



LA COSECHA

The Harvest

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SHI Launches Program to Connect Communities

In an effort to increase cultural understanding and empower the global community, Sustainable Harvest International is launching a new program called Smaller World. The program creates direct connections between groups and individuals who support our work and the communities we serve in Honduras, Belize, Nicaragua and Panama. Participants

receive quarterly updates on the progress in their partner communities and are given the opportunity to take part in a service-oriented trip.

Our founding Smaller World groups are The Peterborough Unitarian Church of New Hampshire and R.E.A.C.H, a student group from the University of Maine. The

Peterborough group is partnering with the community of Montelimar, Honduras and the group from the University of Maine is partnering with the community of Terreritos, Honduras. Terreritos is the site of SHI's first demonstration farm, now under construction.

The Peterborough

congregation has worked hard this year to raise \$2,500 to support SHI's work in Montelimar, a community of 64 families in the Honduran highlands. Many families in Montelimar have been devastated by a lack of resources, natural disasters and, most recently, the severe drop in coffee

Yovany Munguia, SHI's Regional Coordinator, Reports from the Field

The past quarter has been very productive for the families assisted by SHI. They have converted more than 118 new acres to sustainable uses. Approximately 100 of these acres are being used to grow plots of corn, beans and rice, using sustainable and organic techniques, while the rest are used to grow alternative crops like cardamon, ginger, and garden vegetables that improve both family nutrition and income. Families are looking forward to the start of the rainy season when even more gardening and reforestation projects will begin. Some highlights from the past three months from our country programs:

Belize

Nikki Grey, a Peace Corps volunteer, has worked with primary schools to promote health and nutrition. The teachers and students have started vegetable gardens and tree nurseries.

Honduras

Our longest running country program, SHI Honduras, has received its official status as a Honduran nonprofit organization. Recently, the program was visited by two volunteer groups: Engineers Without Borders from Lafayette College and Rowan University working to improve community access to potable water, and a group of volunteers from New England assisting with organic gardening projects.

Nicaragua

With support from the Trickle Up Program, 34 families working with SHI along the Kukra River are developing micro-enterprise opportunities and community loan funds.

Panama

Volunteer Michaela Brehm will be working with SHI Panama to further develop our monitoring and evaluation system. This will help track environmental and economic improvements in SHI work areas.



Isidro Cartagena and two of his daughters stand behind their fish pond in Montelimar, Honduras. Montelimar is the Smaller World Partner Community of the Peterborough Unitarian Church of NH.

in the Smaller World program develop a relationship with a community for the duration of SHI's program there (usually five years or until the community members have learned the sustainable agricultural practices needed to support themselves). The Smaller World partici-

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The Magic of Bocashi

Ramon Salguero isn't the only farmer in Honduras who has seen his crops improve dramatically after adding bocashi to the soil. Bocashi (from the Japanese *bokashi*) is a highly effective natural fertilizer. More than 50 of the families working with SHI in Honduras have started making bocashi on their farms. All are reporting great success.

Though there are many different techniques for making bocashi, SHI participants have developed a simple recipe that works well for them and requires materials that are readily available. Manure, coffee pulp or rice hulls, yeast and molasses are mixed with healthy soil. The yeast becomes active when it comes in contact with the molasses and the fermentation process begins.

The bocashi mixture ferments and decomposes for a period of 15 days. Each morning and night it should be mixed so that it does not become too hot. At the end of the 15-day fermentation period, the bocashi is ready to use or, as our field staff explain, "ready to feed the earth."

There are a number of uses for this special compost. Most of the farmers working with SHI have found it most helpful in their tree nurseries and vegetable gardens. After seeing Ramon Salguero's success, it is evident that there is potential for it to be used on a commercial scale as well. Safe, effective and inexpensive, bocashi is a wonderful alternative to harsh, expensive chemical fertilizers!



Mixing bocashi in Honduras

Ramon Salguero's Incredible Corn

Participant Testimony Oro, Honduras

Ramon Salguero is 47 years old and lives with his wife, Suyapa Acosta, and three children in the mountainous village of Oro, Honduras. The family grows coffee and basic grains on a small scale. Ramon shares approximately 10 acres of land with his brothers where they grow mostly coffee and some basic grains like the corn pictured right.

