



LA COSECHA

The Harvest

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SHI FARMERS ARE SAVING THOUSANDS OF ACRES OF FOREST

Central American farmers destroy thousands of acres of forest each year using slash-and-burn methods to clear the land. With the support of SHI's local staff, families are learning techniques that enable them to grow their food on one piece of land year after year without needing to clear more forest.

SHI participant farmer, Briam Ishim, says that his work with SHI's local extensionists in Belize changed the way he thinks about farming. He writes, "Before we clear[ed] our land to [plant crops] like corn, for our home use only. But now this program opened our horizon... that there is in fact a better way to farm that would allow us to get better yields and more from our land; if we do farming the other way—no burning and using sustain-

able techniques... the SHI way. Thus, we would be in a better position to sustain our family more economically and directly saving the good land and forest for generations to come. At present, we have an organic veggie garden including cucumber, cabbage, and hot peppers. I already took part in a training held to make organic fertilizer and insecticides, which we are applying in our garden. On behalf of my family, I would like to thank the extensionists for allowing us the opportunity to work with the organization as we hope to expand in the coming months. Thank you."

SHI field staff estimate that for every acre of land grown using sustainable methods, five acres of land are saved from slash-and-burn destruction. To date, SHI families like the Ishims are growing trees and food sustainably on 5,669 acres. Do the math and that means that **families working with SHI have saved approximately 28,345 acres of forest!** That's big news at a time when our tropical forests are more important than ever in combating global climate change and providing homes for threatened species of plants and animals.

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Field Program Update

Field Program Director, Greg Bowles

Belize

Sustainable Harvest Belize has made great strides in the past quarter and planted more than 100,000

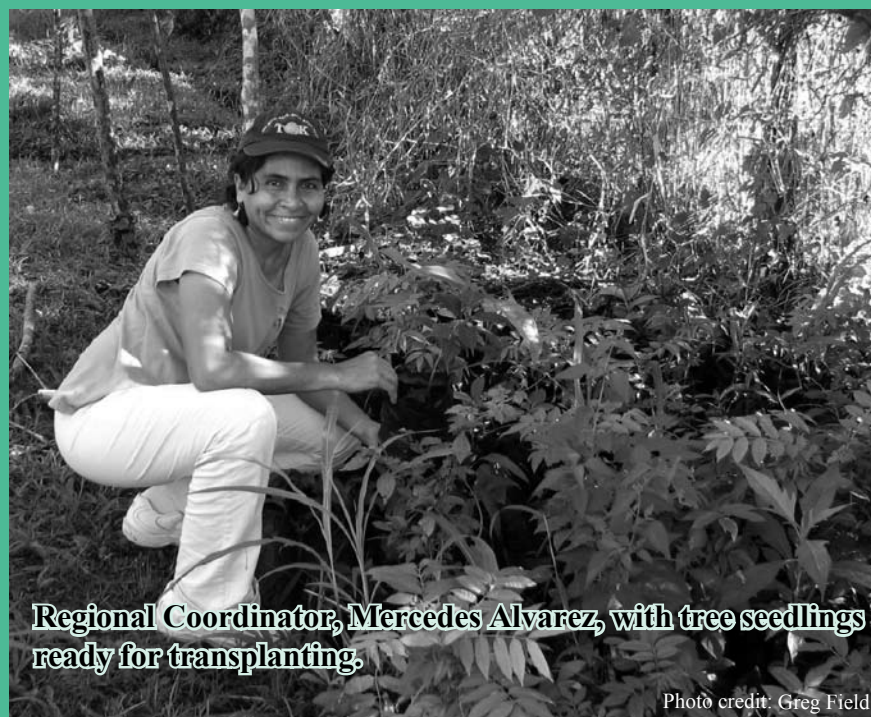
trees. Of course it is not physically possible for one country director, Nana Mensah, and three extensionists to do all of that on their own; they achieved this through delivery of plants to families and to SHI school groups, who worked with the staff to use the trees for reforestation and soil improvement projects. The program has built over 40 Justa stoves, a model of stove that uses very little firewood and

just as importantly, reduces smoke within the home. The program extended its outreach efforts and has done projects in conjunction with local NGO's on stoves and chicken coop building, and will be working with the Cotton Tree Lodge to establish a demonstration plot.

