovers Forever
- ✘ A Page from Bruce Maanum's Field Notes
- ✘ SHI Makes the Grade
- ✘ The Mayas and Chocolate: SHI Kid's Corner

Sustaining Friends

Sustainable Harvest International would like to take a moment to thank a very special group of people: our Sustainers. SHI Sustainers give regularly on a monthly or quarterly basis to provide SHI with dependable support. In addition to recognizing them in our Annual Report, we mention them here.

SHI Monthly and Quarterly Sustainers for Fiscal Year 2002

Meg Berlin & Didier Murat, Terence Barr, Jim Barrett, Steve Birnbaum, Doug Bloch, Douglass Crouse, Judith Fatyol, Robert Franke, Veronica Kaczmarowski, Angela Matthews, Nancy Lovejoy, Joy & Steve Urban, Jane White, Betty Williams, Jerome Full.

We invite you to join the Sustainer program this year. Imagine: your gift of \$25 per month could support a family's participation in the SHI program. Whatever you can afford to give per month or per quarter will go far toward helping SHI families achieve sustainability.



Young SHI participants in their sustainable rice paddy. Photograph by Bruce Maanum.



104 Congress Street, Suite 401



Portsmouth, NH 03801



Phone 603.427.0735



Fax 603.422.8762

E-mail info@sustainableharvest.org



Web www.sustainableharvest.org