"I am very grateful for the support that SHI has given me. As an experimenter, I started with about 1/2 an acre using the organic techniques that Jacobo Suazo [the local SHI extensionist] taught me. This land produced 3,000 lbs of corn! It is incredible but true! Now, after seeing such wonderful results, we are growing an additional acre of corn. We are using organic bocashi compost which I have learned to make myself. I would like to start my own small business making bocashi, but people still don't believe the results until they witness them. I don't have to worry about the rising prices of chemical fertilizers because I know how to make my own natural ones."



Ramon Salguero shows that his corn is growing in rich soil enhanced by his homemade bocashi.

The additional acre Ramon planted with corn will be ready to harvest in September. He estimates that it will produce 10,000 lbs of corn. In his region, an acre normally produces 4,500-5,000 lbs when farmers use traditional slash-and-burn methods and dangerous chemical fertilizers.

Ramon asked for an SHI extensionist to come to Oro after he heard about SHI's work with a group of farmers in the community of Terreritos. He wanted to work with SHI because he saw SHI taught techniques that were practical and protected the environment.

Continued on next page

Ramon Salguero Continued

SHI extension worker Jacobo Suazo has been working with families in Oro since April 2002. Thus far, Jacobo has assisted families with many projects including tree nurseries, vegetable gardens, fish ponds, training workshops on the use of organic fertilizers, making natural chicken feed, improved hen houses and biogas digesters. He has also

provided Ramon Salguero and his family with training and some materials to construct a small irrigation system that has ensured the survival of their vegetable garden during the dry season. These vegetables will not only improve family nutrition, but provide a source of income as well.

Photo credit: Jon Hurst



With bocashi, Salguero's field is now producing twice the amount of corn it did in years past.

Florence Reed, SHI's President, Remembers Friend and Supporter Joanne Lipshires

One of the joys of my work is meeting extraordinary people from all corners of the world. Of course, with this joy comes the occasional sadness of learning that one of these friends has passed away. So it is with Joanne Lipshires whose passing represents a great loss to many people and to Sustainable Harvest International. Joanne faithfully donated what she could to support SHI's work, fearlessly encouraged her friends to do the same and volunteered her time for everything from putting mailing labels on *La Cosecha* to organizing fundraising events.

In fact, Joanne gave me the first donation that I remember receiving. When I was a student at the University of New Hampshire, Joanne appeared out of the blue at the Progressive Student Network office. I was working on bringing speakers to campus to talk about Central American issues among other things, and Joanne asked if she could make a donation to help with this work. It was the first time I realized that people who did not even know me would be willing to financially support the work that I found important.

I will always remember Joanne for many things such as her wonderful poetry and great sense of humor, but especially that first gift: the knowledge that good work will be supported by good people.

SHI plans to continue working with the Salguero family and the other farmers in Oro who have asked for our assistance for another 3 years, or until they are ready to support themselves using sustainable techniques. Their success depends on your support! Please use the enclosed envelope to donate what you can today. You can ensure that our program in Oro and 69 other communities continues AND help us to reach the many other farmers asking for our support.



Okra Flower

Photo credit: Yovany Munguia

S U S T A I N A B L E T E C H N O L O G Y

Nikki Grey
Peace Corps Volunteer

Solar Water Pump Project Brings Life to Community Tree Nursery in Belize

SHI Belize installed two solar water pumps in the rural Toledo District of Belize this year. The funding for this project was generously donated by the Cottonwood Foundation. The road to installing the pumps has been a long one. Though Belize is known for its beauty and tranquility, the country faces many challenges that inhibit sustainable development.

The Toledo region of Belize receives extreme amounts of rain annually; however, the dry season is long and severe. Cultivated crops are unable to get the amount of water they need, even when planted near bodies of water. This is due to a combination of heavy clay soil that bakes and keeps moisture out, the location of viable farm land above the sources of water, and the lack of power and water systems in the district which makes it very difficult to care for crops and seedlings for many months out of the year. Therefore, there is a need for some form of irrigation in the long, hot, dry season. SHI was able to work with two villages, San Jose and Santa Cruz, to install solar water pumps that now provide water to communal tree nurseries.