Honduras

The success of our Honduras affiliate continues. The local program reached 138% of the target goals they set with us last quarter. In addition, country director Yovany Munguia expanded the program's

Program Update continued on page 3...



Regional Coordinator, Mercedes Alvarez, with tree seedlings ready for transplanting.

Photo credit: Greg Field

Global Microcredit Summit

SHI Founder and President, Florence Reed

The richest 500 people in the world have the same amount of wealth as the poorest 416 million people. With that in mind, many organizations, including Sustainable Harvest International, are working hard to help those with the least to work their way out of poverty. Microcredit is one of the key tools for carrying out that work.

I recently had the pleasure of attending the 2006 Microcredit Summit in Halifax, Nova Scotia. During the opening plenary, the Microcredit Summit Campaign's Director announced two new goals for the second phase of the campaign:

- Working to ensure that 175 million of the world's poorest families, especially the women of those families, are receiving credit for self-employment and other financial and business services by the end of 2015.

- Working to ensure that 100 million families rise above the US\$1 a day threshold adjusted for purchasing power parity (PPP), between 1990 and 2015.

The Summit was attended by over 2,000 people from more than 110 countries, including Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus, Queen Sofia of Spain, the President of Honduras and everyone who is anyone in microfinance. It was exhilarating to be there, attend all the plenary sessions and workshops, and meet a variety of highly knowledgeable people from a variety of MFIs (MicroFinance Institutions).

The observation I would most like to share regarding my conversations with many of the MFIs at the summit was their growing realization that, though they talk publicly about microcredit's ability to end poverty around the world, talking amongst themselves they acknowledge that microcredit by itself will not achieve that goal. This reinforced for me that our holistic approach to development – training in sustainable land-use practices, marketing assistance and access to credit - is completely on target to help families get out and stay out of poverty while protecting our environment. At the same time, seeing the vast knowledge of this field possessed by so many NGOs, reinforced my desire to collaborate with experienced, knowledgeable and successful MFIs to bring credit to SHI participants rather than trying to take on that component of SHI's work on our own.

Mujeres en Acción (Women in Action): "SHI gave us the funds for a chicken project and after we had such success selling eggs and hens, we decided to start a sewing business. There are four of us in the cooperative and with the money we earned we were able to buy this sewing machine. We sell everything we make and support our families."



With that in mind, I spent a lot of time getting to know representatives of many nonprofit organizations. I also met and spoke at length with Nelson Avila, the Honduran Finance Minister. He promised to do everything he could to help Sustainable Harvest Honduras, starting by inviting Yovany Munguia, the Executive Director of our Honduran affiliate to the presidential palace for a meeting.

With the help of Don Avila and others that I met at the summit, along with the new knowledge gained there, I look forward to increasing and improving the impact of SHI's community loan funds that have already helped 240 families turn \$10,000 of seed money into \$30,000 through 195 small loans to members and various group projects.

Lili Andrade, the coordinator of SHI's micro-credit and micro-enterprise work in Honduras wrote recently about her work.

"[SHI's Rural Loan Funds] don't just offer loans to poor people, but rather they give them hope for a better life. [In 2001], we started with 12 Rural Loan Funds. Then in 2003 two more were opened and we started six more in 2004 and another in 2005. [They were all started] with \$10,152 of seed money from SHI plus \$2,509 from the participating families. Currently, 21 Rural Loan Funds are managing \$30,114 of capital, providing credit for 206 members and

directly benefiting 1,030 families who have received 1,422 loans.

The Rural Loan Funds have had excellent results managing credit for individuals to carry out activities that improve family income, and for group projects to generate more capital for the Rural Loan Funds, as well as generating savings according to each farmer's economic situation. The Savings and Credit Funds are integrated community businesses managed by rural families that offer financial services to their members and outside individuals. The principal objectives of the Rural Loan Funds are to promote savings and guarantee access to credit for the families.

The Rural Loan Funds have been of great importance to Sustainable Harvest Honduras and the participating families as a means to implement a strategy for campesinos to achieve economic and social sustainability as well as community self-sufficiency. The goal is to continue expanding to communities where Rural Loan Funds don't exist and that these new ones continue helping with the seed capital to start more new Rural Loan Funds."

Field Program Update continued from page 1...

outreach such that now we have over 500 families working with us in Honduras, which is SHI's largest program. Working with these new families and others, almost 100 family gardens were established in the last quarter. Close to 34,000 trees were planted and nearly 200 acres were reclaimed and diversified during this same time period. In addition, Honduras intends for 2007 to be a year-long, tenth anniversary celebration, which has included the formal opening of the demonstration farm and training center that has been built in the Santa Barbara district.

