

Sheep Not Goats



Finca Buenpaisillo Welcomes 2016: Two years ago this month we began converting a corner of an empty field here in Malpaisillo into a farm, with the goal of providing income opportunities to poor families here. That first year we fenced the land, dug a well, and planted lots of plantains and pitahaya. In 2015 we harvested and sold fruit every week and built infrastructure for tilapia production. In 2016 we'll pack more fruits and vegetables onto the farm, but a key area of focus will be refining processes for fish production so processes flow smoothly and reliably under management of local staff (as it does today for plantain production - see the back page article). And we will take a big step forward in sustainability by implementing a solar energy system. To all who have supported the work – *Thank You!*



Oscar and Lucio place our first fence posts (January 2014)

Kids Camp

Through much generous outside assistance, 25 Malpaisillo kids attended the 1st Nicaragua Swamp Corps camp, January 3-8. Each raised a share of the required funds and put in 15-25



Seyling, Wendi, Margi, and Abril enjoying pool fun

Samir and Jonathan Lorbeer in the mess hall

hours of “sweat equity” pulling weeds on the farm. Whether child or adult, working and earning builds character and self-esteem in ways that receiving handouts cannot.

Our Newest Neighbors

Rodolfo and Karla Carvajal are good friends and leaders in the local church who just moved to a house in front of the farm. It's great to have friends close by, plus we can sell from their front porch!



The People

Medardo Gutierrez has worked full-time on the farm since May 2014 and is our main salesperson. Two to three times each week he sells our produce in the streets of Malpaisillo.

From age 21 to 35 Medardo was in prison after his own brother blamed him for a murder that he himself had committed.



Eventually he met Leslie, who would come with a Catholic group to sing to the prisoners. She later became his wife. Medardo's brother never asked for forgiveness, but he offered it anyway.

Medardo and Leslie moved to Malpaisillo because of the work opportunity presented by our farm, and to be closer to the church. They have a 2-year-old-daughter, Lesli Amelia, and twin girls due in March.

Going Bananas (and Plantains)

Finca Buenpaisillo has produced plantains for quite a while; we're just now adding bananas of various types. We're very happy about how things have developed in this area, since we now have processes that are **100% run by the local workers**. Here's what we mean:

First Steve nailed down a plan for applying foliar fertilizers and natural insecticide (from the local neem trees). This involves 4 separate applications per plant while it flowers and develops its fruit. And since the plants are at different stages of development, each must be inspected each week and treated accordingly.

At first Steve would do the analysis and then go out with a worker to spray the plants according to their needs. First this spray, then another, and so on. Now Bismarck does the analysis and codes each plant with a colored flag that tells the team what the plant needs, which they then apply. Bismarck also writes down which plants are ready for harvest now and which are candidates for later in the week.



Bismarck and Medardo cutting a "cabeza" of about 50 plantain fruits



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What	US-based 501(c) (3) non-profit
Where	Nicaragua, the poorest country in Latin America
Why	To share God's love by offering help to the very poor
How	Through income from our farm, <i>Finca Buenpaisillo</i> , as well as medical & other forms of support as needed
Help	Visit sheepnotgoats.org to make a tax-deductible one-time or monthly donation

100% of donations goes to worker salaries, medical care, and other areas of our mission. We receive no salary from the non-profit.

Among Our Goals for January...

- Find and plant 100 Williams-variety bananas (what's exported to the US)
- Find an English-speaking solar energy implementation expert; begin planning a system to provide power for all our pumps
- Finish building the aquaponics growbed for tank #2