After a long wait in customs, SHI Belize picked up the two solar panels and pumps in October 2003. We scouted and designated the sites and consulted with a local expert on solar energy systems who agreed to help us with the installation that was planned for November 2003.

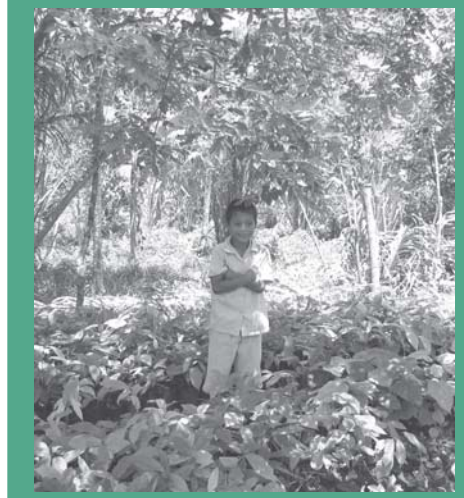
HOW DOES IT WORK?



A solar panel is connected to a car battery and the car battery is connected to the water pump which is hung over the bank of a stream. When the pump is turned on, stream water is sucked up through a hose (6 feet up) and then up the hill to the tank (120 feet away). The tank is elevated so when a person turns the water on, gravity increases the water pressure. The SHI community tree nursery next to the tank is watered twice daily.

Unfortunately, November and December came and went without the help from the local expert; so we set out to do it ourselves.

Buses run infrequently, in and out only four times a week, making



Cayetano Ico shows off the thriving community tree nursery that has been made possible by the new water pump.

travel challenging. A typical week of construction would go something like this: I'd go in to San Jose on Wednesday, work on the setup with the community, need a part, wait until Friday to catch the next bus out to buy the needed supplies in Punta Gorda. Friday in Punta Gorda, the part would be out of stock; a simple part like a check valve or PVC bit; but this is rural Belize and with very few people to buy supplies, very few supplies are available for purchase. So then we'd have to wait until we made the 200-mile trip to Spanish Lookout to buy supplies. This happened twice, which in the States would mean two trips in a day to the local hardware store. In Toledo, Belize it means a month or more in delays.

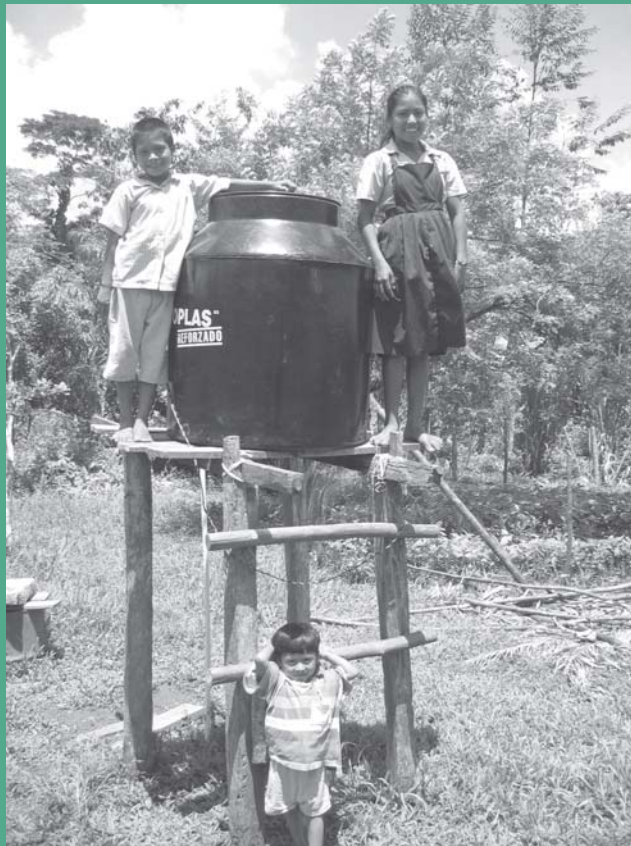
At long last, the solar pumps were fully installed and running in Santa Cruz and San Jose, Toledo. The family who watches after the San Jose pump uses it twice a day to water the tree seedlings for all of the 11 SHI San Jose farmers. With the excess the family is able to water the garden, have closer access to

Continued on next page

drinking water, wash the kids and the pigs and the clothes, and so much more. Each time I visit and check up on the pump, I hear that they've found a new use for the excess water.

