

CRS Call February 10, 2014

***See also: Kerri notes on paper

Alan's Notes

Value Chain for Corn/Amaranth

Very small market for Amaranth, don't have info on pricing

- Half a pound of amaranth in flour or grain form in Guatemala City is 30-35 quetzales (~4.50/lb or ½ kilogram)
- Manzana is 7000 m², 16 cuerdas in a manzana

What is the process for buying seeds?

- Corn
- Most families save their seed from previous harvests
- Amaranth
- Not very available, this will be a large part of the study... finding about how available it is.
- Lot of trade of Amaranth in S. Mexico and a lot of trade that goes across the border between San Marcos and Chiapas
- Under 5% of famers in San Marcos are growing Amaranth

Growth

- Planting in April/May
- Harvesting in late Fall – October/November
- Labor intensive
- Agronomically, similar time-frame, harvesting, upkeep, harvesting, yields
- Corn is slightly more susceptible
- Use basically the same equipment
- Only difference is there would be threshing the seed heads (Amaranth is more like wheat)

Post-harvest processes

- Will cook/grill it on and it will blow up a little, pop out of the seed shell, and that's when they will store it like this
- Grind it into a flour

Storage

- Not sure if post-processing helps prevent spoilage (guesses yes)
- For corn, there's a wide range of silos
- Ministry of Ag trying to push Zinc silos (component of Title II project, of which Amaranth is a part)

Success Story

- Solola (area), Aguabeja (indigenous name) for group success story.
- Funded by a Japanese

Transportation

- Most farmers keep the corn they grow
- Rest is stored for seed or saved to consume later
- Participate in markets if there's a good yield
- Would likely sell through an intermediary
- Would come to town in a pickup truck and take it to market

Farmers

- Avg. adult consumes 400lbs/year
- Not high yields
- Farmers are very much focused on farming to survive
- Some may have a little bit of coffee they're selling
- Avg. land size is between a $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ a hectare
- Some farmers grow poppy to sell
- US govt. is trying to crack down on this
- Many get money from remittances
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Compared with Africa, local markets are fairly advanced.

- A lot of the food available at market is *not* healthy
- Extra money goes to Coke
- Day laboring work goes to sugar, oil, onions, tomatoes
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Potential money to put through something like this

- ECADI, could do a pilot with some of them
- Mechanism would be through ECADI
- Would want it to be sustainable
- Could set up a revolving fund (with ECADI?)
- If they have a strong savings and lendings group (not all have them set-up)
- Would have to check with the partners to see what is the best model
- Maybe a Amaranth-specific group

ECADI farmer field school

- Demonstration farmer
- Mini-board of directors (not paid)
- Decide what next steps are
- Feedback going both ways
- Some have created savings and lending groups
- All are separate, started last year between August and October
- Independent, internal regulations
- Do have exchange visits
- Could form a second level, federation level?

- Has worked in Africa
- 6 year project started in 2012, but only started field operations in July 2013
- Provide trainings, food rations
- Families receive rations, of beans, rice, corn soyplants (porridge), oil
- Get imported from the US, this is what Title II

Title II in Guatemala used to be monetized, but now it's cash—fairly recent shift

- \$42 million, half is in food that's being distributed and the other half in cash

CRS works through local partners

- CRS specialists trains and works with Caritas
- Caritas then trains community volunteers (with ECADI), and then
- Community volunteers train others
- This is how they reach 20,000 people

Chickpea model from Tanzania

Matthew's Notes

- less than 5% of farmers currently growing
- only one annual harvest of both corn and amaranth in the highlands
 - plant April/May
 - harvest late fall (October/November)
- very similar agronomically
 - corn more fertilizer and more susceptible to pests
 - very similar yields
 - more or less same equipment
 - amaranth requires threshing (more like wheat)
- storage
 - wide range of silos
 - ministry of ag wants to push zinc silos;
 - post harvest storage of corn is a component of Title II project
- Agua Beja in Solo La (department around Lake Atitlan) has been doing amaranth for a few years
 - they developed the amaranth guide he sent us
 - visiting them will be on our agenda
 - founded by Japanese group
- transport
 - most corn is consumed by the producer, subsistence farmers
 - surplus corn is stored for the whole year
 - avg. adult consumes 400 lb. of corn/year
 - ¼ to ½ hectare average land size
 - intermediary would come to town in a pickup truck and buy your excess
- SM
 - lots of people migrate to Mexico/US to get extra income → remittance
 - huge portion of a family's income here
 - some illegally cultivate ____, which is a poppy (can get us more info)
 - US is trying to crack down on this
 - lots of commerce with Mexico
 - when they purchase food, it's often not healthy (fast food, coke, etc.)
- ECADI (farmer field schools)? What's this organization called that they are partnering with?
 - would do a pilot with local communities
 - can set up a "revolving fund" to provide farmers with what they need; have done this on other projects
 - each community has a demonstration farmer, others come to them to receive their trainings
 - have a mini board of directors that makes decisions, participates with project staff
 - some now have internal savings & lending groups; in beginning stages but has potential to work with amaranth
 - all separate, all new (July-November last year)
 - have exchange visits between them

- funded by CRS Title II program
- food ration
 - beans, rice, soybeans, vegetable oil: imported from US
 - most possibilities of local procurement through other projects in the future (not Title II)
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- CRS chicken pea model project from Tanzania
- CRS model
 - work through local partners (Caritas)
 - Caritas has whole team of field staff that works with ECADI/community volunteers
 - “cascade method of training”
 - CRS → Caritas → ECADI/volunteers → rest of farmers
- Logistics discussion