

2014-02-18 Meeting Notes

Agenda

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Matt Bloom Notes

- first need to get a really good handle on how they are cooking now
- should we bring amaranth flour with us to let them cook with?
- are we going to Mexico at all?
- giving amaranth away first to help convince them that they want to grow it → starts with us convincing them that they want this

Puente a la Salud Comunitaria Notes

- worked in Zacapa, Guatemala: eastern, near Honduran border (not very similar to SM)
- been in Oaxaca for 6 years, came to eliminate malnutrition by using amaranth
- about 8 million people in Oaxaca; 40,000 target population where they work
- studies point to 4-5 years till a farmer really is independent, plus challenge with markets beyond that
- he's also president of the amaranth institute → has allowed him to access farmers, businesses, academics
- Puente has focused on the whole person, different aspects of capital
- value chain is a good conceptual framework (used since the 60's-70's)
- farmers are very risk averse - will only try something new if they have seen it work
- use a "barriers analysis" to help assess what obstacles we might face
- not a cost-benefit intervention if malnutrition is less than 30% of the population
- production: farmers who want to make \$\$ vs. farmers who want "food security"
 - would approach these two types of farmers differently
- lessons learned from his experience
 - the up front assessment is essential: really understanding what the community is looking for
 - have this written, expressed in photos, etc. to make sure everyone is on the same page
- the report was prepared by a consultant from Ecuador for Puente
- intercalada - grow amaranth together with corn/beans
 - doesn't make a lot of economic sense for industrial, but really good for food security plots
- for 1 hectare and below, anything is appropriate technology
 - Guatemala will be mostly plow pulled by animals
- processing
 - they have a patented way to pop amaranth: value add from \$1/lb to \$2-3/lb
 - corn only sells for \$.10/lb; 4-5 pesos per kilo
 - amaranth is about 25 pesos/kilo
- get the seed from the Mexican seed bank
 - can get seed from the germo plasm bank at Iowa State
 - free for experimentation/new seed - he can send us the link
- not most people have added into their diet
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questions for him

- What exactly does the switch over look like from the perspective of a local farmer?
 - motivations, costs, down time, learning, etc.
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Action Items

- Jess
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- Adam
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- Carolyn
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- Kerri
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- David
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- Matthew
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- All
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