In the beginning, we were challenged with the land itself, limited access to goods, and infrequent transportation. In the end, what once felt like an insurmountable task turned out to be beneficial for everyone. The staff is now capable of installing solar water pumps. The families taking care of the pumps

have access to water in a time they normally would not. And, of course, farmers all have trees growing in the nursery that can be planted in the ground at the start of the rainy season to reforest the land and eventually provide greater nutrition, income generation, and erosion control for everyone in the area.



Three of the nine members of the Ico family, who care for the pump, pose in front of the water tank.

Wonderful Music, Delicious Food, Great Fundraising!

SHI's biggest fundraising event ever took place this summer in Newburyport, MA. Ted and Jenny Nelson, Nathan Felde, Megan Jones and Julia Farwell-Clay hosted two dinner parties followed by an evening of music and dancing at the Felde/Jones home. Nathan said that this was a wonderful way to bring his community together. "Great music, dancing and food replenish the spirit and recharge the fun in fundraising." Guitarist Bobby Keyes and Lucky Stereo provided the music for this successful event at which over \$13,000 was raised - enough to support SHI's work with more than five communities this year! Thank you to everyone who made this event a success.

One Farmer's Story

Agriculture is my work. When I was 13, I started working with the land to make gardens, but the ideas that I had to create fruitful results were few. Later, people who knew me told me ways that I could make a garden in which the first seeds that I planted would grow. Days later, the extensionist from SHI Panama came by, and I asked him what I would have to do to become involved with the program. It is very simple. They help us to get the seeds that we want to plant; also they would help us with the materials we need. In addition to that, they have helped by giving me training in how to work the land, how to make a wood-conserving stove, a manual water pump, how to prepare land for growing without burning, how to control the insects and diseases that attack the plants, and SHI has taught me how to grow seeds without using chemicals. They have helped me a great deal to grow my garden. I hope that they will be able to continue to help me and I can keep working with Sustainable Harvest International.

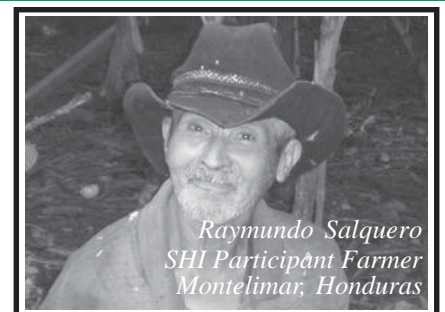
This month, I would like to plant cabbage and the carrot seeds that are not yet in the ground. Later, I can harvest the vegetables and take them to market. I would like to keep working with SHI and receive the support I need so that when I need help, I have it. Thank you for believing in me, a young man, whose work is gardening, and from this I hope to harvest much.

*-Manuel Enrique Sanchez
Anton, Panama*



Felicitia Ico observes the pump at the stream's edge as it brings water to the tree nursery above.

Photo credit: Nikki Grey



*Raymundo Salguero
SHI Participant Farmer
Montelimar, Honduras*

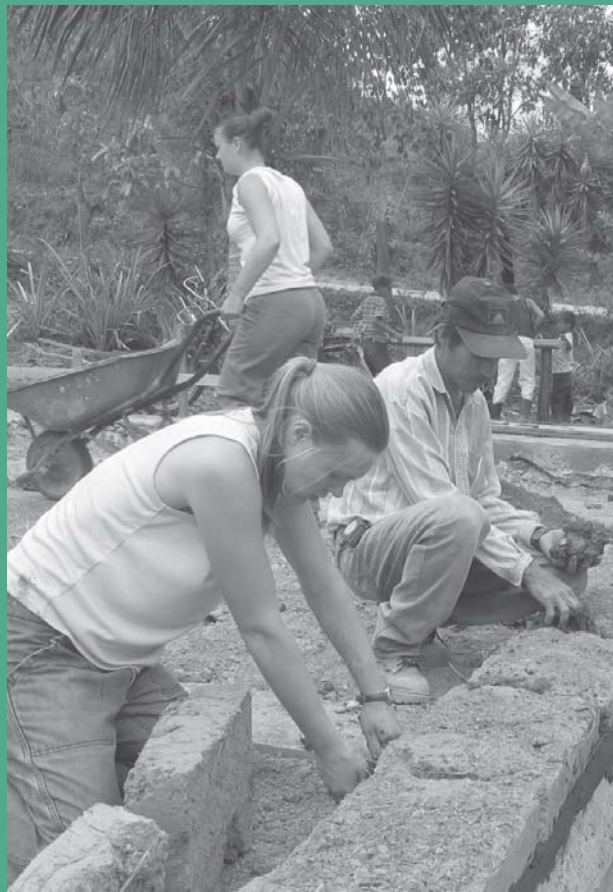
Smaller World Cont...