Nicaragua

Sustainable Harvest Nicaragua continues to meet pressing needs of people living in extreme poverty. The number of families that work with us is smaller than elsewhere in Central America because conditions on the Atlantic Coast are very rough; in the wet season, the mud can get past your knees, which even the SHI mules have difficulty handling. The distance to markets and the lack of infrastructure sometimes hamper our efforts to raise the income levels of our families, but Country Director Marvin Gonzales and his staff meet these challenges head-on. Due to heavy rains, statistical results were low last quarter, but the program has focused on other areas such as school environmental education and micro-lending. The staff have been getting seeds and trees ready for more intensive field work during the drier months. Of particular importance to the program, all legal requirements have been met so that we now have an independent Nicaraguan affiliate, just as we do in Honduras. Our new affiliate's name is FUNCOS, the Spanish acronym for Sustainable Harvest Nicaragua Foundation.

Panama

There have been some changes in personnel within the Panama program, but service to SHI families has continued without interruption. The program is now working together with the environmental organization CEMAD in the Anton district, one of the poorest regions of the country, and has focused on the construction of tree nurseries and increasing the agricultural output of rural farmers. This work includes two irrigation projects for local communities, one of them in conjunction with potential logistical support from Engineers Without Borders. The program also continues its work in Chagres National Park, which is a watershed for the Panama Canal. This is a region that will grow in importance with the expansion of the canal in the coming years. Lead Extensionist Luis Escalante stays very busy managing both regions where SHI works, but continues to report that this work is paying off in families who use sustainable agricultural techniques and have an improving standard of living due to the efforts of SHI's extension program.

A Truck for Panama!



Photo credit: Greg Bowles

Thanks to an outpouring of support, the SHI Panama team now has a truck to transport themselves and supplies to the communities they serve. Thank you for giving Luis and Daysbeth the tools to do their work!

SUSTAINABLE TECHNOLOGY: Bucket Kit Irrigation for Belize's Toledo District

Chris Skellenger, 11 Oaks



SHI Belize Staff members, Nana Mensah and Kenny Cal, make holes in drip irrigation tubing with Chris Skellenger's guidance.

Photo credit: Greg Field

The staff of SHI Belize were gracious hosts to folks from Leelanau County, Michigan this past January. Susan Skellenger and I spent about a month in the Toledo District with Country Director Nana Mensah and his staff, distributing bucket irrigation kits to local program participants.

I met Candido Chun, Southern Regional Coordinator, last winter in Honduras at the Florence Reed Demonstration Farm when I gave a seminar on bucket kit technology. Candido recognized the possible benefits to local farmers in the Toledo District and started researching the interest level among participants. One year later, the kits are a reality.

Bucket kit irrigation is a remarkably simple technique for growing vegetables in family gardens during the dry season. The concept was conceived some 30 years ago by Richard Chapin of the Chapin Living Waters Foundation in response to drought and the ensuing starvation in Senegal. Today, his bucket kits help feed nearly 80,000 children in Malawi alone. An impressive figure to be sure, but one must remember that the number of malnourished people living at the subsistence level is at least 200 million and climbing.

The bucket kit consists of a locally-available five gallon plastic bucket to which we supply some special irrigation tubing that has been designed to irrigate 100 linear feet of garden bed, either as two 50 foot rows, three 33 foot rows, etc. The tubing is engineered to work with gravity

when the bucket is placed on a platform one meter above the soil. The system contains three different filters so gray water and manure tea can also be run through it. Water seeps from slits one foot apart in the 'pipe' and is distributed precisely to the roots of the plants. The kits can be 'landed' from the States for about \$15.00 each and last about 10 years. This means each kit can supply fresh vegetables for 4 people at a cost of about 1.50 per year! The bucket kit's long life span is why we consider it 'sustainable'.

The first farm to receive a kit was that of Mrs. Teresa Coc, in Golden Stream, Belize. With an entourage consisting of Belize staff (Nana, Candido, Juan, and Kenny), visiting country directors from Honduras and Nicaragua, and SHI Board members, we had a bucket kit up and running in Mrs. Coc's garden in no time! Several small children from the school near the Coc farm were also in attendance... perhaps they were taking notes for an extra credit report or were just taking a 'long lunch'.

