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**O**ur new DVD is an exciting way to share the ministry of FARMS with your church, missions committee, Bible study group, and friends. It is formatted to play on either your computer DVD or your television DVD player. Included is a 6 minute narrated overview of the ministry, as well as actual video interviews from the field.

Contact our office to order your free copy of this informative DVD.



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FARMS is able to accept credit card donations on our web site or by telephone. We trust this new service is of help to you.

**NEW!**

# AGRICULTURAL EVANGELISM

*"Blessed is he that considereth the poor"*



Niger - Senegal Update - Urbana '03 Conference Report - March 2004

## AFRICA: Programs Explored in Senegal and Niger

**T**he blue ocean sparkled in the tropical sun as I peered through the 'door of no return'. I sensed only a fraction of the horror Africans experienced two centuries ago as they passed this portal



**The Door of No Return**

into a life of slavery. I was in Senegal in West Africa. I would later travel on to Niger. There, the sights of camels and muffin shaped grain bins dotting the countryside reminded me of old testament scenes.

*"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in*

*mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."*

—Malachi 3:10 KJV

**This challenge is foundational for each FARMS program.**

Many people still bring baskets of grain as tithes to their church. Both Niger and Senegal lie within the "10/40 Window". This swath crosses the eastern hemisphere where most people live under the influence of non-Christian religions. Within this window Christians struggle to earn a living and many times there is no cash. Their tithes represent the fruit of their labors. But often, tithing to the church is seen as a burden, rather than a way to honor God! Therefore,

the expectation of God's blessing is absent.

### Senegal

Believers in Senegal make up less than 5% of the population. Although the government protects Christian activity, discriminatory practices make it difficult for Christians to obtain job training that ensures an adequate income for family support. For example, when a believer enters an apprenticeship knowledge may be

*continued on next page*



**Camels are a means of transport in Niger**



## "Yielded to God"

### Urbana '03 Report

**S**ince 1948, Urbana, Illinois has been the site of a unique triennial, year-end mission event. Young people, ages 18-25, gather from across North America, and the world, with one purpose in mind; missions! Imagine the energy this past December when nearly 20,000 young people worshipped and prayed as they sought God's will for their lives. The enthusiasm of the students was definitely contagious!

"Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will Be Done" was the theme of Urbana '03. InterVarsity Christian Fellowship sponsors Urbana with the express purpose of challenging students to commit to missionary service. The atmosphere was electric with the truth that each believer can make a significant impact on the world for Christ. D.L. Moody once said, **"The world has yet to see what God can do through one man who is totally yielded to Him."** This was the challenge carried away from Urbana '03.

Nathan McLaughlin, my son Jake, and I represented FARMS International at Urbana '03. We introduced the biblical approach of FARMS to hundreds of stu-

*continued on page 3*



**Jake and Steve manning the FARMS display at Urbana**





**Traditional Grain Storage Bins in Niger**

*(New Programs, continued)*

withheld from them, lengthening their studies considerably, promoting a form of indentured servanthood.

One year ago, a FARMS supporter introduced us to Dale Van Steenis of "Leadership

Strategies, Inc." Dale initiated contact between FARMS and Calvary Ministries in Senegal. Christian Life Center, near Chicago, IL has generously committed to support the FARMS program within Calvary Ministries. We are providing expertise and training to establish the loan program. Partnerships like these build cross cultural bridges for indigenous church leaders and strengthen local churches through training, trust, and leader-

ship development.

During my meetings with church leaders and the eight respected individuals who will serve on their volunteer loan committee, I learned the details of the dif-

ficulties Christians face. This new committee is made up of believers of integrity who have succeeded in their careers.

**Their desire is to serve the poor in their church community.**

The leaders and pastors of Calvary Ministries in Senegal have a clear vision to reach Senegal for Christ. Their long term goals are to provide FARMS loans for projects for needy families within their congregations, as well as to encourage pastors and evangelists to promote hard work and tithing within the churches they plant. I was moved by the joy of these leaders as I observed them in their social and work settings.

## Niger

Leaving Senegal, I proceeded interior to Niger. Christians number less than half of one percent of the Niger population! Farms was invited by The Evangelical Church of Niger, and Thomas Johnson, a worker with the Reformed Church of America to initiate a loan program. There I trained eleven enthusiastic committee members in the principles and operations needed for an effective program. Several committee members had graduated from a business and agriculture course taught in the 1980's. Surprisingly this course stressed self-reliance and sustainable income projects. Successful in their own enterprises and careers, they now have a vision for passing their experience on to the younger



**Student built housing at Dogon Gao Bible School**

generation. They see the FARMS program as a practical means of accomplishing their vision to free believers from poverty. The program will begin with the students of Dogon Gao Bible School and then expand to other area churches.

Students at Dogon Gao depend upon their extended family and local church for support. Many families and churches are unable to fulfill this commitment. Besides attending class and studying, the students must build their own houses, tend their gardens, and develop proper storage systems to keep their food safe from pests and theft.

