



June 2013

### It's Growing Season - Planting Seedlings of Hope

As we enter June, we thought it would be a good time to update you on our grass-roots agriculture and nutrition programs. They're crucial to our work in promoting better nutrition in Guatemala, which has the highest malnutrition rate in the Western Hemisphere. With your donations, we're sowing seeds of hope for people that desperately need our help.

#### Planting For a Change



Seedling of hope

In April, we partnered with the Doppenberg family to plant 30,000 chia seeds and 250 pigeon pea seeds. We also planted 4,200 chaya plants in El Progreso, Jutiapa. Now that's progress! These native superfoods will help provide important nutrition for hundreds of families in rural Mayan villages.

#### Teaching Nutrition

Hundreds of women have attended our nutrition workshops led by our own Pedro Rodriguez. The women learn how to grow and cook chaya, and why the nutrients in this and other superfoods are so important to their families' health.



#### Superfood Fast Facts

##### Chaya

- A native perennial shrub also called "Mayan tree spinach"
- Grows quickly (6'-10'/yr) without irrigation or fertilizer
- 1 serving has the same amount of protein as an egg
- Provides twice the iron, calcium and vitamins of spinach.

##### Chia Seeds

- A native flowering plant grown since ancient Mayan and Aztec times
- Provides omega-3 fatty acids, carbohydrates, protein, fiber, antioxidants, and calcium
- Unlike flax seeds, chia seeds don't have to be ground before eaten and are shelf-stable for over 2 years.

##### Pigeon Peas

- Thrives on marginal land and is drought-resistant
- Can be dried and stored, ground into flour, or eaten as a green vegetable
- A good source of protein for humans and animals plus nitrogen fixer for the soil.
- Contains the amino acids that are missing in corn.

Want to help sponsor a nutrition workshop? Just \$50 can help.



### Miracles Taking Root

Don Viviano Cruz is very worried. He is an elder in the village of El Saltrillo in southeast Guatemala, which is home to about 125 people. For more than 30 years, people have used trees from their community to support themselves, cutting them down and selling them for firewood and lumber. Today, the village is surrounded by barren, deforested land, and village elders are desperate to find a better solution.

We're developing a pilot program in El Saltrillo to create a model of sustainable development, using a holistic approach to improve health, education, the environment, agriculture and economic opportunity.

Our first step is to assess the community's needs by talking to its citizens, surveying homes and testing the soil and water. Then we'll work with village leaders to create a sustainable plan for El Saltrillo's long-term prosperity.



Don Viviano

#### Help support this VAP (Village Assistance Project)

El Saltrillo urgently needs your help. Please consider donating towards a:

- Safe stove: \$100
- Water purifier: \$65
- 10 tree seedlings: \$30
- Where needed most: \$25+

#### El Saltrillo Village Assessment Project



### Update From Blanca's Preschool



Many of you remember Blanca, a Miracles scholarship student who went on to become a preschool teacher in El Sapito.

Here is an excerpt from Blanca's recent report: "The children attend school every day with the hope of learning something new... they have developed many skills like how to identify the days of the week and some nursery rhymes. We celebrated Mother's Day and all danced and made little mementos for the mothers. Many thanks for the support!"

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