prices. The farmers working with SHI in this area are eager to learn techniques that they can use to increase food production and family income (a typical family of seven in this area has an income of only \$400 a year). Families working with SHI in Montelimar are growing their staple crops of beans and corn in a sustainable fashion. They have planted vegetable gardens and are bringing in the extra income they need to send their children to school and prepare for the future. With the support of the Peterborough community over the coming years, SHI will work with families to start an educational program at the local school, build an irrigation system,

help start micro-projects like the fish pond shown on the front page, construct wood-conserving stoves, build chicken coops and establish a community loan fund.

The UMaine student group, R.E.A.C.H. (*respect, education, action, community, hope*), had the opportunity to take an active part in the work that they are supporting when they visited the community of Terreritos in the spring. They raised the funds for the materials to construct the first building at SHI's demonstration farm. The site will serve as a training center where families can come and see first hand sustainable agricultural practices that they can implement on their own land.

The students traveled during their spring break to the small village and worked with the community to lay the foundation for the farm.



Ecology and Environmental Science major from the University of Maine, Holly Gumz, helps put mortar between adobe brick at SHI's Demonstration Farm in Terreritos, Honduras.

"Working on the farm was an extremely rewarding and fulfilling experience; there is nothing more worthwhile than working with others to accomplish such a great goal," Emma Pope-Welch, a R.E.A.C.H. member said. You can read more about the students' experience at our website: www.sustainableharvest.org.

If you or your community group would be interested in becoming a member of our Smaller World program, please contact our office and request a Smaller World Information Packet. Check out the back of this newsletter for information on two upcoming Smaller World Tours to Belize and Honduras!