We also installed a kit at the Julian Cho Technical High School in Dump, Belize. Agriculture students had meticulously prepared beds in place when we arrived and listened intently to the presentation. They are the SHI extentionists of the future, perhaps? Juan and Kenny fashioned a platform for the bucket by cutting forked poles from the nearby forest with their ever-present machetes.

When this phase of the bucket kit project is completed, Nana Mensah and staff will have installed over 50 sustainable irrigation systems in the surrounding villages. This will improve the nutrition of 200 people for up to 10 years! While the dry season in Belize is a short one compared to other areas of the planet, the bucket kits will provide fresh vegetables during times when diets would normally focus on the more storable foods with incomplete vitamin supplies. The surplus can be used to sell at market, and the scraps go to the animals or to composting.

SHI Belize staff Nana, Candido, Juan, and Kenny provide advice and support on so many issues that affect the quality of life of their program participants. We at 11 Oaks feel honored to have worked beside them during our brief stay and hope we have contributed in some small way to the preservation of the Mayan way of life.

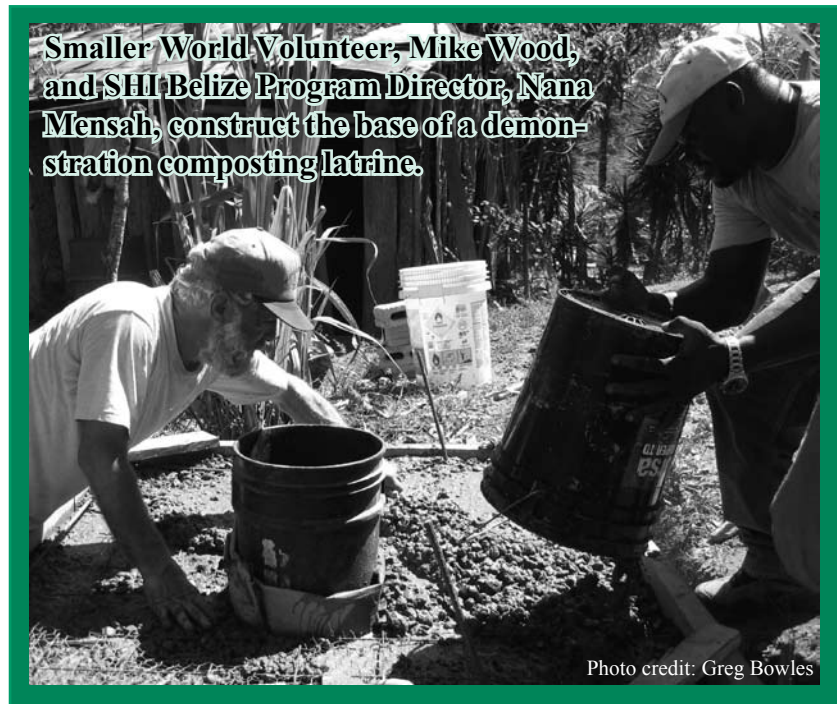
For in-depth detail on bucket kit irrigation, please visit 11oaks.org and go to the LINKS page.

Stories of Success from Honduras

Outreach Director, Sarah Kennedy

I know that building latrines doesn't sound like the most glamorous of work projects, but I am very glad SHI is able to assist with it. I just returned from Honduras where I spent two weeks building latrines and other projects with a group of volunteers from Deer Isle, Maine. Latrines greatly reduce water contamination in the rural communities as well as prevent life-threatening diseases. The composting latrines fit in well with SHI's focus on sustainability, as the waste can be a rich source of nutrients for family crops and trees. Abraham Noe-Hays, an expert on composting latrines, led a workshop at the Florence Reed Demonstration Farm, which the group attended alongside local staff from Honduras and Panama.

In addition to building latrines, the group visited the community of Rio Blanco and did a home stay with the Gomez family in the village of La Laguna del Carmen. Back at the Demo Farm they helped to build a fence around the new biogas digester, started work on a pig pen (the pigs will be providing the fuel for the digester) and prepared a space for a medicinal garden. I was amazed by all the work that has happened at the Demo Farm since I was last there in August. The main classroom has



Smaller World Volunteer, Mike Wood, and SHI Belize Program Director, Nana Mensah, construct the base of a demonstration composting latrine.