The Niger FARMS committee is seeking to help these students establish income generating projects. The resources they earn will help provide for their families and pay school fees. The skills they acquire will enable their future livelihood. There is a diversity of projects students can pursue, such as: sewing, poultry, goats, bicycle repair, donkey cart transport, brick making, house painting, and variety shops. More possibilities will arise as the program progresses. As these students succeed in their FARMS projects, they will gain valuable life experiences.

The students' faith and tenacity impressed me. They struggle to eek out an existence for their wives and children while they study to become pastors. At graduation these students are assigned to villages that have no church or witness for Jesus. Their difficult situation increases as they leave the supportive environment of friends and teachers to become church planters and pioneers in their own hostile society. These young men need a marketable skill in the village so they can be successful in maintaining their family and ministry. **Their example will be a powerful teaching tool to promote real stewardship and self-support within their churches.**

It was a privilege to facilitate the initial phase of these programs in Senegal and Niger. Your prayers and gifts are making all this possible. Thank you so much for your commitment to the poor and for empowering their churches to reach the lost in these difficult regions. Please pray for each of these new FARMS committees as we finalize the agreements. Their first loans will be distributed soon. Pray that the recipients will be faithful in honoring God, as well as successful in their projects.

*Steve Salowitz*

Steve Salowitz



**Nigerien tailor with his hand powered sewing machine**

## Dear Friends,

**It seems that year end tax time approaches a little faster each year.** FARMS has developed a number of giving options to benefit Christians around the world through our ministry, while improving the current financial situations of our friends here at home.

One such option is using Charitable Gift Annuities or CGA's. CGA's were first used in 1843 by the American Bible Society, and they continue to fill several objectives for those who use them. FARMS International has partnered with Funds For Life Ministries of Fort Worth, Texas—a reputable ministry that issues and administers Charitable Gift Annuities (CGAs) with the following benefits:

- ▲ Fixed and guaranteed lifetime payments for up to two persons as designated by the donor
  - Payments can be received periodically as you designate
  - Payments to donor, donor and spouse, donor and child, etc.
- ▲ Special income tax benefits:
  - An initial tax deduction
  - Payments that are partially tax-free
- ▲ You can designate when payments begin
  - Immediate or deferred starting time
  - Deferred payments can assist with retirement planning, as there are no age 59½ or 70½ restrictions as with IRAs/ retirement plans
- ▲ An immediate and annual gift to FARMS International.
  - FARMS International will receive an immediate gift of 5% and annual gift of 2.5% from Funds For Life Ministries, each in the name of the donor.
  - Additionally at the passing of the last payment recipient, FARMS will receive the account value remaining in the gift annuity from Funds for Life Ministries.

To consider this alternative call toll free 866-819-5295 for information and a free quote. You will receive a personal illustration via FedEx from Funds For Life Ministries. It will detail the payment and income tax deduction based on your situation.

Our web site has more detailed information on other giving options which benefit those we help overseas. If you wish to correspond with me personally my contact information is listed below.

In Him,

**Nathan P. McLaughlin**  
FARMS International  
Assistant Director of Development  
Toll Free: 866-819-5295  
Email: [nathan@hcctl.net](mailto:nathan@hcctl.net)



*(“Yielded to God”, continued)*

dents who visited our display over the five days of the conference. Many were challenged by the unique approach to alleviating poverty through biblical stewardship, especially tithing. Besides students, mission representatives expressed a keen interest in our help in establishing self-supporting churches.

A short term service opportunity in Thailand was also offered to interested students. This opportunity will enable young people to observe an active FARMS program. They will be supervised by a veteran missionary, and local loan committee members. Their task will be to document the impact FARMS is having among the poor through recording stories, photos, and video of project beneficiaries. As young people commit to this trip we will be praying that Jesus will touch their lives and make the trip one step toward their lifelong commitment to missionary service.

Just as the disciple's hearts burned within them on the road to Emmaus, we want these young people to take their burning hearts abroad to light fires in others for Jesus.

—Steve Salowitz

## Want to hear some “Good News”?

**FARMS International** works in some unique and strategic areas of this world; areas where “normal” missionary activity is forbidden. In fact, sixteen of our twenty-two programs are in the least evangelized area of the world called the “10/40 window”. These programs are empowering believers that are on the cutting edge of evangelism in their countries. The stories from our field programs are nothing short of phenomenal. For example, churches helped by FARMS are using their increased offerings to carry out cross border evangelism into restricted access countries. One of our programs is actually sending its own missionaries to another “unreached people group” in a place where there is no gospel witness. FARMS also is helping a major people movement (converts to Christianity) be self-supporting in a very hostile nation. Their numbers now have reached the tens of thousands!

**Your church and your friends need to hear these and other encouraging stories from the field.** We also have a sincere desire to fellowship with you, because we see FARMS as a family. Our staff is ready to set a date to visit your church, Sunday school, mission committee, Bible study, or for a personal visit. We also, would be delighted to provide speakers for your mission conferences. Please do not hesitate to call.

Joe Richter

888-99FARMS (888-9932767)

## Correction!

Please accept our apology for an error in our recent Annual Report. Dr. Lew Mix retired from Agway, Inc. in 1986 after serving in several positions in research and sales. He now lives in Virginia Beach, VA with his lovely wife, Connie.