Photo credit: Yovany Munguia
Sarah Kennedy

SHI Welcomes New Staff and Bruce Maanum takes on new projects

Field Program Coordinator

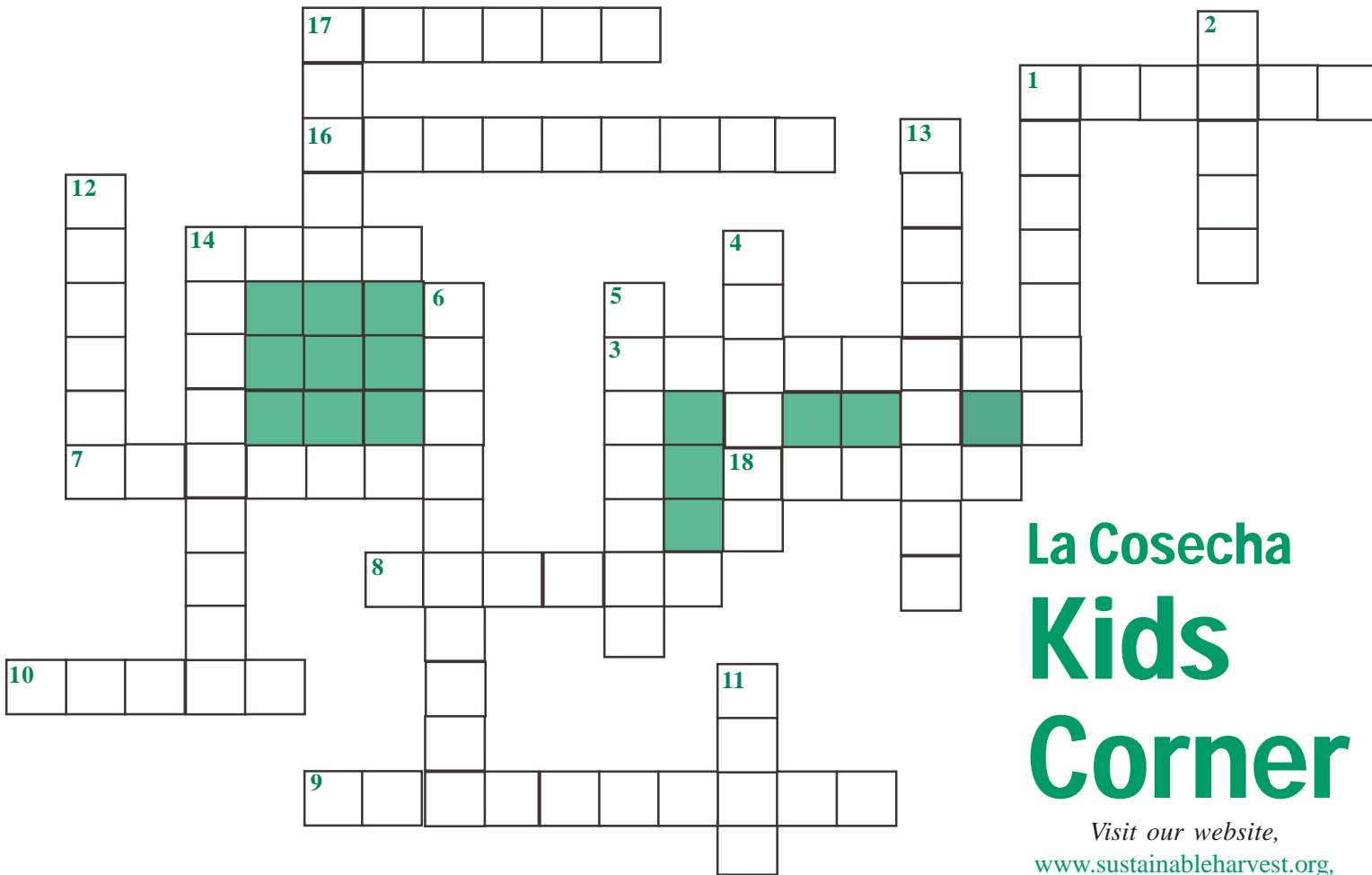
Jon Hurst received a B.A. in Psychology from the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. After graduation he founded Via Community, a residential program in Berkeley, CA that provides housing for developmentally disabled individuals. Jon has also served as a volunteer with the U.S. Peace Corps in Panama, promoting sustainable agriculture and reforestation, and as a Volunteer in Guatemala with the U.S. Crisis Corps. Following his return to the U.S., Jon continued to work in Latin America managing a portfolio of projects working with reproductive health. He provided assistance to projects in Mexico and Guatemala with Family Planning International Assistance (FPIA), Planned Parenthood's international division. Most recently Jon worked at the University of California, Berkeley managing research funds for Professors in the Electronics Research Laboratory.

Development Director

SHI is happy to announce the addition of **Bob St. Peter** to our staff. Bob volunteered in SHI's office for four months and he will now be working full-time to communicate with SHI's growing number of members and supporters, while also seeking new funding from institutional donors. Bob graduated from the University of New Hampshire with a B.A. in political science and a minor in Race, Culture & Power. He has since worked with non-profit organizations including the International Institute for Humane Education and the Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Policy. Bob has also held positions with two food co-operatives in Maine and helped open a natural foods restaurant. In addition to his work with SHI, Bob is working towards completing the Master Gardener Volunteer Program through the University of Maine Cooperative Extension. He is looking forward to contributing to the expansion of small-scale sustainable agriculture as a means of feeding the people of the world.

Happy Trails

to **Bruce Maanum**, Former VP of Programs. After four years with Sustainable Harvest International, Bruce is changing careers. He is now working in ecological building and renewable energy in Maine. We wish him the very best! Bruce and SHI President, Florence Reed, are engaged to be married next summer.



La Cosecha Kids Corner

Visit our website,
www.sustainableharvest.org,
 for an answer key.