Photo credit: Greg Bowles

been finished, there is solar power (thanks to support from Ohio Wesleyan University), running water (thanks to support from Engineers Without Borders, St. Andrews and St. Georges Schools) and the orchard looks beautiful!

While the group was busy working, I was able to sneak away for a quick visit to the community of Pinabete. A water project was recently funded by Ohio Wesleyan University and now the families of Pinabete have access to clean water for drinking and irrigation. Juan Carlos, the extensionist who works in the area, told me with pride that, *"This big tank provides water to 70 families! Before they would drink contaminated water and suffer from diarrhea and the children were always sick, sometimes too sick to go to school or work with their parents. Now they know their water is clean and comes from a good source. We have planted trees here with the community all around the watershed to protect the spring. These trees keep the soil healthy and the water will run here even in the dry season. The tank is protected from animal waste, human waste, and pesticides which keeps it safe for the families."*

After Juan Carlos and I visited the water tank, we headed down the hill to the Perez family home. I hadn't visited there for a year and was worried that the family might not remember me, but as we drove up on the dirt bike all the little girls ran up calling my name. Lesly (10), Heidi (9), Dayani (2), Rosmeri (5) and Rubia (8) had all grown since I had last seen them and skipped down the path leading the way to their farm. The house had also changed. The family received a loan through SHI's micro-enterprise program to start a small store and they had transformed their front room to accommodate all the products they were selling. The



SHI extensionist, Juan Carlos Sandres, atop Pinabete water tank. This tank provides safe water to 70 families.

Photo credit: Sarah Kennedy

Stories of Success from Honduras
Continued from page 5...

mother, Janet Selaya Fajardo, explained, “SHI helped us to start our own business and now look at how well we are doing! Lili [Sustainable Harvest Honduras micro-finance coordinator] came here to teach us how to run the business and keep records. We sell things that the community needs. We sell a lot of grains, but also sugar, beans, some medicines, juice and chips. We have earned much in just the past few months. We use the money we have earned to buy things for our children, to take them to the doctor if they need to go and put money back into the business.”



Perez family store in Pinabete, Honduras.

Photo credit: Sarah Kennedy

and now are able to support themselves.

It was wonderful to work with the volunteers, local staff and families in Honduras. I am returning to my desk excited to seek out new sup-

port for the families we serve. The local staff and SHI participant families asked me to please send their thanks and best wishes to everyone who supports their work. They hope you will come and visit them so they can show you what they have done with your help. Nothing compares to seeing the work in person and talking with families like the Perez’s. I encourage you to consider taking part in a Smaller World Service trip so you can see for yourself.

As the family showed me their store and with great pride presented the notebook they were using to keep track of their sales, several neighbor children came by the window to buy soap and sugar. Señor Perez told me, “Before there wasn’t anywhere near here to buy these things and we had no way to start a store like this in our community. We had nothing to give to the bank to show them that we are good people who deserve their credit. With SHI, they know us and gave us a chance. Thanks to God and SHI we have succeeded and continue to do well with our store.” What Señor Perez told me next was the highlight of my trip. It is moments like this, out in the field with the families that make all the long hours back at my desk working to find the funds to make these projects possible worthwhile. He said, “We have learned so much from SHI and the program has been a great help for us. It started with teaching us how to be better farmers. We grow more now. Before we just had coffee and corn and spent all our money on pesticides. Now we have tomatoes, soy, onions, papaya, cabbage, beans, cucumber, peppers, melons and much more. We still grow coffee, but now we grow it organically under the shade of trees which hold the water in the soil. Now that we have our store we are taking care of ourselves. **If SHI had to leave and start work with other families, we would give thanks to God that others could have support and we know that now we would be alright on our own.**” Hearing that last part meant a great deal to me and makes me proud to be a part of an organization that is truly helping people to help themselves. I hope that it makes you proud as well! The Perez family is an example of one of the many success stories from families working with SHI. They are using the training the Honduran staff members have given them

and now are able to support themselves.

Future Builders Present :

One Note at a Time...

Bay Area Youth put together a compilation album to support Sustainable Harvest International.



Ranging from indie and progressive rock to ska and electronica, Future Builders’ “One note at a time...” showcases the best of young talent from the San Francisco Bay Area. Visit www.future-builders.com to meet the inspirational teens who put this project together and order your copy today!