ACROSS

1. This orange root vegetable contains Vitamin A. In Spanish it is called a zanahoria.
3. This country, just north of Nicaragua, is the home of SHI's first demonstration farm.
7. By planting rows of plants like pineapples along the contours of steep hills, farmers working with SHI are able to protect their crops from soil _____.
8. The _____ that many North Americans drink every morning is often from as far away as Central America.
9. This large green and red fruit with small black seeds grows well in Central America.
10. SHI helps communities build irrigation systems to bring _____ to their crops.
14. These animals are not native to tropic climates and damage fragile soil with their big bodies and pointy hooves.
16. Farmers working with SHI learn how to make organic fertilizers that they can use instead of harmful _____ fertilizers that make their families sick.
17. This primate lives in the rainforest protected by SHI farmers working in Central America.
18. This yummy tropical fruit is grown on trees that prevent soil erosion.

DOWN

1. When added to your soil, _____ will help your crops grow. It can be made from organic material like food scraps.
2. SHI farmers plant these to stop erosion and protect the soil. They also provide homes for animals like monkeys.
4. The families working with SHI in this country are saving forests which protect the watershed of the large canal that connects the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.
5. SHI has helped families to build coops to protect this animal from predators and to make it easier for farmers to collect manure for their gardens.
6. This habitat provides a home for over half of our world's species of plants and animals.
11. A _____ can be used to store and protect grain and seeds.
12. This small country is the only one in Central America where English is the official language. In addition to English, many people there also speak Mayan dialects.
13. This country contains one of the biggest lakes in the world. It is just north of Costa Rica.
14. Farmers in Belize harvest their Cacao plants which are used to make this tasty dessert food.
17. This large colorful parrot depends on your support to protect its rainforest home.




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

La Cosecha is a publication of Sustainable Harvest International (SHI), a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. Sustainable Harvest International is building a global network of local partners working toward environmental, economic and social sustainability. SHI facilitates long-term collaboration among trained local staff, farmers and communities to implement sustainable land-use practices that alleviate poverty by restoring ecological stability. All donations to SHI are tax-deductible.

81 Newbury Neck Road  Surry, Maine 04684  Phone 207.374.2002  Fax 207.374.2093
E-mail shi@sustainableharvest.org  Web www.sustainableharvest.org

New Dates!

**Upcoming Smaller
World Tours**

Discover Honduras
January 10th-17th 2005

Teach Nutrition in Belize
Spring 2005

Join SHI staff, Board members and other supporters for an unforgettable week of sharing, learning, working and making the world a better place.

SHI's local staff and program participants are proud of all that they have accomplished with your support. Getting to know them will inspire and move you. That is why four days of this week-long trip will be spent getting to know SHI's local staff and program participants, while helping them with one or more of many volunteer opportunities! The remaining three days will be spent getting to know some of the other wonders that Honduras has to offer such as Mayan ruins, a tropical cloud forest, botanical gardens and more.

The \$1,000 per person cost of the trip covers double-occupancy accommodations (simple, but clean & comfortable) for 8 nights, all meals (a variety of local foods) for 7 days, in-country transportation, guide / translation service, entrance to two parks and a donation to support SHI's work in Honduras. Not included: the flight to Honduras that we can help you arrange (around \$300 — \$600 depending on departure city); single-occupancy accommodations (\$100 extra or we can try to arrange for a roommate) and extra activities such as rafting and diving that we can arrange for the additional cost of the activity.

This spring, SHI launches its first Smaller World volunteer-driven service trip to Belize. We will be helping poor families grow nutritious vegetables that will not only improve their health, but create an additional source of income.

Participants will start their experience in Belize with a training workshop where they will learn about local produce, cooking, sanitation and family needs for proper nutrition. The group will then travel to remote Mayan villages and hold educational workshops of their own for local community members. Participants will stay at a rustic eco-lodge in the jungle and will have the opportunity to truly experience Mayan culture. During the 2 week trip there will also be 2 weekend excursions that may include snorkeling, rafting, hiking and visiting Mayan ruins.

Before departure, trip participants will be asked to hold community fundraising and awareness events. The group of volunteers will be asked to raise \$3,000. These funds will be used to purchase educational supplies as well as materials to share with the communities such as seeds, chimneys for wood-conserving cook stoves, silos, pipes for irrigation systems and gardening tools.

With your help, farmers in Belize will be able to grow nutritious food for their families without cutting down more of the forest.

For more information on these, and other Smaller World Tours, please contact our office.