AWARDS:

Women of the Earth

Florence Reed received the third annual Women of Earth Award presented by the Yves Rocher Foundation-Institut de France. *Congratulations Flo!*

Pew Scholars and Fellows award SHI \$20,000

The Pew Charitable Trusts sponsors scientists for post doctorate work in the United States. This year's graduating group of Latin American Fellows evaluated and chose to honor SHI. These scientists, at the beginning of their careers, gave almost \$1,000 each to SHI because they saw the integration of social, economic, and environmental impact as being of great importance. SHI is honored by their support and wishes them well in their continued work. *Hooray for scientists!*

Saving Thousands of Acres of Forest

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Trees are an important tool for our farmers. In addition to protecting the natural forest, families working with SHI are planting native species back onto the land. These trees provide shade for other crops and protect watersheds. Some trees fix nitrogen into the soil, others have strong root systems that prevent erosion and provide a home for beneficial birds and insects. Varieties that produce edible fruits and nuts provide nutritious food and valuable income for the families. When these cash-crops are firmly established in an area, that area is much less likely to be logged for timber or slash-and-burned. Families working with SHI to produce these crops are making a long-term investment in the land that will contribute to the local economy and lead the way to sustainable development in their countries.

La Cosecha Kids Corner

What's My Job?

Even though they don't get paid, animals have jobs too. Can you figure out whose job is what?



toucan

I work at night and am a bug exterminator. I can eat as many as 6,000 insects in one night!



wasp



leafcutter ant



hummingbird

Although I am small, my hard-working friends and I scour the forest for leaves to feed our babies. We march in a line along the forest floor and bring the leaves to our underground home where we use them to grow a fungus which feeds the next generation. Our constant search for new leaves allows the forest to grow and regenerate all the time.



howler monkey

I have a sharp sting, so few humans think of me as "sweet," but I do love sweet food like nectar and help keep the forest clean by eating fruit that falls from the trees.

I'm a fast worker! I sip nectar from flowers with my little beak and carry pollen from plant to plant.


My job is to plant seeds. I like to eat fruit and leaves while climbing high in the forest canopy.



bat

I am also a seed planter. I use my beak to pick fruits from the trees. I travel a lot and the seeds I have eaten end up far away from their parent tree, which is great for the forest diversity!

Are there animals at work in your community?

 Special thanks to Emily Dodge.

You can discover the correct answers at your local library or by searching online.



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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.

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**Upcoming Smaller
WorldSM Service Trips**

Honduras - August 12 - 21, 2007

Looking for a summer vacation that's more than just a vacation? Join Sustainable Harvest International's local staff and participant families in Honduras. Trip participants will work with local families on projects promoting sustainable agriculture, reforestation and poverty alleviation. Contact SHI to register today!
Program cost: \$1,200



Photo credit: Sarah Kennedy

Bid With Your Lid!

Yogurt lid that is. Be on the lookout for your opportunity to support SHI by sending in specially-marked **Stonyfield Farm Yogurt Lids** this summer.

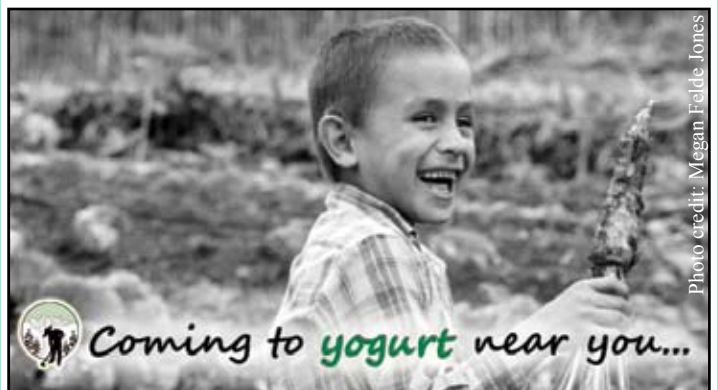


Photo credit: Megan Felde Jones

SHI has been selected as one of three organizations to take part in Stonyfield's Bid With Your Lid Program. Each organization will receive a \$20,000 donation from Stonyfield plus a percentage of \$40,000 based on public voting! Cast your votes for SHI, and get rewarded too... voting prizes include yummy Terra Nostra Chocolate, Stash Teas and organic totes. Program starts July 1st.

What a tasty way to make a difference.